constructivist notion that learning deepens when students make knowledge visible through public products. In the projects clustered here, student authorship takes place in various multimedia genres of the early twenty-first century, including digital stories and digital histories, Web sites and PowerPoint essays, historically-oriented music videos, electronic portfolios and other historical and cultural narratives. The emergent pedagogies explored by these scholar-teachers involve multiple skills, points of view, and collaborative activities (including peer critique). For example, Patricia O'Conner had her Appalachian literature students at Georgetown University create Web pages about Dorothy Allison's *Bastard Out of Carolina*, annotating particular phrases and creating links to historical sources and images, while she investigated the ways that "associative thinking" shaped students' ability to make nuanced speculations about literary texts. Meanwhile, Tracey Weis at Pennsylvania's Millersville University and several faculty at California State University at Monterey Bay gathered evidence on the cognitive and emotional impact of student construction of short interpretative "films," or what we came to call "digital stories." Examining the qualities of student learning evidenced through such assignments, these projects spotlight issues of assessment and the need to move beyond the narrowly cognitive quiz and the critical research essay to find ways to value creativity, design, affect, and new modes of expressive complexity. (For sample projects, see http://cndls.georgetown.edu/crossroads/vkp/themes/poster_showcase_writing.htm)

Naturally, these three areas of classroom practice—critically engaging primary sources, social dialogue, and multimedia authorship—converged in all kinds of ways. Some of the richest and most intriguing projects engaged students in a scaffolded process of collaborative research and writing, laying the groundwork for multimedia-enhanced performances of their learning. Our fluid categories were defined and redefined by the creativity of our faculty as they experimented within them.

The key to faculty innovations in VKP was not merely trying new teaching strategies but looking closely at the artifacts of student work that emerged from them, not only in traditional summative products such as student writing, but in new kinds of artifacts that captured the intermediate and developmental moments along the way. What did these artifacts look like? They included video evidence of students working in pairs on inquiry questions, as well as student-generated Web archives and research logs; they included careful analysis of discussion threads in online spaces and student reflections on collaborative work; they included not only new forms of multimedia storytelling but evidence of their authoring process through interviews and post-production reflections about their intentions and their learning. One of the consequences emerging from these new forms of evidence was that, as faculty looked more closely and systematically at evidence of learning processes, those processes started to look more complex than ever. The impact of transparency, at least at first, seemed to be complexity, which can be unsettling in many ways.

**Pieces of Insight**

This phenomenon had a significant impact on the kinds of findings and claims that emerged from this work. We set out looking for answers ("what is the impact of technology on learning?") and what we mostly found were limited claims about impact, new ways of looking at student learning, and often dynamic new questions. In fact, the VKP projects followed a pattern typical in faculty inquiry. Whatever the question that initiates the inquiry, it often changes and deepens into something else. For example, Lynne Adrian (University of Alabama) started off investigating the role of personal response systems ("clickers") in a large enrollment Humanities course to see if the use of concept questions would increase student engagement, but was soon led to reflect much more interestingly on the purpose of questions in class and the very nature of the questions she had been asking for more than twenty years. Similarly, Joe Ugoetz (Borough of Manhattan Community College), in an early inquiry, hoped to study the benefits of a free-form discussion space in an online literature course, but got frustrated because the students would frequently digress and stray off topic; finally it occurred to him that the really interesting inquiry lay in learning more about the nature of digressions themselves, considering which were productive and which were not. The changing nature of questions, and the limited nature of claims, is not a flaw of faculty inquiry but its very nature. John Seely Brown describes the inevitable way that we build knowledge around teaching: "We collect small fragments of data and struggle to capture context from which this data was extracted, but it is a slow process. Context is sufficiently nuanced that complete characterizations of it are extremely difficult. As a result, education experiments are seldom definitive, and best practices are, at best, rendered in snapshots for others to interpret."5

Here is where the power of collaborative inquiry came into play. That is, what emerged from each individual classroom project was a piece of insight, a unique local and limited vision of the relationship between teaching and learning that yet contributed to some larger aggregated picture. We had, in the microcosm of the Visible Knowledge Project, created our own "teaching commons" in which individual faculty insights pooled together into larger meaningful patterns.6 Each of these snapshots is interesting in itself; together, they composite into something larger and significant. What follows below is our effort at putting together the snapshots to create a composite image in which we recognize new patterns of learning and implications for practice.

