

**Article**

**Gamification: The Ash-fall Effect**  
By Corey Minatani

Here at Larch, the residents are going through an adventure. There are quests. There is experience points (XP) awarded. People are getting character points (CP). The Game-master (herein known as Instructor) Ashton is scribing positive actions (i.e. positive behavior logs) in his Hall of Records of Good Deeds. By the way, Instructor Ashton also has been known to scribe in his Hall of Records of Bad Deeds as well. What is going on here? Some sort of role-playing game such as the online World of Warcraft or the dice game Dungeons and Dragons? Not quite. We're talking about Small Business Entrepreneurship with Clark College. Intrigued? I thought so....

While many people here know Mr. Ashton as the "go-to" guy about computer problems here at the compound.

What you may not know is that Mr. Ashton likes to innovate in very specialized areas of learning development as it applies to business entrepreneurship, life skills computing, and job seeking skills courses under the direction of Mr. Helmer for Clark College. During the past summer, he instituted a process that is the rave called Gamification into his teaching program. This mixture of professional teaching, expecting professional behavior, drawing students into complex business concepts, and building up student's confidence in various skills to include working with Microsoft Office, I call the "Ash-fall effect." The Ash-fall effect recently added Gamification to the process teaching method of Mr. Ashton with tremendous success.

Having returned from a national conference on teaching methodology, Mr. Ashton was asked to give his insights into innovation he applies here with the residents at Larch. Mr. Ashton told his students that "...the things you are doing this quarter are getting attention nationwide" (Ashton, 2018). Again, according to Ashton, the innovations taught at LCC Clark College are changing the way people look at education (Ashton, 2018). What does this mean for all of us? We're getting the chance to partake in some of the most up-to-date technological innovations in education!

So, what exactly is Instructor Ash-

Total XP	Quest XP	Character Points (CP)	Behavior Logs
1000 XP (Week 1)	50 XP x 1 (Easy)	10 (total XP x 1.05)	Positive
1000 XP (Week 2)	125 XP x 1 (Easy)	20 (total XP x 1.10)	Negative
1000 XP (Week 3)	250 XP x 3 (Medium)	30 (total XP x 1.15)	
1000 XP (Week 4)	375 XP x 3 (Medium)	40 (total XP x 1.20)	
1000 XP (Week 5)	500 XP x 1 (Hard)	50 (total XP x 1.25)	
1000 XP (Week 6)	675 XP x 1 (Hard)		
1000 XP (Week 7)	700 XP x 1 (Hard)		
1000 XP (Week 8)			

ton doing that is so innovative? For starters, he's using a Gamification model of instruction. What that means is that the college class is geared very much like a computer video game you might have on your media players. This particular teaching model uses a role-playing style genre to break down parts of the class to give the student more freedom of choice on the kinds of assignments they do (easy, medium, or hard levels), choice of when they do the assignments, flexibility on how they wish to learn (e.g. essay, definitions, projects, etc.), and the ability to plan how much they want to learn by gaining experience points (XP). Knowing how much XP you need to get to the next level is more fun for the student than a simple syllabus denoting one's as-

signments for the week. Each level is a week or two worth of work. In short, the mindset is changed from a dull, boring class into a fast-paced, exciting, and challenging learning atmosphere! Many of the students were actually challenging themselves and their fellow students, who would get the most XP, and thus, the higher grade. Many of these students were now able to see a familiar way to get to the treasure of the quest or adventure: an A grade! Being a long-time college student, I was easily out-paced by several students in the BUS 101 and MGMT 101 course. Whatever Instructor Ashton is doing, it is working! That's why I simply call

the phenomenon, "The Ash-fall Effect." Like volcanic ash drifting in the sky waiting to settle, this is how I see Mr. Ashton's teaching method. Never harsh or forceful, but encouraging and professional, Ashton's students are striving beyond the average student by getting amazing

results in the learning of material in the course.

The break down for the course goes something like this:

Each week, students have a quest they must complete worth 1000 XP. As one can see from the second column (Quest XP), the students have multiple ways to obtain that 1000 XP. Students can do one Hard quest worth 675 or 700 XP, then do one Easy worth 50 XP, and finish up with one Medium worth 250 XP! At the end of the quarter, depending upon the number of Character Points (CP) built up, they can gain an addition 5-25% points in extra credit! CP is awarded for

**Continued on page 4**

# Article

## continued from page 3 Gamification: The Ash-fall Effect

things such as professional behavior, neat/organized workstation, team/class exceptional teamwork, and assisting the instructor after class. Conversely, CP can be lost by the opposite actions such as rude behavior, cussing, leaving early or not showing up at all to class. Take up the challenge with Instructor Ashton and Clark College's Small Business Entrepreneurship Certificate Program

here at Larch. Simply kiosk your counselor for a referral for the program! Good luck on your quest!

***“There is always a way! If the desire be coupled with courage”***  
~ Conan the Barbarian

### Works Cited

Ashton, M. (2018, September 13). MGMT 101x Class. (C. Minatani, Interviewer)

Howard, R. E. (n.d). Two Stories of Conan. Audio file downloaded from Jpay.com.

