**Establishing an Elearning Component to an In-Person or Fully Synchronous Online Class**

**WMUx Workshop, Fall 2020**

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**Workshop Objectives**

Participants will:

* explore the benefits of establishing a course framework for your in-person or fully synchronous online courses
* learn how to encourage students to utilize the course framework, even when the class meets in-person or in a fully synchronous online mode
* find out about WMUx workshops and tutorials to finish up the course framework development process

**Part 1: Course Frameworks**

In-person and fully synchronous online teaching can be augmented using many of the tools available in the WMU Learning Management System (LMS) interface. Surveys of WMU undergraduate students indicate that having access to an online course presence makes it more likely that they will succeed in a class.

WMUx provides tutorials on how to set up LMS grade books, attendance logs, discussion posts, and group work settings, but there are compelling reasons for instructors to go a step further and establish an online presence for the core content of their class, even if they will be teaching in-person or in a fully synchronous mode.

The first step in the process involves establishing a **course framework** by transferring the building blocks of an in-person or fully synchronous online course into the module system available in WMU’s LMS. For instance, a basic course framework would include a module for the syllabus, schedule, and assignment sheets for the class, as well as modules for every unit covered in the course.

Within each module, the instructor could place a list of the learning goals for the unit and links to any lectures or resources that would be used in the in-person or in the fully synchronous setting. Establishing this basic framework ensures that students will have a centralized location for their course materials, while providing the instructor with a logical place to add additional handouts or resources during the period that they are teaching each module’s content. This process is easier to institute for those professors who are already in the practice of establishing discrete units for their courses or who use a textbook that has divisions in place, but making the move to a module-based framework will aid students in navigating the course effectively.

An important benefit of establishing a course framework is that if the class must be quickly moved to a distance delivery mode, the majority of the transfer work will already have been done via the framework, thus saving instructors valuable time.

Instructors who teach using a pre-established course unit structure can replicate that structure outline in the LMS class site, creating a module for each unit. In these situations, learning goals, assessments, and strategies are usually included in the structure and can be listed out, as well.

However, for those instructors who have been integrating these elements only into a syllabus or who have not divided their course content into units, the move to an Elearning framework will require extra steps. The process is labor intensive up front, but once established, can serve as a model for subsequent iterations of the course or related courses in the instructor’s area of expertise.

Individual modules can include a list of materials, learning objectives, and homework assignments, as well as links to materials that the instructor wishes to share with the class. Including short video messages or mini-lectures help to generate student interest, and all of the module content can be shared on an overhead or with screen sharing in the in-person or synchronous class meetings.

**Encouraging Student Engagement**

One question that instructors often mention when considering an online course presence is whether or not students will make time to access the content.

One answer to this question involves using techniques found in **blended learning**, a concept which refers to the combination of in-class meetings with the team-building and social interaction components of online environments to create in students a sense of belonging to a community of inquiry.

The difference between establishing a course framework for an in-person or fully synchronous online course and teaching in the hybrid mode is that the majority of instruction remains in the classroom or the face-to-face synchronous environment, with the online component serving to support the course content, not supplant it.

***Technique One: Online Group Work***

Although group work can be an important component of in-class sessions, it can also be an effective way to engage students in the course between class sessions. Online group work can involve synchronous communication in Webex, Zoom, or Teams, or it can involve asynchronous communication via a series of discussion posts or group rooms established in Teams or the LMS. For asynchronous group meetings, asking students to return to the discussion post multiple times ensures that they engage in a quasi-conversation in which they make more than one contribution.

Requiring students to work collaboratively outside of class and embedding the group work structure in the LMS ensures that students will visit the site on a frequent basis.

***Technique Two: Course Recaps***

One blended learning technique, the **course recap**, offers students participation points for visiting the LMS site once a week or after every class meeting to read a summary of what went on in-person during the week. In addition to providing helpful information for students who might have missed an in-person class, course recaps allow instructors to mention concepts that they forgot to bring up in the in-person session or were unable to bring up due to time constraints. Course recaps also help instructors keep track of their teaching experiences and innovations, and they serve as de facto course outlines that students can use as they study for exams.

In order to encourage students to visit the recap, instructors can pose a short discussion question at the end of the recap designed to reinforce concepts, to forecast future content, or to continue a discussion that had taken place during the in-person session.

Some instructors choose to place course recaps in each module for the class, while other instructors set up a designated course recap module. Either way, in order to earn points, students are required to access the LMS course framework outside of class on a regular basis. In terms of grading, instructors can elect to make the recaps a major component of the course grade and provide extensive commentary, or they can elect to make it an ancillary component and simply provide credit if students meet the

Set out below is a sample course recap from the Fall 2019 section of Dr. Gwen Tarbox’s ENGL 3840, Adolescent Literature course, which fulfills major/minor requirements in English. In addition to including a meeting summary and a prompt, the recap includes a reminder regarding homework:

**COURSE RECAP**

In class today, I described the difference between summarizing a text and making a claim about a text. In addition to going over examples, students created claims and shared them with the class for comment. Our TAs notes, which are included in this module, provide more detail on this segment of class. The claim/summary descriptions and examples are included in the Agenda that is also included in this module.

