

MATTHEW SHELDON AMES, PhD

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ACADEMIC PROFILE

Scholar of instructional design and technology-enhanced learning with 20+ years of teaching and research experience across universities in the United States, East Africa, and the Gulf. Research focuses on the digital transformation of higher education — particularly how instructional design, and learning systems development reshape teaching practice, and access to education in global and resource-constrained contexts. Experienced in graduate and undergraduate instruction, curriculum development, and the design of scalable learning environments across interdisciplinary education settings.

RESEARCH INTERESTS

Research is organized around three interconnected areas:

- Digital transformation and institutional change in higher education — technology-mediated curriculum, authentic assessment in AI-rich environments, and scalable learning design.
- Instructional design and learning sciences in interdisciplinary and health professions education contexts, with particular focus on Sub-Saharan Africa.
- The history, theory, and future of instructional design and educational technology as a field — including emerging questions about AI's role in reshaping pedagogy and professional practice.

CURRENT WORK

Independent Researcher & Writer

Tbilisi, Georgia | Jan 2026 – Present

- Developing the Meaning Machine — a place-based digital learning platform integrating geolocation, AI interpretation, and participatory narrative to create layered historical and cultural learning experiences. Built in Next.js, Supabase, and OpenAI.
- Lecturing at universities in the Caucasus on AI in higher education.
- Designing a new pedagogical framework for AI-era higher education, addressing assessment redesign, faculty capability, and the changing role of the instructor.

ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor — Educational Leadership

American University of Ras Al Khaimah (AURAK), UAE | 2024–2026

- Taught graduate courses in Educational Leadership and Digital Leadership, with emphasis on technology-mediated institutional change and AI-integrated learning environments.

- Contributed to curriculum review and program-level assessment initiatives within graduate education programs.
- Directed the Center for Learning Support Services and e-Learning Programs — leading a 30-member instructional team and overseeing digital learning services for 800+ undergraduates.

Head of e-Learning & Assistant Professor

University of Global Health Equity (UGHE), Kigali, Rwanda | 2019–2024

- Taught undergraduate and professional courses in digital health and educational technology in global health contexts.
- Designed and implemented blended and online curricula supporting regional health workforce education across interdisciplinary programs.
- Built the university's e-learning function from scratch — establishing governance, LMS infrastructure, faculty development systems, and a five-year institutional digital strategy aligned with Rwanda's national Digital Health agenda.
- Collaborated with faculty across medicine, public health, and digital systems to integrate technology-enhanced learning into institutional practice.
- Led LMS course architecture for the Digital Health Applied Leadership Program (DHALP).
- Contributed to Erasmus+-funded RADIC consortium on digital rehabilitation education capacity-building across Europe and East Africa.

Assistant Professor, Department of Education (Remote)

New York Institute of Technology, USA | 2017–2019

- Taught undergraduate courses in instructional technology and learning theory.
- Supervised student capstone projects in digital pedagogy and educational media.

Instructor & Course Developer

CITSIE, Virginia Tech, USA | 2013–2015

- Designed and delivered fully online courses including Message Design, Instructional Media, Digital Video, Graphic Design, and Product Evaluation.
- Contributed to large-scale online teacher education initiatives.

Early Academic Career (2002–2013): Virginia Tech | Valencia Community College

Teaching and curriculum development across multi-campus institutions serving 40,000+ students; supported large-scale LMS integration and digital learning transformation.

PUBLICATIONS

Journal Articles

- Cyuzuzo, C., Dukuzimana, M. J., Muhire, C., Ames, M. S., et al. (2025). Challenges to rehabilitation services in Sub-Saharan Africa: A scoping review. *JMIR Human Factors*. **(Scopus Q2)**

- Clark-Stallkamp, R., & Ames, M. S. (2023). The AECT Archives: Elusive primary sources and where to find them. TechTrends. **(Scopus Q1)**
- Ames, M., Uwizeyimana, T., Clarke, O., & Gatete, C. (2023). Assessment of the implementation of the SAMR model in online courses at UGHE. International Journal of Online and Distance Learning.

Book Chapters

- Ames, M. S. (2023). Chapters in AECT at 100: A Century of Innovation and Influence in Educational Technology. Brill Academic Publishers.

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

- Advancing Medical Education Conference, Kigali, Rwanda (2025)
- e-Learning Africa, Dakar, Senegal (2023)
- TUFH Africa Regional Conference (2023)
- AECT International Convention (multiple years)

SELECTED INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

- Erasmus+ RADIC Consortium (Jamk University of Applied Sciences, Finland) — Contributed to digital rehabilitation education capacity-building; participated in multinational consortium meetings and editorial development of regional handbook.
- Digital Health Applied Leadership Program (UGHE) — Designed LMS course infrastructure supporting regional health leadership training across Sub-Saharan Africa.
- NTD Communities of Practice — Advised on digital knowledge networks and AI-supported training development during grant conceptualization and implementation phases.

ACADEMIC SERVICE & MEMBERSHIP

- Director, Center for Learning Support Services & e-Learning Programs — AURAK
- Head of e-Learning — University of Global Health Equity
- Graduate Program Curriculum Committee Member
- Peer Reviewer: AECT at 100 (Brill)
- Member: Association for Educational Communications & Technology (AECT)

EDUCATION

PhD, Instructional Design & Technology — Virginia Tech, USA, 2015

Dissertation: Development of a Framework to Determine the Status of Instructional Design and Technology Artifacts

MA, Instructional Technology — Virginia Tech, USA, 1999

BA, Philosophy — Ferrum College, USA, 1993