**A Picture of New Learning: Cross-Cutting Findings**

Collectively, what emerged from this work was an expansive picture of learning. Although we started out with questions about technology, early on it became clear
that the questions were no longer merely about the “impact of tools” on learning: the emergent findings compelled us to confront the very nature of what we recognized as learning, which in turn fed back into what we were looking for in our teaching. Over the years, faculty experienced iterative cycles of innovation in their teaching practice, of reflection on an increasingly expansive range of student learning, and of experimentation shaped by the deepening complexity (and at times befuddlement) that emerged from trying to read the evidence of that learning. From this spiral of activity developed a research framework with broad implications for the now-emergent Web 2.0 technologies. We have come to articulate this range of cross-cutting findings under the headings of three types of learning: adaptive, embodied, and socially situated. Briefly, by adaptive learning we mean the skills and dispositions that students acquire which enable them to be flexible and innovative with their knowledge, what David Perkins calls a “flexible performance capability.” An emphasis on adaptive capacities in student learning emerged naturally from our foundational focus on visible intermediate processes. What became visible were the intermediate intellectual moves that students make in trying to work with difficult cultural materials or ideas, illuminating how novice learners progress toward expertise or expert-like thinking in these contexts.

Our recognition of the embodied nature of learning emerged from this increased attention to intermediate processes—the varied forms of invention, judgment, reflection—when we realized that we were no longer accounting for simply cognitive activities. Many manifestations of the affective dimension of learning opened up in this intermediate space informed by new media, whether it was the way that students drew on their personal experience in social dialogue spaces, or the sensual and emotional dimensions of working with multimedia representations of history and culture. In these intermediate spaces, dimensions of affect such as motivation and confidence loomed large as well. We have come to think of this expansive range of learning as embodied, in that it pointed us to the ways that knowledge is experienced through the body as well as the mind, and how intellectual and cognitive thinking are embodied by whole learners and scholars.

Inasmuch as this new learning is embodied, similarly is it socially situated. Influenced by the range of work on situated learning, communities of practice, and participatory learning, our work with new technologies continuously brought us to see the impact new forms of engagement through media had on the students’ relative stance to learning. This effect was not merely a sense of heightened interest due to the novelty of new forms of social learning. Rather, what we were seeing was evidence of the ways that multimedia authoring, for example, constructed for students a salient sense of audience and public accountability for their work; this, in turn, had an impact on nearly every aspect of the authoring process—visible in the smallest and largest compositional decisions. The socially situated nature of learning became a summative value, capturing what Seely Brown calls “learning to be,” beyond mere knowledge acquisition to a way of thinking, acting, and a sense of identity.

These three ways of looking at pedagogies—as adaptive, embodied, and socially situated—together help constitute a composite portrait of new learning. Each helps us focus on a different dimension of complex learning processes: adaptive pedagogies emphasizing the developmental stages linking learning to disciplines; embodied pedagogies focusing on how the whole person as learner engages in learning; and socially situated learning focusing on the role of context and audience. In this sense, the dimensions are overlapping and reinforcing in any particular set of practices. For example, consider Patricia O’Connor’s work making use of Web authoring tools to lead students to engage in close reading of print fiction. Calling the activity “hypertextification,” O’Connor asks students to make increasingly sophisticated “associational” connections, to move from novice reading encounters with texts to more expert ones. She wants them to experience “associational thinking” on multiple levels, from the personal and emotional to the definitional and critical. Ultimately, students’ ability to engage fully along a continuum of expert practice is shaped by their knowledge that their Web pages will be public, and their presentations to their peers a social act. All three key dimensions are in play in her teaching practices, as in so many of the case studies coming out ofVKP.