Next, I gave a lecture on activism in YA literature in order to demonstrate that many of the authors we are reading this semester have set the goal of inspiring young readers to become involved in social and political movements. I asked students to consider whether any of the activist elements in the novels we have recently read feel preachy or if the presence of the "hidden adult" seems particularly overt. We had an interesting discussion on these ideas, summarized well by our TA in his notes.

***Homework***

For homework, you will need to complete this course recap prompt by 2/28/19 at 11:30 PM. I pushed back this due date because I am concerned that the area will lose power during the upcoming winter storm. Your Film Worksheet will also be due on 2/18/19 at 11:30 PM.

Looking forward, I will be releasing Test 2 on 3/10/19 at 8:00 AM, and it will be due on 3/15/19. I will put up a study guide for Test 2 in a day or so.

***Earning Participation Points***

Please read the prompt below and participate in a discussion with your classmates. You should make two posts of at least 200 words. There should be at least 5 hours between your two posts. The earlier you post, the more involved you can get in discussion with other classmates. You are certainly welcome to post more than 2 times, but you will earn your 25 points by posting twice. Please be sure to read through the Prompt Assignment Sheet for reminders on professional discourse and to see the basic rubric that I will be using to assign points.

Add your post by clicking on the link above to Course Recap 4/Prompt Post 5, and then click on the blue Start a New Thread button. Your text should be written in complete sentences, and any direct quotes from the text should include parenthetical documentation (putting the page number you have quoted or paraphrased in parentheses after the passage). This response is worth 25 points.

***Prompt***

Earlier in the semester, I asked students to think about Roberta Seelinger Trites' claim in *Disturbing the Universe: Power and Repression in Adolescent Literature* (2000) that YA literature depicted teenagers testing out their growing sense of power and autonomy against the social institutions that surrounded them (7). Making reference to any or all of the following books -- Thomas' *The Hate U Give*, Levithan's *Every Day*, and Eric Gansworth's *Give Me Some Truth* --how well do you think the teen protagonists manage to achieve their desires? What compromises do they have to make with authority? Are they ever able to defy authority without negative consequences?

**Part 3: Using WMUx Resources**

The suggestions listed below are for those instructors who will be teaching in-person or fully synchronous online and wish only to develop a course framework for that purpose. If an instructor wishes to move their delivery method to an asynchronous or partially synchronous online delivery, they should consult with the instructional designers in WMUx who can help them establish a formal course storyboard.

***Course Design Components***

During WMU’s revision of its general education offerings, most instructors participated in discussions regarding the learning objectives, assessments, and strategies important to their various course offerings. However, for review, here are the definitions of these terms:

**Learning Objectives**: the specific skills, practices, and information that an instructor wants students to learn from each section of the course

**Assessments**: the instruments used to gauge students’ understanding of the learning outcomes

**Strategies**: the methods that the instructor will use to convey course content.

As explained in the Carnegie Mellon Eberly Center forum on course design, alignment among these “main course components ensures an internally consistent structure” and “is a dynamic process since a change in one necessarily affects the other two.” For the purposes of this document, the planning process described is based upon a process of establishing learning objectives first, linking those goals to the course materials, and establishing assessments. For a more detailed discussion of course design components, consult the WMUx Instructional Continuity site (https://wmich.edu/elearning/instructional-continuity).

***Learning Objectives***

Taking a moment to review the development of learning objectives will help as we move on in the design process. As mentioned above, a learning goal is a specific competency that students need to pick up in order to become experienced in a particular area. Learning objectives are expressed by joining the phrase “students will” with a verb and a specific goal. Here are some examples:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Students will** | **+ verb** | **+ learning goal** |
| Students will | define | the properties of a short animated film |
| Students will | compare | the 1964 and 2018 versions of *Mary Poppins* |
| Students will | apply | what they have learned about character analysis in cartoons to live action films |
| Students will  | create | an alternative ending to the final scene of the film. |

