The Toolbox

A TEACHING AND LEARNING RESOURCE FOR INSTRUCTORS

Volume 11
Issue 2
October 2012

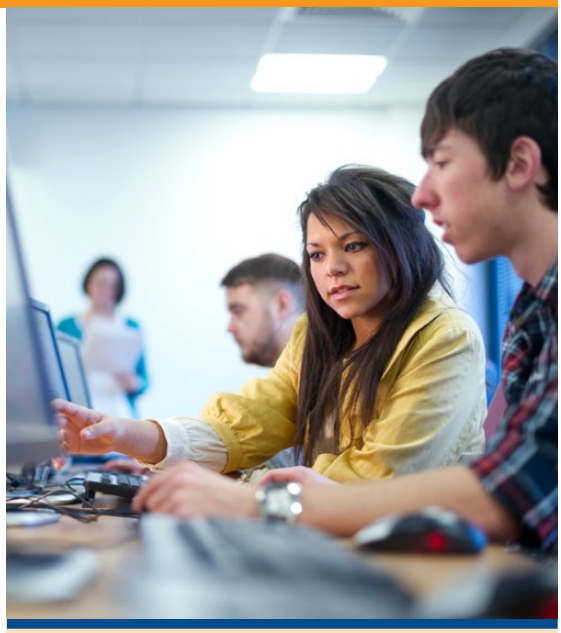
Creative Venues for Students to Display Their Learning

Technology pervades today's culture, but many educators—because they do not have the latest gadgets or dread new advances, for example—lag behind in effectively integrating technology into their teaching. The 2009 results of the Faculty Survey of Student Engagement, published in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (2010), revealed that a majority of instructors do not feel a strong need to use technology, even while teaching a generation of students who have grown up knowing only the realities of a digital culture. For example, although 72% of the respondents report using course management systems (e.g., Blackboard, Moodle), they are much less likely to incorporate other kinds of technology that students are likely to use regularly, such as collaborative editing software (e.g., Wikis, Google Docs), 16%; blogs, 13%; video conferencing or Internet phone chat, 12%; and video games or simulations, 9%. Yet, more than one quarter report using plagiarism detection tools, which, while useful to instructors, have less educational significance for students.

A recent article described the future of higher education as "global, mobile, virtual, and social" (Dew, 2010). In some ways, students' early learning experiences may be driving these trends. As increasing numbers of students become acquainted with blended learning during their K-12 experience (Bushweller, 2012), they likely bring expectations for similar learning experiences in college. In fact, studies produced by Chronicle Research Services (2009) and the U.S. Department of Commerce (2010) suggest that students will demand increasing access to technology and to flexible learning experiences made possible by technology, such as

- the ability to access classes from cellular phones and other portable computing devices;
- the choice to alternate between face-to-face and online participation within a single course; and
- online access to classroom discussions, office hours with a professor, lectures, study groups, and papers.

To meet these expectations, instructors must overcome their uncertainty about teaching with technology and look for painless ways to acquire the necessary skills to offer blended learning opportunities for students. For example, familiar technologies might be used to design assignments in clever and engaging ways. With minimal effort or training, faculty can incorporate creative and energizing venues for students to develop and submit assignments. The technology chosen should always be appropriate to a course's learning outcomes. The value of using creative technological venues during the instructional process is to help students think, learn, and demonstrate their accomplishments in a variety of technological formats.



"The number one benefit of information technology is that it empowers people to do what they want to do. It lets people be creative. It lets people be productive. It lets people learn things they didn't think they could learn before, and so in a sense it is all about potential."

— Steve Ballmer, CEO, Microsoft

Here are four platforms instructors might use to integrate technology into the classroom.

Pecha Kucha

Pecha Kucha (pronounced pa-check-a-cha), which literally means "chit chat" in Japanese, is an electronic presentation format composed of exactly 20 PowerPoint slides with exactly 20 seconds of narrative per slide. These presentations can be performed live or recorded using available computer software (e.g., iMovie). Given a topic to explore and present, students must consider the facts and concepts to include (or to omit) and then create a visual and auditory display within the time constraints of the Pecha Kucha format. Pecha Kuchas are fun to create and also require planning and a mastery of the topic. Samples of Pecha Kuchas can be found at: www.pecha-kucha.org.

