

Kelli Munns

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Kelli Munns joined the Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences department this year as a professional practice instructor. She teaches courses and mentors ITLS and School Library Media Administration MEd students.

Munns is currently finishing her PhD in curriculum and instruction here at USU. She got her MEd in leadership in education and administration development at Southern Utah University and her undergraduate degree in biology education at Utah Valley University.

Her current research focuses on simulation technology and how it can be utilized as a feedback modality to encourage the learning process, especially in adult learners. She also studies how this technology can eliminate subjectivity and help assuage the cognitive dissonance that occurs when feedback is not perceived well by students.

“Student success is her primary objective,” said Brian Warnick, associate dean of the College of Agriculture and Applied Sciences. “Her application of effective assessment models, particularly related to performance-based assessment, have been drawn upon by many instructors, programs, and departments across campus.”

Munns was the keynote speaker for the USU Empowering Teaching Excellence (ETE) Conference in 2017 and was named the Animal, Dairy and Veterinary Sciences teacher of the year in 2018.

Travis Thurston, Munns’ ETE director, said that he knows ITLS students are “in good hands” with her. “I’ve seen firsthand that her knowledge and expertise in teaching and learning has impacted countless classrooms across the USU system,” he said.

Munns is thrilled to be able to mentor master’s students through their graduate programs. She believes mentorship plays a vital role in postsecondary education and feels that developing relationships with students is the best part of her job. She’s excited to teach ITLS courses and has a deep affinity for making sure education parallels this digital age, as well as for understanding the learning sciences. She believes these concepts really can transform learning in any setting.

“Kelli’s passion to bring scientific truth and excellence to her teaching is an inspiration to her students and colleagues,” said Judy Smith, a former colleague. “She is a devoted educator who continuously seeks to improve her ability to connect and collaborate with others.” Munns’ evaluations had a “common theme” of her students praising her efforts to prepare them for their futures, said Dirk Vanderwall, Kelli’s former department head.

Munns hopes that her students learn to write their own stories so that when they leave the program, they can advocate for themselves and achieve their professional and personal goals. She wants to make a meaningful impact on them so they can press forward in life. When she’s not working, Munns is an avid equestrian and spends her spare time riding and showing in three-day eventing. She also enjoys running.

Munns loves the book “Optimist Creed” by Christian D. Larson and often gives students advice from it. She likes to remind students that we all get one life, so it’s important to make it what you want because it is the one thing that is absolutely yours and the one thing you have control over, including your attitude about it.