

## *LESSONS LEARNED FROM A DISTANCE LEARNING PHD PROGRAM*

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### ABSTRACT

With the financial support of the Agence universitaire de la francophonie, a team of professors at the Université de Montréal set up a Distance Learning Doctoral Program in Education, with a specialization in ICT. The program offers opportunities to postgraduate students who would otherwise be unable to study abroad. Twenty-one students from eight Western and Central African countries have enrolled to date. This presentation provides a description and analysis of the program and builds on initiatives undertaken at other universities. Guided by previous research findings and conclusions (Wallace, 2003), the faculty have made every effort to ensure a successful and rewarding academic experience through innovative teaching methods, blended learning, and a collaborative approach. The avenues pursued, the choices made, and the lessons learned over several years of guiding graduate students are presented. The benefits of the cohort effect and distance collaboration are addressed, along with problems encountered.

**Michel LEPAGE** is a Professor at the Department of Educational Psychology and Adult Education at the Université de Montréal. Having earned a PhD in Educational Psychology, he serves as Assistant Director for Initial Teacher Training, and he oversees the internships under the Bachelor of Education, Secondary School program. His research interests include teacher internships and professional development. An Associate Researcher at the Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la formation et la profession enseignante (CRIFPE), he is also an Associate Editor of the International Journal of Technologies in Higher Education.

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**Thierry KARSENTI** is Director of the Centre de recherche interuniversitaire sur la formation et la profession enseignante (CRIFPE) (Interuniversity research centre on education and the teaching profession. Besides holding the Canada Research Chair in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in Education, Professor Karsenti is also a Full Professor at the University of Montreal. His field is the Integration of Information and Communication Technology into Teacher Training. Professor Karsenti's research center, the CRIFPE, received the CEA Whitworth Award for Best Education Research Center in Canada from the Canadian Education Association.