Selecting the competencies are logical for a particular course involves an understanding of what abilities and knowledge students bring to the course, as well as the ways that we can assess student learning within the constraints of the time and methods of instruction we will employ. Many educators turn to Bloom’s Taxonomy in order to develop level appropriate learning goals for their courses. The taxonomy was developed in the mid-1950s by educator Benjamin Bloom and enhanced since that time by instructional scholars and designers.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Level of Cognitive Learning** | **Description** | **Verbs** |
| 1. **Remember**
 | Definition: retrieve, recall, or recognize relevant knowledge from long-term memory (e.g., recall dates of important events in U.S. history, remember the components of a bacterial cell). | cite, define, describe, identify, label, list, match, name, outline, quote, recall, report, reproduce, retrieve, show, state, tabulate, and tell. |
| 1. **Understand**
 | Definition: demonstrate comprehension through one or more forms of explanation (e.g., classify a symptoms of an illness, compare ritual practices in two different religions). | abstract, arrange, associate, categorize, clarify, classify, compare, contrast, defend, diagram, differentiate, discuss, exemplify, explain, extend, give examples of, illustrate, infer, interpolate, interpret, outline, paraphrase, predict, summarize, transform, and translate. |
| 1. **Apply**
 | Definition: use information or a skill in a new situation (e.g., use Newton’s second law to solve a problem for which it is appropriate, carry out a multivariate statistical analysis using a data set not previously encountered). | apply, calculate, classify, complete, compute, demonstrate, employ, examine, execute, experiment, illustrate, implement, infer, interpret, manipulate, modify, operate, organize, predict, solve, transfer, translate, and use. |
| 1. **Analyze**
 | Definition: break material into its constituent parts and determine how the parts relate to one another and/or to an overall structure or purpose (e.g., analyze the relationship between different flora and fauna in an ecological setting; analyze the relationship between different characters in a play). | analyze, arrange, break down, categorize, classify, compare, connect, contrast, deconstruct, detect, diagram, differentiate, discriminate, distinguish, divide, explain, identify, integrate, inventory, order, organize, relate, separate, and structure. |
| 1. **Evaluate**
 | Definition: make judgments based on criteria and standards (e.g., detect inconsistencies or fallacies within a process or product, determine whether a scientist’s conclusions follow from observed data, judge which of two methods is the way to solve a given problem, determine the quality of a product based on disciplinary criteria). | appraise, apprise, argue, assess, compare, conclude, consider, contrast, convince, criticize, critique, decide, determine, discriminate, evaluate, grade, judge, justify, measure, rank, rate, recommend, review, score, select, standardize, support, test, and validate. |
| 1. **Create**
 | Definitions: put elements together to form a new coherent or functional whole; reorganize elements into a new pattern or structure (design a new set for a theater production, write a thesis, develop an alternative hypothesis based on criteria, invent a product, compose a piece of music, write a play). | arrange, assemble, build, combine, compile, compose, construct, create, design, develop, devise, formulate, generate, hypothesize, integrate, invent, make, modify, organize, perform, plan, prepare, produce, propose, revise, rewrite, specify, synthesize, and write. |

Adapted from: Anderson, Lorin W., and David R. Krathwohl, eds. 2001. *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching, and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Goals*. New York: Addison Wesley Longman, Inc., as well as assessment materials.

***Curriculum Mapping***

One quick way to incorporate learning goals into the course design process is to use a procedure called **curriculum mapping**, a tool that has been a mainstay of teacher education programs for decades. Developing a curriculum map can help instructors (and their students, if they share it) obtain a bird's eye view of the course framework.

A curriculum map is set up as a table, with the vertical axis providing a list of learning goals and and with the horizontal axis providing a list of potential modules for the class. To fill out the table, an instructor plots out the content, having as a goal the students’ gradual development of course competencies.

The example set out in Appendix B is taken from Dr. Tarbox’s Summer II course ENGL 3070: Literature in Our Lives, a class focused on the interpretation of Disney Company offerings across a number of genres. In this instance, the curriculum mapping process involved acknowledging that as a general education offering, ENGL 3070 would attract non-majors or entry level English majors who would not necessarily possess an advanced understanding of the history of the Disney Company or of the best practices involved in the analysis of comics, films, and television programs. Coming to terms with the knowledge and abilities that students bring to a course is an important step in the course design process.

In the example, Dr. Tarbox set up the units chronologically, beginning with the founding of the Disney Company in 1928 and moving through the elements of its growing empire up to its acquisition of other media companies in the 1990s and 2000s.

Then, as part of the process of instituting learning goals and assessments, Dr. Tarbox addressed her students’ need to build up a repertoire of interpretative tools with goals such as this one: “define the characteristics of various Disney genres” and with this associated assessment: “identify the relationship among scenes within a cartoon, a film, or TV program by filling out viewing worksheets.” Then, to ensure that students built up these competencies, she placed the assessments across the breadth of the course.

Once completed, a curriculum map can serve as the guiding document for syllabus and schedule creation and for setting up an Elearning framework. Screen Capture 1 of the Elearning site table of contents for ENGL 3070, included as Appendix C, demonstrates that Dr. Tarbox was able to set up her modules via information from the horizontal axis of the curriculum map. And Screen Capture 2 shows how Dr. Tarbox used the Module description section to set out the learning outcomes and assessments for the students to review.

