

MATTHEW SHELDON AMES, PhD

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PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Strategic higher education leader and faculty member with international experience building digital learning ecosystems, academic support operations, faculty development programs, and institutional learning systems across the United States, East Africa, the Gulf, and the Caucasus. Ph.D. in Instructional Design & Technology with a record of establishing departments and services from the ground up, managing multidisciplinary teams of 30+ staff, and supporting more than 800 learners and 100 faculty. Experienced in online learning strategy, AI integration, curriculum and assessment, quality assurance, student success, and cross-functional implementation in complex international higher education environments.

SELECTED ACHIEVEMENTS

- **Founded and institutionalized an e-Learning Department at a medical university** in Rwanda, establishing LMS governance, faculty development systems, scalable digital infrastructure, and a five-year institutional strategy.
 - **Directed integrated academic support and digital learning services for 800+ students** while managing a multidisciplinary instructional team of more than 30 tutors, teaching assistants, and support staff.
 - **Supported more than 300 learners and 50 faculty through centralized online learning** systems, course architecture, faculty capacity-building, and technology-enabled program delivery.
 - **Represented the University of Global Health Equity in the Erasmus+-funded RADIC** consortium, collaborating with partners in Finland, Rwanda, and Zanzibar to advance digital rehabilitation education.
 - **Built an international academic profile through graduate teaching, invited presentations**, and publications in Scopus-indexed journals, including a 2026 study of the ARCS motivational model in emergency remote learning.
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WORK EXPERIENCE

Adjunct Instructor Education, Management

ADA University | Baku, Azerbaijan | Fall 2026

- Appointed to teach a graduate course in educational technology and artificial intelligence in education within the Education Management program.
- Designed course learning outcomes, assessments, and applied activities focused on responsible AI use, instructional design, technology evaluation, and educational leadership.
- Course scheduled for remote delivery through Blackboard to master's-level students.

Independent Educational Technology Consultant & Researcher (AI & Digital Learning)

Strategic Consultant | Tbilisi, Georgia | Feb 2026 – Present

- Lecturing at universities in the Caucasus region on AI in higher education.
- Developing AI-supported digital learning and place-based educational technology systems.
- Designing a new AI-era educational framework that rethinks assessment, pedagogy, and the role of the instructor in technology-rich environments.
- Writing and refining research-driven essays on AI in education, digital learning systems, and the future of higher education.

Director of Learning Support & e-Learning Programs | Assistant Professor

American University of Ras Al Khaimah | Ras Al Khaimah, UAE | Jul 2024 – Feb 2026

- Led a 30-member instructional team (tutors, TAs, and support staff), establishing standardized training frameworks, performance expectations, and operational workflows to improve service quality and consistency.
- Directed centralized academic support and digital learning operations serving 800+ undergraduate students, integrating tutoring services, learning centers, and LMS support into a coordinated institutional system.
- Redesigned academic support delivery using data-informed approaches, increasing student engagement and utilization of tutoring and learning services.

- Managed operational budgeting, staffing, and resource allocation, aligning service delivery with institutional priorities for retention, student success, and academic performance.
- Contributed to accreditation readiness and academic program review processes, ensuring alignment between learning support services, digital learning infrastructure, and quality assurance standards.

Head of e-Learning & Assistant Professor

University of Global Health Equity | Kigali, Rwanda | Nov 2019 – Jul 2024

- Founded and institutionalized the university's e-Learning Department — supporting 300+ learners and 50+ faculty through centralized LMS governance, faculty development systems, LMS integration, and scalable digital infrastructure.
- Directed development and execution of the institution's five-year e-learning strategy, aligned with medical education priorities and Rwanda's national Digital Health agenda.
- Designed and facilitated faculty development initiatives supporting teaching innovation, digital pedagogy adoption, and capacity-building across interdisciplinary teams.
- Led LMS and online course architecture for the multi-country Digital Health Applied Leadership Program (DHALP), translating executive-level digital health curriculum into scalable online learning for health leaders across Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Contributed to grant development and AI-supported training architecture for NTD workforce initiatives.
- Represented UGHE in the Erasmus+-funded RADIC consortium, collaborating with partners across Finland, Rwanda, and Zanzibar to advance digital rehabilitation education in East Africa.
- Served as faculty mentor for the eGlobal international virtual exchange program, supporting collaborative research partnerships between University of Global Health Equity and University of Virginia students on global health research projects.

Assistant Professor, Department of Education

New York Institute of Technology (Remote) | USA | Aug 2017 – Oct 2019

- Designed and delivered undergraduate instructional technology coursework in a fully online program.

- Mentored students in capstone projects.

Instructional Designer

Vinnell Arabia | Riyadh, Saudi Arabia | Nov 2015 – Jan 2018

- Developed educational technology strategy for a new graduate college; advised executive leadership on infrastructure and systems alignment.

Instructor & Course Developer

CITSIE, Virginia Tech | Blacksburg, VA | Jun 2013 – Oct 2015

- Designed and delivered remote teacher education courses including Message Design and Product Evaluation.

SELECTED RESEARCH & PRESENTATIONS

- Ames, M. S. (2026). Applying the ARCS model to foster belonging and confidence during emergency remote learning: A case study from Rwanda. *East African Journal of Education Studies*, 9(3).
- Ames, M. S. (2023). Two chapters in *AECT at 100: A Century of Innovation and Influence in Educational Technology*. Brill.
- Clark-Stallkamp, R., & Ames, M. (2023). *TechTrends* (Q1 Scopus).
- Cyuzuzo et al. (2025). *JMIR Human Factors* (Q2 Scopus).

International Presentations:

- e-Learning Africa (Dakar)
- Advancing Medical Education Conference (Kigali)
- TUFH Regional Conference (Africa)

EDUCATION

Ph.D., Instructional Design & Technology — Virginia Tech

M.A., Instructional Technology — Virginia Tech

B.A., Philosophy — Ferrum College

CORE COMPETENCIES

Digital Learning Strategy · e-Learning Systems Design & Implementation · Faculty Development & Capacity Building · Academic Quality Assurance & Accreditation · AI Integration in Higher Education · Curriculum Design & Assessment · Institutional Change Management · Cross-Cultural Leadership · Budget Oversight & Resource Allocation · Grant Development