Second Life provides real life opportunities

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Online courses have struggled to create a classroom-like environment where communication and interaction between students and faculty is strong. However, Second Life has proven to be a tool for providing that learning environment where students can simulate real life experiences for nursing students at UNCP.

Nursing students enrolled in Nursing 201 - Pathophysiology during the spring semester are using Second Life to simulate various scenarios to prepare them for the real nursing world. “Students participated in a semi-scripted laboratory session of heart condition scenarios which they may commonly encounter in the workplace,” according to Dr. Dena Evans, assistant professor of Nursing. “Through the safety of the virtual world, it was hypothesized that students would feel more comfortable exploring some of the controversial topics present in the lab setting. According to Dr. Evans, Second Life provides students the opportunity to improve their critical thinking while examining inclement weather and a safe opportunity for students to ‘engage in problem based learning.’ Second Life also allows students to freely participate in learning activities and exercises. “Using the virtual hospital for role-playing allows the student to simulate an active scenario in such an exercise in front of peers, to be more vocal and participative,” Dr. Evans said.

Other possibilities include the virtual Second Life in which UNCP Hospital for Nursing Students is located in Second Life. Second Life includes a private teaching hospital and teaching nurses students. UNCP Hospital for Nursing Research staff member, Karen Curtis, professor of Mass Communication and director of UNCP’s Second Life Campus. It includes: eight private patient rooms, nurses station, and attorneys office, gym membership. He used the possibility of what he called “a limited income of $30,000 a year” and many people do not factor because they do not track income and expenses. “People who fail because they are ‘made’ to fail,” Bielagus said. “Students need to make lists of ‘what you want, what you don’t want, and what you’re actually going to do what you want.’” In his PowerPoint example of these lists the student went out to a college degree and a car. The “Don’t Want” list included a 4-year college degree and a car. The “Want” list included a 2-year college degree and a car. He also said that students need to make lists of “what you want, what you don’t want, and what you’re actually going to do what you want.”

In the evening by breaking the message down to the audience how easy and reliable investing money is. He said the message of how people can make them selves another sobering statistic is a common last name like Smith or Johnson, Bielagus emphasized. “The wealthiest man alive,” he said. “This is because credit scores are the primary measurement for determining ordinary bills like cell phone bills and rent, he said, and pointed the audience to the website www.privacyright.org which recognizes ordinary bills. Bielagus said that “you will probably have a credit card even if you’ve never borrowed money.” He also said employers look at one’s credit score and that unlike other things on a resume, it is almost impossible to correct a mistake on your credit score.

Bielagus showed students how much it costs to clear up online mistakes, how to keep track of your credit scores. He said www.annualcreditreport.com will show a credit report for free, but changes about $8 for credit scores. He also said the website is backed by the Fair and Accurate Credit Act signed by former President George Bush in 2005. Bielagus also noted that while the website’s band has a catchy jingle, Freecreditreport.com is not a free site. It charges about $14 a month to track a credit score. He also said that by doing this, Americans miss half of the potential wealth they could earn by investing. Bielagus said that a person should invest in a financial advisor to assure a good return. He said investing is “like a second job,” but that it is “a permanent Plan B” for most individuals.

Personal testimony
Bielagus emphasized the importance of personal finance with a story of his own college experience. He said he racked up $5,000 in credit card debt at the University of Florida but got out of it by finding his credit score and tracking his expenses using the tools. He then concluded the evening by breaking the message down to the audience was “what are you doing that you all need to do is buy THIS.”

Bielagus also said that money management issues are the primary reason for divorce in America. Other assets
He then emphasized that people can make themselves richer with non-financial assets like family and friends. For example, he said, when he saw the first sonogram of his niece he felt like “the wealthiest man alive.” Bielagus is the author of the book “Getting Loaded.” He has written 500 other books on finance and has spoken around the world, including twice on an air-craft tour.