Glogster

Glogster is an online option that allows students to create a free, multimedia, electronic poster or glog (i.e., graphic blog) at its website at www.edu.glogster.com. Within the space provided, students can insert graphics, pictures, words, and links to audio and video resources. Instructors register on the website and then announce the assignment to their students. For 10 or fewer students, this service is free. Glogster charges a nominal fee for more than 10 students using the website during any given time frame (e.g., a semester), but the benefits to students are worth the cost.

Wikis

A wiki is a website that allows users to edit content actively and collaboratively. One option for the creation of wikis is the website Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Creating_a_new_page). The sponsors of Wikipedia provide specific directions for creating a wiki on a new topic. These directions are easy to follow and allow instructors to limit access to only students enrolled in their classes. Instructors could ask students to create a wiki and collaboratively and asynchronously create a body of knowledge (i.e., words, pictures, quotations, external sources) on an assigned topic. At the end of the semester, students would be evaluated on the quality and organization of their Wikipedia article. As an additional component, teams could develop their own article and provide constructive criticism for other groups. This interactive dialogue should increase student involvement and, ultimately, the quality of their work.

Pinterest

One of the newest electronic social media and sharing tools, Pinterest, is a website that provides students with the opportunity to collect and organize pictures, video and audio clips, and articles around an assigned topic (www.pinterest.com). Messner (2012) reports that Pinterest currently attracts almost 10 million visitors per month and is growing faster than Facebook and Twitter. Similar to a Glogster assignment, students could develop a Pinterest display around a course-related content topic and then share and pool the acquired information to review and process key concepts. Within the context of a course, students could each be assigned a related topic with the purpose of gathering the information and resources necessary to teach their classmates the most salient content and principles related to their topic. The accumulated bank of Pinterests then becomes a databank for learning and review for the entire class.

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FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE® AND STUDENTS IN TRANSITION
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Journal
of The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition

A semiannual refereed journal providing current research and scholarship on significant student transitions. The primary purpose of the *Journal* is to disseminate empirical research findings on student transition issues, including:

- Explorations into the academic, personal, and social experiences—including outcomes related to success, learning, and development—of students at a range of transition points throughout the college years. These transitions include, but are not limited to, the first college year, the transfer transition, the sophomore year, the senior year and transition out of college, and the transition to graduate work;
- Transition issues unique to specific populations (e.g., nontraditional, traditional, historically underrepresented students, transfer students, commuters, part-time students); and
- Explorations of faculty development, curriculum, and pedagogical innovations connected to any of the transitions identified above.

To submit or subscribe, please visit
www.sc.edu/fye/journal

Give Technology a Try!

The first step to bringing technology into the classroom is to visit the sites listed above. Instructors interested in these approaches and their applicability but uncomfortable with their technological skills can ask for students to help create the linkages (and procedural directions) for Glogster, Pinterest, a wiki, or other social media tools. Students will be glad to help, and faculty will be offering new opportunities for them to be creative in a digital environment they know well.

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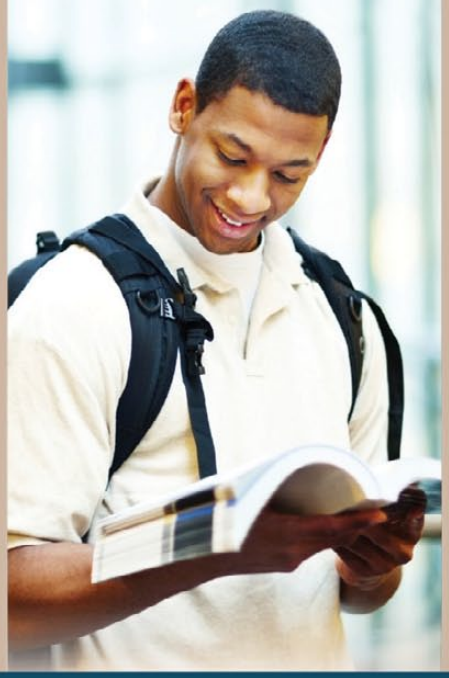