**Completing the Course Framework Process**

In addition to creating unit modules and filling them out with the design components listed above, instructors can include handouts, links, discussion posts, or other associated elements. Some instructors choose to reinforce content by embedding a short video in each module or they can use the LMS site during in-person sessions to direct students to content and materials.

Beyond this brief guide, WMUx offers instructors a number of resources to move establish an online teaching presence. Please visit the WMUx Instructional Continuity Page to access tutorials and guides or to set up a one-on-one consultation with an instructional designer.

A bibliography of scholarly articles on the course design and blended learning processes is included as Appendix A.

**Appendix A**

**Bibliography for Further Reading**

**Teaching Techniques**

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**Appendix B**

**Curriculum Map for ENGL 3070, Summer I 2020**

**Dr. Gwen A. Tarbox, Department of English**

**Curriculum Map for ENGL 3070: Literature in Our Lives (Disney+: From Mickey to Marvel)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Unit/Primary Texts** **Competen-cies** Students will… | Module 1: Early Animation*Steamboat Willie* (1928) | Module 2: Animated Fairytales*Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937) | Module 3: Children’s Television*Mickey Mouse Club*;*The Adventures of Spin & Marty* (1955) | Module 4: Theme Parks*The Imagineering Story*;*Disney Around the Seasons* (1955-66) | Module 5: Live Action Films*Mary Poppins* (1964) | Module 6: Disney and Pixar*Toy Story* (1995) | Module 7: Disney and Marvel*Black Panther* (2018) |
| COURSE SUBJECT COMPETENCIES |
| Describe the Disney Company’s origin and development | Lecture: The Origins of the Disney Formula Documentary:American Experience’s *Walt Disney*, Part I (2015) Navigating the Disney+ Channel | Documentary: *Disney’s First Feature: The Making of* *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (2017) | Lecture: The Growing Reach of the Disney Corporation | Lecture: The Happiest Place on EarthDocumentary: American Experience’s *Walt Disney*, Part 2 (2015) | Lecture: Mixing Live Action and Animation |  | Lecture: Disney’s Purchase of World Building Franchises |
| Describe Pixar and Marvel’s origins and development |  |  |  |  |  | Lecture: The Pixar Revolution; or, How Disney Purchased Its Renaissance | Documentary: *Roundtable with Creators of* *Black Panther* (2019) |
| Link Disney’s programming to social and cultural shifts in American life |  | Inge’s “Walt Disney’s *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*.” |  | Hobbs’ “Main Street U.S.A.: The Myths of Reassurance and Nostalgia.”  | Kenschaft, “’Just a Spoonful of Sugar’: Anxieties of Gender and Class in *Mary Poppins*.” |  | Williams’ “Three Theses About *Black Panther*”Lebron’s “*Black Panther* Is Not the Movie We Deserve” |
| Define the characteristics of various Disney genres | Lecture: Comics and Animated Shorts | Lecture: Adaptation - From Fairytales to Film  | Lecture: A Brief History of Children’s Television |  | Lecture: Dual Audience/Live Action: The Spoonful of Sugar is for the Adults, Both in 1964 and 2008!  | Lecture: 2D vs 3D AnimationDocumentary: *The Pixar Story* (2007) | “MCU for Beginners” (2020)*Marvel Studios: Assembling a Universe* (2014) |
| Explain the economic relationship between a Disney artifact and its merchandizing |  |  | Coleman's "Through the Years We'll All Be Friends: The 'Mickey Mouse Club,' Consumerism, and the Cultural Consensus" |  |  | Lecture: The Pixar Revolution; or, How Disney Purchased Its Renaissance |  |
| ENGLISH STUDIES COMPETENCIES |
| Write effective short essays |  |  | Viewing Worksheet #3 | Viewing Worksheet #4 |  |  |  |
| Identify the relationship among scenes within a cartoon, a film, or TV program by filling out viewing worksheets | Viewing Worksheet #1 | Viewing Worksheet #2 |  |  | Viewing Worksheet #5 | Viewing Worksheet #6 | Viewing Worksheet #7 |
| Write effective discussion posts that move forward the conversation | Discussion Post #1“How to Write an Effective Discussion Post” | Discussion Post #2 | Discussion Post #3 | Discussion Post #4 | Discussion Post #5 | Discussion Post #6 | Discussion Post #7 |
| Formulate a project proposal | “How to Write an Effective Project Proposal” | Webex Project Proposal Conference |  |  |  |  |  |
| Compose a semester project that takes the form of an essay, a Powerpoint with voiceover analysis, or a creative project with accompanying commentary |  |  | Project Proposal Due |  |  | Project Proposal Draft | Project Due |

**Appendix C**

**Module Table of Contents and Sample Module Description from ENGL 3070**

**Screen Capture 1**

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**Screen Capture 2**

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