MICHELLE SIMMS, PHD, MFA

Storyteller • Educator • Mentor
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RESEARCH INTERESTS

- Structure and expression of Story across entertainment media
- Expansion of Entertainment-Education methodology for academic concept attainment
- Different-abilities and the Arts
- Filmmaking-as-performance

EXPERIENCE HIGHLIGHTS

- University educator in (1) film studies, (2) film & television production, (3) story arts
- Professional film and television industry experience
- Former National Science Foundation Graduate K-12 Teaching Fellow
- Curriculum developer
- Writer, Producer, Director

EDUCATION

Certificate in Producing (in progress), UCLA Extension. Continuing education under notable industry professionals.

Master of Fine Arts, Cinema-Television, Regent University, 2015. Dual focus: Directing and Producing. Thesis film: *Get Plaid!* A live-action adaptation of the comic book series *The Plaid Avenger.*

Doctor of Philosophy, Curriculum & Instruction, Texas A&M University, 2011.
Honor Society Membership: Delta Kappa Pi
Committee Co-chairs: B. Stephen Carpenter (now Dean of the College of Arts and Architecture and Professor of Art Education and African American Studies at Penn State) and Tim McLaughlin (now Dean, School of Performance, Visualization & Fine Arts, Texas A&M University)
Dissertation: "The development of an academically-based entertainment-education (ABEE) model: Co-opting behavioral change efficacy of Entertainment-Education for academic learning targeting the societal landscape of U.S. geographic illiteracy"

Master of Science, Geography, Texas A&M University, 2007.
Honor Society Membership: Gamma Theta Upsilon
Focus: Integration of geospatial technology into inquiry-based pedagogy
Non-Thesis Project: "Using Google Earth as a visual GIS"

Master of Agriculture, Natural Resources Development, Texas A&M University, 1995.
Honor Society Memberships: Gamma Sigma Delta (Agriculture), Gamma Theta Upsilon (Geography). Focus: Geographic Information Systems.

Bachelor of Science, Geography, Texas A&M University.

2018 - present: **Lecturer, Film Studies Program**, School of Performance, Visualization & Fine Arts (PVFA) (moved from Department of Performance Studies in September 2022), Texas A&M University.

Primary teaching assignments **(4/4 load):**
- Large sections of Introduction to **Film Analysis** (200-300 students per semester). This class explores film as a language to understand the deeper ways that film elements (beyond dialogue) shape and perform a story.
- **Special Topics**. Customized courses in my areas of specialization in story performance including writing, directing, and producing.

Other courses taught:
- **Special Topics: Story for the Screen** (30+ students per semester): Introduction to story structure and performance in film, animation, and games.
- **Performance and Technology**: Investigates the technique and performance of the film camera as primary narrator of the story.
- **Seminar in Performance Theory** (cross-listed with Advanced Film): Investigating how story is expressed and shaped by the medium in which it is performed including film, stage, dance, fight chorography, super story/transmedia, photography, music, non-linear story of hyper-drama and games, and landscapes.
- **Film History**: Survey of the evolution of film and the causational forces shaping the films we have today.
- **Special Topics – The SXSW Experience**: Leveraging South by Southwest Conference and Festival attendance and participation to meet individual academic and career goals.
- **Directed Studies**: Customized mentorship for students interested in filmmaking and careers in the film industry. Topic interests to date include animation producing and directing, video production, short film writing, directing, and producing, and academic analysis of *The Haunting of Hill House*. **Selected student accomplishments**:
  - Sloane Veronico: *Before Dogs Could Die*, Best Short Film, *Artfest 2023* (Texas A&M) and Winner, *Fresh Forward 2023* (Texas A&M).
  - Olivia Parker: Accepted to MFA program.
  - Audrey Zane: Accepted to MFA in creative producing program.

Service:
- **Board member**, Spectrum in Aggieland Advisory Board at Texas A&M University. Invited to join December 4, 2023.
- **Faculty Advisor, Aggie Arthouse:** Mentoring student leadership for the organization recognized by Texas A&M University in fall 2023.
- **Lead, Film & Television faculty cluster (17 members):** Wrote course syllabi for new 18 credit hour minor in Film Production for the PVFA.
- **Co-Lead, Different-Abilities and the Arts faculty cluster (5 members):** Faculty organized around efforts to create space for artists with different-abilities.
- **Mentor, Story in animation -- for graduate thesis film:** Mentoring of a graduate student developing an animated short film.
- **Mentor, Aggie ACHIEVE program student:** Mentoring a student interested in becoming a film director, focusing on story structure, scriptwriting, and storyboarding.
- **FIRST Faculty Mentor:** Available to first generation college students.