November 4-6, 2012
University of South Carolina
Columbia, SC

Limited to 100 participants

Price per individual: $645
2 or more: $625

www.sc.edu/fye/sscc

NATIONAL RESOURCE CENTER
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What's Happening at The National Resource Center

Conferences and Continuing Education

Online Courses

The National Resource Center is offering online courses on topics of interest in higher education. The courses are designed to provide participants with the same content and opportunities for interaction with peers and with the instructor as traditional (i.e., classroom-based) learning environments while taking advantage of pedagogy and teaching techniques that are not possible or common in those settings. The courses have limited enrollment and use tools such as e-mail, threaded discussions and forums, listservs, and blogs. For more information, visit www.sc.edu/fye/oc.

Online Courses Offerings:

April 9-May 11, 2013

Strategic Planning for Your First-Year Experience Program—facilitated by Bernard Sevarese, Associate Director in Undergraduate Admissions and First-Year Experience, and Julie Schultz, Senior Assistant Director of Undergraduate Admissions and First-Year Experience, at The Ohio State University

May 21-June 22, 2013

Models and Methods of Student Advising—facilitated by Paul A. Gore, Associate Professor of Educational Psychology, at The University of Utah

Conferences and Institutes

Institute on First-Year Success in the Community College

November 4-6, 2012

Columbia, South Carolina (USC campus)

The National Resource Center invites professionals involved in first-year initiatives in community colleges to participate in the Institute on First-Year Success in the Community College. This institute will provide attendees the opportunity to discuss the current role of the community college in higher education and develop an action plan for creating or enhancing pathways to community college student success. Interactive sessions are designed with practical application in mind so that participants will be ready to implement strategic initiatives when they return to campus. For more information, please visit www.sc.edu/fye/sscc.

32nd Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience

February 23-26, 2013

Orlando, Florida

Early Registration Deadline: January 24, 2013

The First-Year Experience conferences are meetings where educators from two- and four-year institutions come together to openly share ideas, concepts, resources, assessment tools, programmatic interventions, and research results focused on the first college year. Registration information and a tentative schedule are available at www.sc.edu/fye/annual.

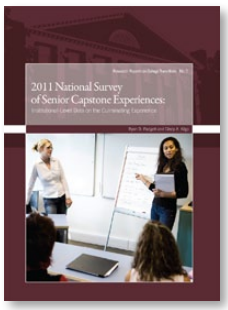
Save the Dates

26th International Conference on The First-Year Experience
June 17-20, 2013
Waikoloa, Hawaii's Big Island

33rd Annual Conference on The First-Year Experience
February 14-18, 2014
San Diego, California

Publications

New Releases



Research Reports on College Transitions No. 3
2011 National Survey of Senior Capstone Experiences: Institutional-Level Data on the Culminating Experience
Ryan D. Padgett & Cindy A. Kilgo

New research report updates findings from the 1999 National Survey of Senior Seminars and Capstone Courses and explores the current state of culminating experiences in American higher education. Drawn from a sample of public and private colleges and universities across the country, the 2011 survey focuses on both course- and project-based senior capstone experiences to examine the purposes, content, organization, administration, and assessment of culminating experiences. The research report offers a discussion of the findings and implications for practice and future research. Designed to be accessible and informative, this report can assist both higher education researchers and practitioners in understanding the potential of capstones to promote student learning and development during the concluding chapter of college. ISBN 978-1-889271-86-6. $20.00. Visit www.nrcpubs.com to order.

