Varied Learning   Analyzing and Feedback   Scaffolding and Reflecting

Where	University of Central Florida
Who	Dr. Lisa Dieker, Professor and Lockheed Martin Eminent Scholar, Developer of TeachLivE™
What	TeachLivE™, an avatar-based learning platform, is used in more than 80 teacher preparation programs across the United States and internationally with both general and special education preservice and inservice teachers. Dr. Dieker developed the program in conjunction with her colleagues Michael Hynes and Charles Hughes at UCF.
Purpose	TeachLivE™ provides teachers with the opportunity to practice teaching content and positive behavior strategies within a virtual environment before applying them with students in the classroom environment. In this mixed-reality environment, teacher educators have the ability to personalize candidates' instructional experience with specific content based on individual candidates' learning needs. Teacher educators can adjust the number of students that the candidate is teaching, the students' characteristics, and the instructional content area that is taught. The platform addresses a wide range of content areas, grade levels, and situations, from instruction in middle school science to addressing a crisis prevention situation, or providing instruction to a small group of preschool students with autism.
Description	TeachLivE™ is a practice-based approach that can be used with teachers across their careers. In addition, it can be used to provide teachers with opportunities to plan and teach collaboratively. At UCF, faculty provide opportunities for candidates to practice teaching with TeachLivE™ in co-teaching pairs and triads, providing them opportunities to practice planning and teaching collaboratively and to observe their peers' instruction.

Teacher educators who use the TeachLivE™ virtual simulation environment can employ a variety of strategies to model effective techniques and routines for teacher candidates. One approach is to provide candidates with opportunities to observe more experienced educators teach within the mixed-reality environment.

The After-Action Review (AAR) that follows teaching in the simulator is critical to supporting candidates as they integrated practiced skills within authentic classroom instructional settings, and as they work toward improving student achievement. Teacher educators using TeachLivE™ provide feedback during AAR in a variety of formats. At UCF, some candidates are afforded opportunities to reflect on the effectiveness of their instruction in meeting their students' learning needs. This reflection is first done by the candidates independently, is sometimes done through journaling, and is later discussed with faculty.

Other teacher educators provide candidates with virtual feedback on their teaching. In some instances, faculty used an observation protocol (e.g., Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching or Marzano's Teacher Evaluation Model), providing feedback on specific behaviors (e.g., wait time, specific praise, avatar talk versus teacher talk time, and so forth). Some teacher educators sit in the environment with their candidates, observing and providing "just-in-time" feedback.

Impact The simulated teaching environment provides an intensified practice experience for candidates. Simulation research demonstrates that in as few as 3 minutes—with the maximum time in the simulator typically being around 10 minutes—candidates have the ability to master one discrete skill. UCF's research team has found that in four 10-minute sessions, they can change a targeted behavior, and this change transfers back to the "real" classroom. This short, intensive use of the simulator is important for teacher educators to remember when they are using simulation as a practice-based approach with teacher candidates.