Adjunct Professor, Regent University
  School of Communication and the Arts (graduate):
  - COMM Seminar: Entertainment-Education Story and Structure
  - Special Topics: Preparing Future Faculty

  School of Arts and Science (undergraduate):
  - Producing for Television
  - Post-production Process (editing using Adobe Premiere Pro)
  - Cross-cultural Communication

TEXAS A&M UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Film Production Minor developer: Wrote course syllabi for 8 of the 12 courses including: FLMP 200 **Film Language and Performance**, FLMP 210 **Story for the Screen**, FLMP 215 **Intro to Film Production**, FLMP 259 **Practicum**, FLMP 315 **Cinematography & Lighting**, FLMP 320 **Editing Narrative Film**, FLMP 497 **Capstone**.

FILM 489 **Special Topics: Story for Radio Theater/Podcast**: Writing and producing audio drama for broadcast or streaming. Working in conjunction with Acting and Sound Design classes, students create a live public performance of a long-form radio drama.

FILM/VIST 489 **Special Topics: Story for the Screen**: Introduction to writing for story performance driven by character, emotion, and structure through film, animation, and games. Students gain current industry exposure through a two-week session with a working screenwriter.

PERF 457 **Performance & Technology** (cross-listed with FILM 489 **Special Topics: Performance & Technology**) Investigate the technique and performance of the film camera as primary narrator and performer of the story.

PERF 460 **Seminar in Performance Theory** (cross-listed with FILM/ENGL 351 **Advanced Film**): Investigating how story is expressed and shaped by the medium in which it is performed including film, stage, dance, fight chorography, super story/transmedia, photography, music, garden landscapes, and non-linear story of hyper-drama and games.

FILM 489 **Special Topics: The SXSW Experience**: Leveraging South by Southwest Conference and Festival attendance and participation to meet individual academic and career goals.

FILM/ENGL 251 **Introduction to Film Analysis**: Develops expertise through decoding visual and auditory grammar components to understand the deeper ways film shapes and performs the story.

FILM 299 **Film History**: Survey of the evolution of film and the causational forces shaping the films we have today.

FILM 485 **Directed Studies**: Customized mentorship for students interested in filmmaking and careers in the film industry. Topic interests to date include animation producing and directing, video production, short film writing, directing, and producing, and academic analysis of *The Haunting of Hill House*.

REGENT UNIVERSITY GRADUATE COURSE DEVELOPMENT

COMM Seminar: **Entertainment-Education Story and Structure**: Developing film and television series designed to create a social or educational change in the viewer.

Special Topics: **Preparing Future Faculty**: Professional development for graduate students preparing for faculty careers.

REGENT UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DEVELOPMENT

Producing for Television: Write and produce a five-minute segment for multi-camera production. Taught in partnership with Television Studio Production class.

Post-production Process: Non-linear editing theory and techniques for narrative film.

CREATIVE WORKS AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

PI, "Apprenticeship as a College Arts-based Curriculum Intervention", Texas A&M University, Spring 2024. Investigate the impact on student learning efficacy of an embedded two week in-class learning experience with a working screenwriter to simulate a "writer's room" for story and script development in the SP TP: STORY FOR THE SCREEN class. **Grant: $6014** awarded through the AVPA Curricular Arts Enhancement Grant program at Texas A&M University.

Founding Director, **36 HOUR SCREENPLAY JAM**, Texas A&M University, March 2024. Inaugural competition for student teams to write a short film based on a mystery prompt with celebrity judge Paul Guyot (*Leverage, The Librarians, NCIS: New Orleans, Judging Amy*).

Guest Speaker, PERF 301: PERFORMANCE IN WORLD CULTURES, Texas A&M University, September 8, 2023. Discussing anatomy and structure of story.

Faculty host, Textbook funding for FILM/VIZA 489: SP TP STORY FOR THE SCREEN students, Texas A&M University, Fall 2023. **Grants totaling $420** awarded from Visualization Sciences program and Film Studies program to purchase textbook used for course.