Nevertheless, we believe it is a valuable exercise to slow down and look closely at each of three areas, and to begin making sense of how each dimension might be better understood for its shaping influence on learning. We now explore each of these areas more fully below.

A Note on Findings Because faculty inquiry lives at the boundary of theory and practice, we have chosen to present the findings in two forms: as conceptual findings (representing the way theory informed practice, and vice versa) and design findings (representing some of the key claims on practice made by these concepts and values about learning). As a further response to the challenge of representing collective findings in a messy research environment, we also present each area with a set of “tags,” keywords that help associate the findings with various trajectories. Finally, at the end of each finding description we link to several relevant case studies within this volume.

[A complete version of this essay, including the two remaining parts, may be found at www.academiccommons.org under the Creative Commons License. —The editors.]

2. Many good resources exist on the scholarship of teaching. Two essential resources can be found at the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/CASTL/) and the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning tutorial at Indiana University, Bloomington (http://www.isotl.org/tutorial/sotutorial/home.html).

3. In all, more than seventy faculty from twenty-two institutions participated in the Visible Knowledge Project over five years. Participating campuses included five research universities (Vanderbilt University, the University of Alabama, Georgetown University, the University of Southern California, Washington State University, and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology), four comprehensive public universities (Pennsylvania’s Millersville University, California State University (CSU)—Monterey Bay, CSU Sacramento, Ohio’s Youngstown State University, and participants from several four-year colleges in the City University of New York system, including City College, Lehman, and Baruch), and three community colleges (two from CUNY—Borough of Manhattan Community College and LaGuardia Community College, and California’s Cerritos College). In addition to campus-based teams, a number of independent scholars participated from a half dozen other institutions, such as Arizona State and Lehigh University. The project began in June 2000 and concluded in October 2005. We engaged in several methods for online collaboration to supplement our annual institutes, including an adaptation of the digital poster tool created by Knowledge Media Lab (Carnegie Foundation), asynchronous discussion, and Webconferencing. For more detailed information, see the VKP galleries and archives at http://crossroads.georgetown.edu/vkp/.


6. For a broader discussion of the “teaching commons,” see Pat Hutchings and Mary Huber, The Advancement of Learning: Building the Teaching Commons (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005).


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YouTube in Your Classroom

Kristine Larsen, Professor of Physics and Astronomy; Director of the University Honors Program, Central Connecticut State University

We’ve all noticed the change in the student population over the past decade. Between the sight of fingers deftly flying over the tiny keys of their cell phones in a mad flurry of text messaging, the increasing appearance of laptops in the classroom, and the ever-increasing tension between faculty and students over citing text versus internet sources, it’s clear that we faculty are not in proverbial Kansas anymore. Instead, we find ourselves immersed in the sometimes bewildering cyberworld of the Millennial Generation, or Net Gener, as they are often called. Those born between approximately 1980 and 1994 have often been described as impatient, technology-savvy, multi-taskers. They view more and read less, seem to have short attention spans, and are always looking for more efficient ways to get the most done in the shortest period of time, which some have suggested is an artifact of their over-scheduled childhoods. Proper spelling is sacrificed in the name of brevity (e.g., gr8 instead of great) and acronyms such as LOL (laughing out loud) and WOW (World of Warcraft) are assumed to be understood without question. The library is often seen as a glorified coffee house (or a location with strong wireless signal) rather than a bastion of books and other research materials. For example, 36% of Americans aged 18-24 get their science information from the internet as opposed to 28% who report getting such information from television and even fewer from books or magazines (National Science Board, 2008). Time magazine drew attention to the increasing importance of online communities when it awarded its 2006 Person of the Year designation to “You” – as in YouTube, MySpace, and the like. Yet while it appears on the surface that NetGen prefers interacting across a firewall as opposed to across a table, Facebook, Twitter, and texting augment rather than replace personal interactions. Distance-learning and online courses leave many of these students cold, as they still appreciate personal contact – but on their own terms.

