Editorial

Welcome to the Vol. 10, No. 1 issue of the Malaysian Journal of Distance Education. There are eight reviewed articles published in this issue by contributors from countries spanning across the globe, namely, the Netherlands, Malaysia, West Indies, USA, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Australia. The topics are rather diverse ranging from the content development of e-learning as the delivery mechanism to the roles of tutors in open and distance learning, mobile devices as well as the issues related to courseware development.

The first article is by Bastiaens and Stijnen of the Open University Netherlands which reports on career development through the competence based e-learning approach. Based on the experience in developing the software, various recommendations are put forward. The second article is by Chang et al. of Universiti Putra Malaysia, presenting the study on the roles and competencies of distance education tutors in Malaysian public universities. Several interesting characteristics have been elucidated among the tutors and more significantly, is the indication that there exists gaps between required and acquired competencies.

The third article is by Thurab-Nkhosi of the University of the West Indies. This article reports on a qualitative study regarding the impact of e-learning for the development of the region. The fourth article is by Franklin and Thurab-Nkhosi of the same university, presenting a quantitative study that highlights the evaluation of the online delivery of a mathematics course by the students as well as the challenges faced by the implementer.

The fifth article is by Harrison and Mansour of the Indiana State University. They present an interesting article that looks at faculty perceptions towards online teaching and outline the factors that inhibit their participation. Even though the overall attitude among the faculty members is positive, there are issues of concern which include the quality of students as well as the faculty workload. The sixth article is by Al-Fahad of the King Saud University who surveys student readiness towards

using mobile devices. The results are encouraging as mobile devices provide a different and more flexible scenario of learning.

The last two articles are by Norfadilah et al. of the Queensland University of Technology on the conceptualisation of courseware development and Tan et al. of Universiti Sains Malaysia, proposing a conceptual framework on generative learning objects. Norfadilah et al. propose an interactive component in the system that enables course developers to interact among themselves in the process of courseware development. Tan et al. on the other hand, propose a conceptual framework that utilises various activity tools that would enhance collaborative learning and critical thinking.

Many thanks go to all contributors in this issue. The next two issues will be special issues on the results of the e-educator research project undertaken by the University of Nottingham, UK, in collaboration with Beijing Beiwai Online at Beijing Foreign Studies University, Beijing, China. These articles elaborate on the generic training module for tutors of Universiti Sains Malaysia who support students in online courses.

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Chief Editor