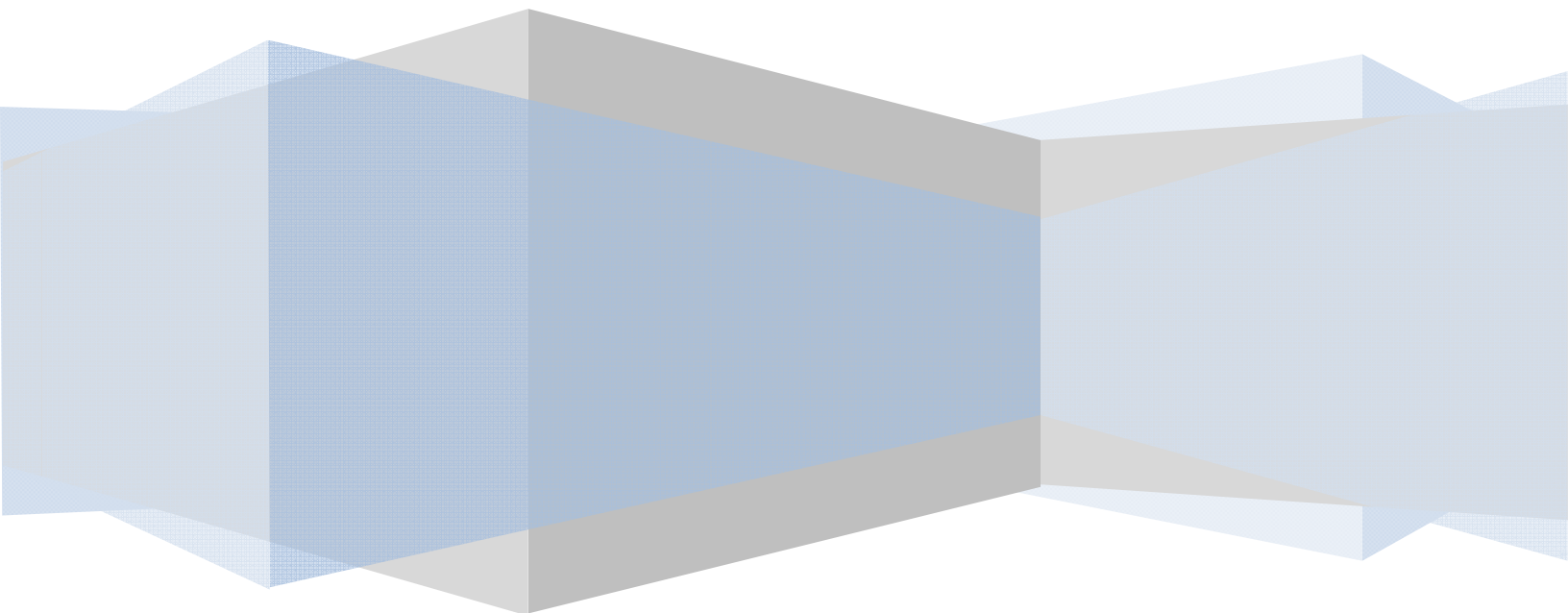


# Second Life

## Learning in a Virtual World

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August 20, 2008



# Learning Styles

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In most modern day colleges you are given two different ways to earn your degree. It is up to the lifestyle of the student that decides which of these will be chosen. Most colleges break down academic studies down into two basic categories. These two categories are on-line and on-site studies.

## On-site Studies

On-site programs consist of an actual school building in which the students attend on a regular basis.

### Benefits to On-site Studies:

- Professor / Student interaction
- Hands on learning
- Over all better communication skills
- Some students understand ideas better by seeing them

### Downfalls to On-site Studies:

- Can conflict with job schedules
- Often times more expensive
- Overcrowding of classrooms
- Some students work better on their own

## Online Studies

Online programs consist of working on your degree at home on your computer through written lectures and reading the text material.

### Benefits to Online Studies:

- Can work around your work schedule
- Work at your own pace
- Less stressful environment
- Often have more time to learn and understand the material

### Downfalls to Online Studies:

- Can get stressful if you procrastinate the work
- Loss of on hand learning
- Lack of communication with professor and students

## Virtual Studies

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Virtual learning gives teachers and students a completely new direction for learning altogether. Similar to the online programs, the teaching is done online through a computer. The big difference is that virtual learning gives a three dimensional community in which students can attend through their computers and never have to leave the house.