Artist, "Modern Geographer" (digital collage on canvas), *School of Performance, Visualization & Fine Arts Faculty Biennial Art Show.* J Wayne Stark Galleries, Texas A&M University, March 23–May 14, 2023.

Faculty host for guest artist Joel McCrary. Texas A&M University, February 28-29, 2023. Coordinator of artist visit to work with PERF 489: SP TP: IMPROV class and to deliver PVFA Workshop "Improv Story Building with Joel McCrary". **Grants totaling $4685** awarded from Performance Studies Program and School of Performance, Visualization & Fine Arts Course Enhancement Fund.

Co-PI, "Integrating *The Improvaneer Method* as a Curricular Intervention Impacting Abled and Disabled Communities", Texas A&M University, 2022-2023. Using The Improvaneer Method® artist performance and curriculum, we address the paucity of performance opportunities accessible for the campus Aggie ACHIEVE and local disability communities while enhancing the

curriculum of Aggie ACHIEVE and Performance Studies majors. This project is planned to be extended through PI certification in The Improvaneer Method and delivery of workshops for three additional years. **Grants totaling $9,700** awarded from the Academy for the Visual and Performing Arts (Texas A&M University), Intercultural Performance Series (Dept of Performance Studies), and Curriculum Enhancement Funds (Dept of Performance Studies).

Graduate Research Assistant, Department of Teaching, Learning, & Culture, Texas A&M University, 2010-11. <u>Project</u>: IRB-compliant focus groups for understanding communication efficacy of animated simulation of classroom management for pre-service teacher training.

Graduate Research Assistant, Texas A&M University Center for the Integration of Research, Teaching, and Learning (TAMU-CIRTL), 2007-09. <u>Project</u>: Developing university-wide future-faculty education programs targeting STEM graduate students. Establishing member of national network of universities funded by the National Science Foundation.

National Science Foundation Graduate K-12 Teaching Fellow – Advancing Geospatial Skills in Science and Social Science (AGSSS), Department of Geography, Texas A&M University, 2005-07. <u>Project</u>: Developing spatial thinking skills in students and training K-12 teachers in curriculum enhancements using virtual globes and geographic information systems.

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GRANT AWARDS
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2023
$**6014** Academy of Visual and Performance Arts - Curricular Arts Enhancement, Texas A&M University. "Apprenticeship as a College Arts-based Curriculum Intervention".

$**420** Performance Studies Program and PVFA Curriculum Enhancement Fund, Texas A&M University. Textbook purchase for Story for the Screen classes.

$**4685** Performance Studies Program and PVFA Curricular Enhancement Fund, Texas A&M University. Campus artist visits by Joel McCrary (actor/writer) and Shun Lee Fong (actor and Greenhouse Art & Media CEO).

2022
$**9785** Academy of Visual and Performance Arts - Curricular Arts Enhancement, Performance Studies Curricular Enhancement Funds, and Performance Studies Intercultural Performance Series Fund, Texas A&M University. "Integrating *The Improvaneer Method* as a Curricular Intervention Impacting Abled and Disabled Communities". Co-PI with Anne Quackenbush.

2010
$**500** Department of Teaching, Learning, & Culture Graduate Student Research and Presentation Grant, Texas A&M University.

$**800** Department of Teaching, Learning, & Culture Graduate Student Dissertation Research Support Grant, Texas A&M University.

$**500** Office of Graduate Studies Graduate Student Research and Presentation Grant, Texas A&M University.

Simms, M., and Quackenbush, A. (2023). *Using the culture of improv to power college classrooms structured as Learning Communities*. Transformational Teaching and Learning Conference. Texas A&M University. College Station, Texas, May 3-4, 2023.

Simms, M. (2023). *Me, myself, and (the camera) eye*. PVFA Research & Creative Works Day. Texas A&M University. College Station, Texas, February 1, 2023.

Simms, M, and Quackenbush, A. (2022 & 2023). Aggie ACHIEVE students perform improv using The Improvaneer Method (workshops and public performances). News article.

Simms, M., and Wilson, R. (2021). *Leveraging a philanthropic ecosystem to reach the next generation of engineers*. Texas Professional Engineers. Corsicana, Texas, September 17, 2021.