Numerous educational researchers have warned us that this generation is easily bored with the traditional classroom strategies, and that they have little patience for material that does not seem relevant to their personal lives or future goals (e.g., Carlson, 2005; Roberts, 2005; Barnes et. al, 2007). This is especially a challenge to faculty who are teaching general education courses, which students often treat as nothing more than a hoop to jump through on the way to graduation. Reaching this new breed of students requires meeting them where they live – in cyberspace – but with conditions. As with any technology or pedagogical technique introduced into the classroom, there will be successes, abuses, and failures. Here we describe how to successfully use one of these Web 2.0 applications – YouTube – in the college classroom.

YouTube is a free video-sharing website that allows users to participate in a variety of ways. Many users merely view videos, either based on the recommendations of others or by searching for particular topics, while others leave comments and ratings under the videos they’ve viewed (the Net’s version of Siskel and Ebert). The most dedicated users upload their own videos, a high-tech version of the old “show and tell.” Users are responsible for assuring that what they upload is their own intellectual property, but copyright violations do occur. For example, some users upload segments of television series or films (including some educational videos) while others combine copyrighted images and songs to make their own song videos on a particular topic. If a complaint is filed against a particular video for copyright infringement, it is pulled from the site, or in the case of music, the visual part of the video remains but without the audio soundtrack.

As with any creative technology, the quality of the results varies widely. Some videos are clearly amateurish (some intentionally so) while others rival professional quality. Videos made by both school children and their teachers, as well as college professors, can be found. Just as the quality of production varies widely, so does the intellectual value of the content of these videos. Lev Grossman noted in the Time cover article (p. 40), “Web 2.0 harnesses the stupidity of crowds as well as its wisdom. Some of the comments on YouTube make you weep for the future of humanity just for the spelling alone.” Eyewitness videos of...
tornadoes and earthquakes can be found alongside home-made music videos for high school garage bands, surfing cats, examples of bad driving, and the usual “don’t try this at home” banality. While much of what is found on YouTube is of doubtful educational value, there are certainly diamonds to be found, with a modicum of effort. Benefits of using YouTube videos in the classroom include their short length (typically a few minutes), fast pace, currency and relevancy, and of course their cost (or lack thereof). Some are eyewitness videos of important or catastrophic events, such as Hurricane Katrina, the war in Iraq, and food riots in Africa. YouTube videos bring the outside world into your classroom, and make the foreign relevant and000(262,257),(763,743)

An important key to using YouTube effectively in the classroom is to plan ahead, and select videos beforehand. Failing to do so can yield embarrassing results, as the title or description of a particular video might not accurately describe the content (especially in regards to possible displays of inappropriate language or behavior). The site’s internal search engine allows the user to search for videos by length, language, words or phrases contained in the title or creator’s description, and other properties. A filter does exist for content unsuitable for minors, but it is advisable that the user screen videos themselves before classroom use even if using this filter. Search results include not only the title, length, keywords, and creator of the video, but its date of posting, a screen capture of its opening frame, current rating by users, and how many times it has been viewed. YouTube should not be used as an electronic babysitter or time-filler but rather as an integral part of the educational process. It should be remembered that we are not using technology for the sake of appearing hip or cutting edge, but to facilitate learning in the classroom.

Given all these parameters and cautions, how can we effectively integrate YouTube into the curriculum? Possibilities include using videos as:

- Part of a lecture to illustrate a specific concept;
- A prompt for in-class writing or discussion;
- Ancillary material linked on a course website for out of class viewing by students;
- The basis of an out of class assignment where students find a YouTube video on a particular topic and share it with the class (an application of the concept of “cool hunting” advocated by Trier (2007));
- The basis of an in or out of class assignment where students write an analysis of the accuracy of the content (or evaluate the bias) of a particular video;
- A creative capstone, where students make their own videos based on a particular topic and upload them to the YouTube site.