### **Benefits to Virtual Studies:**

- Professor / Student interaction at your home
- More visual potential
- Less stressful environment
- Can be fun rather than just sitting in class
- Cheaper for universities

### **Downfalls to Virtual Studies:**

- Computer must meet certain requirements
- Occasional Broadband Lag
- Sometimes conflicts with work schedule

## How does it work?

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The university would first have to purchase a plot of land from *Second Life*. Once the land is purchased, the builder of the faculty's choice would be free to edit the land in any way. Classrooms would be built for its students. Slideshows would be places for a more classroom type feel. Voice chat would be enabled for the professor and the students to be able to converse within the class.

Once the land is completed the only thing left it for the students to create an avatar and customize it however they want. A landmark would be given to the student from the schools land location that allows the student to teleport to the virtual classroom. From here, the teaching would take place just as if it were a real classroom.



Figure 1: Example virtual classroom from Middle Georgia College, Second Life Campus

## Who is participating?

Virtual learning has taken a huge leap into colleges all around the world. Here is a list of a few colleges that have made their presence known in *Second Life*:

- DeVry University
- Middle Georgia College
- Stanford University
- Princeton University
- The Hong Kong Polytechnic University



Figure 3: DeVry University's GSP Program site within *Second Life*

## How much does it cost?

*Second Life* is free as a basic member. As a basic member you are not allowed to own land. This is where students can benefit because the actual program would cost them absolutely nothing. The only money the student would have to spend is the tuition from the university.

As for the university, there would some cost involved because you would need land to house your classroom environment. Owning land requires a premium membership which can be paid in the following options:

Monthly	\$9.95 USD/month
Quarterly	\$7.50 USD/month
Annually	\$6.00 USD/month

In addition to the membership is an initial cost of land, as well as a monthly maintenance fee. The following tables show these costs:

Initial Land Purchase		
Feature	Current Price	
Mainland Auctions	Variable	
Private Region Sales	\$1,000 per region	
Private Region Moves	\$150	
Private Region Transfer	\$100	
Open Space Region Sales	\$250	

Monthly Land Maintenance		
Size (Regions)	Size (Sqm)	Current Price
1/128 <sup>th</sup>	512	\$5 USD/month
1/64 <sup>th</sup>	1,024	\$8 USD/month
1/32 <sup>nd</sup>	2,048	\$15 USD/month
1/16 <sup>th</sup>	4,096	\$25 USD/month
1/8 <sup>th</sup>	8,192	\$40 USD/month
1/4 <sup>th</sup>	16,384	\$75 USD/month
½	32,768	\$125 USD/month
Mainland Region	65,536	\$195 USD/month
Private Region	65,536	\$295 USD/month
Open Space Region	65,536	\$75 USD/month

Figure 2: Current Price Listings (“Pricing List”, 2008)



Figure 4: Georgia Middle College within *Second Life*

## How Do I start?

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If you are interested in this product and want your students and faculty to be able to experience a new learning style as well as be ahead of the game, then visit [www.secondlife.com](http://www.secondlife.com) for further information. This site contains everything you need to kick start the future of learning from your institution. We look forward to having you in our virtual world.

## Conclusion

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After seeing the different style of education, it is clear that on-site education is not always available for some. For those students, a virtual world presents a very unique and interesting way of learning. Students will never be left alone to their studies. With this technology, the student actually has an environment that includes a teacher and students without having to leave the house. Listed below are the benefits you will receive with Second Life:

- Less Space require for classes
- More cost efficient
- Provides a comfortable learning environment
- Gives online classes a more group setting
- Simply much more fun for the students as well as faculty.

## Works Cited

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*Pricing List*. (2008, May 14). Linden Research, Inc. [http://static-secondlife-com.s3.amazonaws.com/corporate/Second Life Pricing List 20080514.pdf](http://static-secondlife-com.s3.amazonaws.com/corporate/Second%20Life%20Pricing%20List%2020080514.pdf)  
Retrieved August 24, 2008 from Website.

## Recommendation

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Linden Labs Inc. will provide one private region at a discounted rate of \$750 dollars from the original price of \$1000. We will also reduce the land maintenance fee of \$295/month to \$250/month for educational purposes. The land will be available within a period of two days after payment has been received. You will still be required the \$9.95 premium membership fee.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, of \_\_\_\_\_, agree to the terms listed above from Linden Labs Inc. After payment of \$750 for the land, \$250 for the monthly maintenance fee, as well as the \$9.95 premium membership fee, Linden Labs Inc. will have the land available for work within a period of two days.