Final volume of series on first-year seminar design and administration now available:

The First-Year Seminar: Designing, Implementing, and Assessing Courses to Support Student Learning and Success
Volume V: Assessing the First-Year Seminar
Daniel B. Friedman

Friedman, a recognized expert on seminar administration and assessment, provides a comprehensive framework for deciding what to assess, what kinds of data to collect and from whom, and how to use findings for continuous program refinement and improvement. The volume is a useful tool for administrators launching a new seminar or managing a decades old course. While centered on the first-year seminar, Friedman's suggested strategies can be applied to a wide range of educational experiences in the first college year and beyond. ISBN 978-1-889271-81-3. $25.00.
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Applications now being accepted for editorial review board members:

The *Journal of The First-Year Experience & Students in Transition* is currently accepting nominations (including self-nominations) for members of the editorial review board. Editorial review board members serve a three-year term (January 2013-December 2016); hold advanced degrees (Ph.D. or equivalent preferred); have a minimum of five years experience in

eSOURCE FOR COLLEGE TRANSITIONS
www.sc.edu/fye/esource

A biannual publication from the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience® and Students in Transition

E-Source for College Transitions provides practical strategies for supporting student learning and success. Articles on a variety of topics related to student transitions are welcome, including those focusing on

- strategies for addressing the first-year, sophomore, senior, and transfer transitions at different types of institutions;
- innovative teaching strategies and programs addressing the needs of special student populations;
- strategies for assessing student learning experiences, programs, or courses;
- descriptions of institutional initiatives with demonstrated results; and
- descriptions of new and relevant print and online resources.

eSOURCE FOR COLLEGE TRANSITIONS
CONTENTS
The Transfer Center: Building a Home for Transfer Students

Visit **www.sc.edu/fye/esource** to sign up for content alerts or view archived issues.

higher education; are affiliated with an accredited college or university; and have expertise in quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods research design and analysis.

Individuals who meet these qualifications are invited to submit a letter of intent and CV to Dr. Paul A. Gore, Jr., Editor, at paul.gore@utah.edu. The deadline for receipt of completed nomination packages is November 30, 2012.

NRC Exhibits and Presentations

Like many of you, the staff of the National Resource Center is actively involved in the conference circuit. We are pleased to share the following upcoming opportunities to hear about the results of center research studies, learn about best practices, and meet NRC staff members.

Peer Leadership Within Higher Education: A National Portrait. Plenary session by Jennifer R. Keup, National Resource Center Director, at the 2012 National Orientation Directors Association (NODA) Conference, October 28, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Retention Symposium Panel. Featuring Tracy L. Skipper, Assistant Director for Publications, at the 2012 National Orientation Directors Association (NODA) Conference, 8:30-10:30 a.m., October 29, Champagne Ballroom, Paris Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Demonstrating the Impact of First-Year Seminars on Student Outcomes. Research paper session by Jennifer R. Keup, National Resource Center Director, at the 2012 Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) Conference, November 16, Las Vegas, Nevada.

An Examination of Peer Leadership Experiences and Outcomes. Research paper session by Jennifer R. Keup, National Resource Center Director, at the 2012 Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE) Conference, November 16, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Measuring Reported Learning From Supervised Practice Experiences of Graduates of Master's Programs in Student Affairs to Predict Perceived Preparation for Professional Practice. Research paper presentation by Dallin George Young, Assistant Director for Research, Grants, and Assessment for the National Resource Center, at the 2012 Annual Conference of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (ASHE), 11:15 a.m., November 17, Condesa 5, The Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas, Las Vegas, Nevada.

Research

The National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition named Jacob Okumu, a doctoral candidate in Higher Education and Student Affairs at Ohio University, as the recipient of the 2012-2013 Paul P. Fidler Research Grant. The Center publicly acknowledged Okumu during its 19th National Conference on Students in Transition, held October 13-15, in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

The grant, designed to encourage and enable scholarly research on issues related to college student transitions, includes a financial stipend and travel to two national conferences. Okumu's study is entitled Developmental Meaning-Making Dynamics of Emancipated Foster Care Youth Transitioning Into Higher Education: A Constructivist-Grounded Theory. For more information on Okumu and the four finalists, please visit http://www.sc.edu/fye/research/grant.

The application window for the 2013-2014 Paul P. Fidler Research Grant will open April 1, 2013, and close July 1, 2013.

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The Toolbox

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The Toolbox is an online professional development newsletter offering innovative learner-centered strategies for empowering college students to achieve greater success. The newsletter is published six times a year by the National Resource Center for The First-Year Experience and Students in Transition at the University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC.

The online subscription is free. To register for newsletter alerts and access back issues, please visit www.sc.edu/fye/toolbox.

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