It should be noted that these assignments are applicable to both traditional on-ground courses as well as online courses.

As examples, the author offers the following four videos which he has used in various non-major courses.

1) “Aurora Boreal” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2X08L5FA9X1X) This 1-minute, silent, time lapse video (shot in British Columbia) shows the evolution of an auroral display over the course of one night. While this video is of obvious relevance to a course in general earth science, it can also be used as the focal point of discussion in an art or video course. It can also be used as a prompt in a writing course, as part of a poetry-writing assignment, or as a descriptive essay assignment.

2) “Hurricane Katrina tribute” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-P20ULUbw) This powerful 6-minute video set music to chronicles physical and human devastation in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. While this video might seem best suited for a meteorology course (to depict the power of hurricanes), it is perhaps even better suited to courses in sociology, politics, business, or economics, as it can lead to valuable discussions on race and class, the role of the government in natural disasters, or the impact of natural disasters on the insurance industry, among others.

3) “Large Hadron Rap” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j50ZsEoOJ3M Lyrics can be found at https://www.msu.edu/~mcalpin9/hhc_rap/largehadron.html) Kate McAlpine, a science writer at the CERN international laboratory, created this 5-minute original rap music video based on the scientific instruments and experiments associated with the controversial Large Hadron Collider (LHC). While this humorous video features rapping and dancing “scientists” attired in lab coats and hard hats, the science behind the LHC is correctly described in an extremely engaging manner. Physics students will undoubtedly find this video relevant and appealing, but its potential impact on political science, science education, economics, philosophy, and technology students should not be discounted. Given widely-reported fears that the LHC would create a miniature black hole and destroy the earth when it was first turned on (fueled by the well-documented lack of science literacy among the general public), discussions and reflections on science literacy, the overall role of science in society, the cost of big science, and ethical concerns in science would interest and benefit numerous students.

4) “Duck and Cover” (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2COK_I3DXIo) This 9-minute excerpt from a classic black and white U.S. government Cold War civil defense film features an adorable cartoon turtle and well-heeled school children who cheerfully demonstrate the “proper” way to survive an atomic bomb attack. Although the vintage 1950s classroom and scenarios are dated (to some amusingly so), the lessons gained from viewing this video clip are timeless. Students to whom the author has shown this video are almost unanimously disturbed by the obvious propaganda aspect of it, and the obviously

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Using Blackboard to Meet the Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education

Tom Thibodeau,
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Stephanie Ferriola, Faculty Resource Coordinator,
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A recent forum thread on the Chronicle of Higher Education website posed a very interesting question to all of us in faculty development: Are we successful at what we do if very few of our faculty like what we do? The forum thread suggests that we only succeed when (and rarely) we are direct and to the point and don’t take up much of the faculty member’s time. Sentiments like this certainly make our job “a tough room to work.” In this article we would like to share an idea that is fast, to the point, and is receiving positive feedback from our faculty.

New England Institute of Technology is an open admissions college. Our mission is to “…provide specialized development activities on the use of Blackboard, but after the initial surge most of our sessions are poorly attended so we decided to try something different.

Starting with the winter quarter of 2006, the Center for Distributed Learning and the Faculty Resource Center initiated a weekly program for our faculty to help them expand their use of Blackboard while practicing good pedagogy. The design of the program was very simple. Using “The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education” (Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda F. Gamson) as our pedagogical structure, we sent out weekly emails to all full time and adjunct faculty that provided a few easy “tips” for the faculty member to use or try. These tips also tried to follow the rhythm of the quarter. For example, week 1 would give ideas for connecting with and getting to know students, and week 5 suggests students print out the grade summary page, then sign and return it as a mid-quarter progress report. Since our calendar is composed of four, ten-week quarters per year, we decided to concentrate on one principle each quarter. Therefore, our first quarter focused on the first principle: Good Practice Encourages Student-Faculty Contact. Each week we emailed strategies for using Blackboard to meet this principle and asked faculty to choose one or more of these tips to try in their classes. We invited them to send us feedback about some of the ideas they tried or to share new ideas with us. Here are the tips we used for the first quarter. Please feel to use or adapt this in any way that fits your campus. We would appreciate any experience or feedback (good or bad) that you could share with us at tthibodeau@neit.edu.