Simms, M., and L.M. Burlbaw (2018). *A sign of the times: The Project House and TAMC Aggies*. 2018 Annual Conference of the Central Texas Historical Association. Round Rock, Texas, April 27-28, 2018.

Simms, M. (2011). *The development of an academically-based entertainment-education (ABEE) model: Co-opting behavioral change efficacy of entertainment-education for academic learning targeting the societal landscape of U.S. geographic illiteracy,* Dissertation, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX.

Simms, M., & Carpenter, B. S. (2010). Putting the world together: Virtual globes and the changing nature of (digital) global representations. In E. M. Delacruz, A. Arnold, A. Kuo & M. Parsons (Eds.), *Globalization, Art, and Education* (pp. 135-141). Reston, VA: National Art Education Association.

Simms, M., Smith, D., McLaughlin, T., and Brown, I. (accepted 2010). *Stylized vs. simplified graphics: Differences in viewers' perception of simulated actions in instructional vignettes*. Peer reviewed paper for the 2011 AERA Annual Meeting, New Orleans, Louisiana, April 8-12, 2011.

Simms, M. (2010). *Developing educational outreach programs using academically-based Entertainment-Education (ABEE) methodology: Leveraging the power of the sports franchise brand to empower education*. Paper presented at the Sports and Society 2010 conference: "A Mirror of Our Culture: Sport and Society in America", De Pere, Wisconsin, May 26-28, 2010.

Simms, M. *Using Google Earth as an analogy*. Paper presented at the Association of American Geographers Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, April 14-18, 2010.

Simms, M., Woods, M. N., and L. M. Burlbaw. *A sign of the times: The Project House and TAMC Aggies*. Paper presented at 31st MidAmerica Conference on History, Norman, OK., October 1-3, 2009.

Carreker, S., Chien, C.-F., Reiss, V., Rothberg, A., Sheror, E., **Simms, M.**, et al. (Artists). (2009). *Proactive retrospective: Exploring the past and the future to guide the present* [interactive art installation].

Daehnke, H., **Simms, M.**, Viall, K., Li, X., Seeve, C., Kim, J., Harvey, O., and Reiss, V. *Preparing future faculty through a student-led organization: The GTA Model*. CIRTL Forum 2008: Aligning the Preparation of Graduate Students for STEM Early Faculty Careers, Madison, WI, June 16-17, 2008.

Simms, M., Kincaid, J., Martinez, A., Prouhet, T., and Williams, N. *Profiles in spatial literacy: How young Americans think spatially*. National Science Foundation Graduate K12 Conference, Washington, DC, March 9-11, 2007.

Simms, M. and Williams, N. 2007. Three-dimensional map of Allegheny National Park watershed, In Seagraves, R., Hughes, S., and Price, J. *Operation W.A.T.E.R.: Dr. Thistle Goes Underground*. Junior Master Gardener Program, Texas Cooperative Extension, Texas A&M University. (Invited submission).

Simms, M. and Bednarz, R. 2006. *The Mysterious Monarch Butterfly* activity featured on the My World GIS: Activity Center website http://www.myworldgis.org/activities (June 25, 2007). (Invited submission).

White, K.L. and **Simms, M**. 1993. Geographic Information Systems as an educational tool, *Journal of Geography* 92(2): 81-85.

Simms, M., Rowell, G., and Makela, M. 1992. The use of GIS in simulations of biological population dynamics. (Abstract). *American Bee Journal* 132 (12): 814. P

PROFESSIONAL FILM AND TELEVISION CREDITS

FantomWorks (Velocity Network, Season four), **Assistant Story Producer**, New Dominion Pictures, 2017.

The Great Christmas Light Fight (ABC Network, Episode 4.1), **Production Assistant**, Fremantle, 2016.

In-Lawfully Yours (feature film), **Art Department Coordinator**, Virginia FilmWorks/Home Theater Productions, 2016.

KAMU Magazine with Sharon Colson (1999 season), **Floor Director**, PBS affiliate KAMU-TV at Texas A&M University.

PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Member, **FWD-DOC: Filmmakers with Disabilities.**
- Member, **Greenhouse Arts & Media**.
- Member, **Social Impact Entertainment (SIE) Society**.
- Member, **University Film & Video Association**.