

## ARIS

### Scenario

Professor Becker is teaching an introductory art course focusing on a local, nationally renowned sculptor. Previously, it has been difficult for professor Becker to make the students visit and interact with the different art pieces on display on the college campus. However, by incorporating the *Augmented Reality for Interactive Storytelling* (ARIS) editor and iOS app into his course he is able to make his assignments more interactive and engaging for the students. One of professor Becker's assignments requires the students to pick three statues or sculptures on campus to visit and record their thoughts and feelings about. Through ARIS, professor Becker has placed location-based triggers by each art piece that trigger when students walk up to it. The triggers provide the students with information about the piece and also prompts them to carry out certain tasks, such as to record their impressions and feeling in the application notebook by writing them down or recording audio or video. After a student has visited the three required art pieces, ARIS automatically triggers their next assignment, which is to write a paper on the artist, with the help of their recorded notes.

Another project that has helped engage his students in research on the local artist has them create a thematic tour of art pieces on campus. The students pick a theme and several art pieces that fit the theme. They then use ARIS to plot them on a map and research the individual pieces. The information they find is then incorporated into a tour that visitors to campus may take. As the visitors follow the map and approach the individual art pieces information compiled and edited by the students is presented on the mobile device screen. The information is accompanied by suggestions for further reading and tasks that the visitors can do to interact more with each art piece.

All in all Professor Becker has found that by using ARIS he is able to create more engaging and interactive learning experiences for the students who are able to use their mobile devices to take better, more detailed notes for the assignments.

### 1. What is it?

ARIS is a free online platform that allows you to create educational experiences such as mobile games, tours and interactive stories that can be accessed on iOS mobile devices.

### 2. How does it work?

The instructor of a course uses the online, browser-based editor to put together create interactive experiences where information can be released to students based on physical locations, the performance of specific tasks, and interaction with virtual characters. Students access the games or learning experiences through a dedicated app on their iOS devices.

### 3. Who's doing it?

ARIS was created by David Gagnon, an instructional designer at University of Wisconsin, Madison together with Kurt Squire, an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the Educational Communications and Technology division of Curriculum and Instruction. Since 2010 different educators around the country have experimented with ARIS. For example, at the University of New Mexico students in a second-year Spanish class used it to learn Spanish by way of solving a fictional murder mystery set in a local Spanish-speaking neighborhood and assistant professor Chris Holden uses ARIS to create educational games and help students learn by designing interactive stories, games, and tours tied to geographical locations. Likewise, Eric Watkins, associate professor in the Department of Horticultural Science; College of Food, Agricultural, and Natural Resource Sciences at University of Minnesota has used it in a horticulture course.

### 4. Why is it significant?

ARIS allows instructors to design interactive, location-based learning experiences for students' mobile devices. This enables students to engage in new forms of learning experiences that can be more engaging and realistic. IT also supports the use of student mobile devices for learning purposes and allows them to gather data through written notes,

photographs, and audio and video recordings – all within the ARIS mobile app. The app also allows for sharing of notes so that students may collaborate on learning tasks and data collection.

## 5. What are the downsides?

The ARIS project website does not list any privacy policy or legal terms of use or service. Consequently, you cannot expect uninterrupted access to the ARIS editor or mobile app and any work you create on their site may not be protected, just like there is not guarantee against data being lost in the event of system problems.

ARIS may not work with different screen reader technologies and full functionality cannot be guaranteed. Instructors should always keep accessibility issues in mind when using new online tools like this in their classroom. In case of any doubts or concerns, please contact the relevant offices on campus for advice and assistance.

## 6. Where is it going?

The use of augmented reality is on the rise and more and more instructors and institutions are experimenting with its use for educational purposes. However, typical augmented reality setups like Oculus Rift or Google Glass are often expensive and/or cumbersome to use and develop educational materials for. ARIS provides a more user friendly editor that most instructors will be able to master in a relatively short time while providing a way for students to experience the augmented reality on a standard mobile device that many already own. This makes ARIS more accessible to both teachers and learners.

## 7. What are the implications for teaching and learning?

With ARIS, instructors can create augmented reality learning experiences that involve physical locations in the local community while having students gather and process their own data. This can help make learning experiences more involving and interesting for students while enabling learning activities that cannot easily be created within the confines of a traditional classroom.

## 8. Where can I find out more?

Visit the ARIS website at [www.arisgames.org](http://www.arisgames.org). In the [Press](#) section of the website, there are links to various online articles and stories about the educational use of ARIS.

You may also contact Jacob E. Larsen ([jlarsen@iastate.edu](mailto:jlarsen@iastate.edu)) in IT Services to discuss how ARIS can be used with your students.

Additional [legal information](#).

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