

Teaching Statement

Andrés Monroy-Hernández
email@andresmh.com

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My research is guided by the constructionist philosophy of education that advocates learning by designing and building personally meaningful projects (Papert, 1980). I look forward to having the opportunity of applying this educational methodology to the courses I lead and with the students I advise.

OUTREACH

An important part of my research at the MIT Media Lab involved the development and dissemination of learning technologies, from programming environments for children, like Scratch, to electronic construction kits such as PicoCricket. As part of this work, I was able to lead dozens of workshops for educators and children in places such as Brazil, Costa Rica, Mexico, the UK and the United States. Guided by research on creative learning (Resnick, 2007), I found ways to engage participants of these workshops in the design process by creating, sharing and reflecting on their creations. I hope to bring this design-based style to the classes that I teach.

TEACHING

I was also able to help teach and design the curriculum for the course “NextLab: Designing Mobile Technologies for the Next Billion Users,” a collaboration between the Media Lab, the Electrical Engineering and Computer Science department and the School of Management at MIT. This class brought together students from various disciplines to create mobile technologies for solving problems in the developing world. I helped connect the students with nonprofit organizations around the world, and coached them as they embarked on the process of providing technology-based solutions for those organizations. This experience allowed me to explore not only the nuances of

teaching but also the complexity of dealing with a diverse range of stakeholders. The class has since become a popular course and has been featured in the MIT OpenCourseWare system. I look forward to teaching more hands-on courses in the future.

MENTORING

My research lends itself well to project-based work where collaborations between undergraduate and graduate students to create and study systems with real-world impact. Much of my work has been supported by undergraduate and masters students whom I have mentored through the Undergraduate Research Opportunity Program at MIT. To date, I have supervised two high school interns, five undergraduate research assistants, two senior undergraduate thesis projects and two masters of engineering thesis projects.

The study of online communities, social media and social computing interests students from multiple disciplines because many of them already actively participate in these online spaces. I would welcome the opportunity to teach and mentor students in human-computer interaction and social computing courses and research. I also look forward to the potential collaboration with colleagues in the department and from other departments across the university.

REFERENCES

- Papert, S. (1980). *Mindstorms : children, computers, and powerful ideas*. New York: Basic Books.
- Resnick, M. (2007). Sowing the seeds for a more creative society. *Learning & Leading with Technology* 35(4), 18–22.