

Dr. Rebecca Bayeck Accepts New Assistant Professor Position

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The new year brought exciting changes to the Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences department with the arrival of Dr. Rebecca Y. Bayeck as a new Assistant Professor.

Dr. Bayeck will teach the undergraduate and graduate courses in areas of learning sciences and instructional technologies, including research methods. She will serve on graduate student committees, advise graduate students, and provide teaching and research opportunities to undergraduate students. She will also be participating in research, publication, grant writing, and other scholarly activities, as well as providing service to the department, college, university, and community.

Dr. Bayeck is excited to interact with scholars in different fields, since her position is interdisciplinary. She wants to expand our understanding of how culture, context, place, and space shape learning, interaction, and design to create inclusive learning environments, moments, and opportunities.

Dr. Bayeck has a dual Ph.D. in Learning Design and Technology and Comparative International Education. She has four master's degrees in instructional technology, human resource development, business administration, and management. She earned her bachelor's degree in foreign languages and civilizations.

She was recently awarded a 2021 Fellowship with the [Library Information Sciences Education and Data Science Integrated Network Group](#) at Drexel University. She has received awards from the [African Studies Association](#), the [Association of Educational Communications and Technology \(AECT\)](#), the College of Education at Pennsylvania State University, and the [Africana Research Center](#) at Pennsylvania State University.

Bayeck's research interests lie at the intersection of learning sciences, educational technology, literacy studies, and the interdisciplinary field of game studies. Within this intersection, she works with digital and analog games, learning and literacies, emerging technologies, and design of inclusive learning spaces and exhibitions. She is also interested in how culture shapes learning and literacy practices in different environments.

Dr. Tataleni I. Asino, an Associate Professor of Educational Technology and director of the Emerging Technology and Creativity Research Lab in the College of Education and Human Sciences at Oklahoma State University, praised Bayeck for her innovative study of ancient and traditional games, such as Owela or Mancala, and how they celebrate and connect to skills valued in modern computational thinking. "In doing so," Asino added, "she has shown that computational thinking skills are not just limited to those who have access to computers."

"She is passionate about working with students and conducting research that has impact in communities that are often ignored," he added.

Dr. Bayeck decided to work at Utah State University due to her past interactions with faculty and the reputation of the institution and department. She was also interested in the combination of instructional design and learning sciences as a springboard for her to engage in interdisciplinary research.

Dr. Andy Walker, department head of Instructional Technology and Learning Sciences, praised Dr. Bayeck's research, particularly her integrative review of video games and learning in South Africa. "Research synthesis is a challenging task that she clearly does well," he said. "It's one thing to accurately represent the findings of these studies; even more important is her contextualization of

those findings with South Africa's history of apartheid. Her deep-seated interest in sociocultural learning theory and understanding people are a consistent theme that will help all of us to learn about each other and grow."

When she is not working, Dr. Rebecca Bayeck likes to listen to music, go on walks, watch movies, and read. If she could give any advice to people, she would say to be openminded, flexible, and happy.