Using “The Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education” (Arthur W. Chickering and Zelda F. Gamson) as our pedagogical structure, we sent out weekly emails to all full time and adjunct faculty that provided a few easy “tips” for the faculty member to use or try.

Good Practice Encourages Student-Faculty Contact.

Tips for Week 1
1. Use the Announcement or email section of Blackboard to send out a warm welcome to students before the first class.
2. Create a student profile form or background knowledge survey that students can fill out as an assignment or first class activity to learn more about their educational background, work history, or interests.
3. Use the Staff Information page of Blackboard to introduce yourself to students with a short bio and ask students to write their own bios on the student pages of Blackboard.
4. During the first class or as an assignment, ask
students to email you three questions they have about the syllabus. Summarize the questions asked and write a response to the whole class via Blackboard email so everyone will get your responses to all the class questions.

5. In addition to the course syllabus, post other class documents on Blackboard—such as assignments, project requirements, class notes, and rubrics—to encourage students’ independence in course content sections.

Tips for Week 2
1. Send a weekly email message to students that reinforces the previous week’s key concepts and builds anticipation for the upcoming week’s class.
2. Post a class agenda or lesson plan with the specific lesson objectives prior to each class as a daily announcement.

Tips for Week 3
1. Use the Announcement function before the first exam or first major paper or assignment to remind students about posted study guides, sample problems, and project or paper requirements that you have available on Blackboard.
2. Use Blackboard’s Course content section to provide solutions and explanations to difficult problems as a tutorial.

Tips for Week 4
1. Use External Links in any content section of Blackboard to link students to online resources that might provide clarification of difficult concepts.
2. Post supplemental materials for tutorials or challenge in the course documents section.

Tips for Week 5
1. Share your suggestions, or tips from other students who have attained success with a particular study method, in the course document section. You can also start a discussion forum on the topic.
2. Use the survey function in Blackboard to collect student feedback about how the class is going.
3. Require the students to access their grades from Blackboard for your class. Have them print out the grade summary page, sign it, and return it to you and use it as a Mid Quarter Progress report.

Tips for Week 6
1. Provide feedback to students on overall results of exams, assignments, or in-class activities by using the gradebook function.
2. Encourage students to email you with specific questions they have about the exams or assignments. You can then respond to the whole class by creating a course FAQ site in the course documents section.

Tips for Week 7
1. Use Blackboard to conduct online office hours using email, discussion forums, or the online chat function.
2. Use External Links in any section of Blackboard to connect students to resources for career opportunities and professional organizations.

Tips for Week 8
1. Post a question or problem of the day or week to prepare students for upcoming finals, using announcements, email, or course documents.

Tips for Week 9
1. Use an ungraded quiz from the test manager that allows multiple attempts to post sample problems or questions so students can practice for final exams.

Tips for Week 10
1. Use the survey function to ask students to assess the class by offering their candid (and anonymous) reflections on the strengths and weaknesses of the class. What should change and what should stay the same for the next class?

YouTube in Your Classroom Continued from page 13

ineffective “survival” tactics promulgated by the film. Students in peace studies, communication, political science, U.S. history, chemistry, and physics classes will easily find direct relevance to their course material—and their lives—in this film.

Web 2.0 continues to infiltrate myriad aspects of our lives, including the classroom. Keeping in mind the basic concepts of good pedagogy, college instructors can find YouTube to be another aspect of Web 2.0 that can be successfully adapted to the classroom. With YouTube, we see yet again that when instructors meet students on their technological turf, it can be a remarkable learning experience for all involved.

References and Recommended Reading:


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