"Collaboration" (Digital Pedagogy in the Humanities)

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Digital Pedagogy in the Humanities

KEYWORD

Collaboration

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CURATORIAL STATEMENT

In research, writing, and teaching, ideas build on countless others, weaving a complex network of influences. Collaborative work foregrounds this network, celebrating the value that many hands bring to a project. It includes diverse perspectives, flips the dichotomy of expert and novice, and explores alternative ideas—something Cathy Davidson, cofounder of...

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ARTIFACTS

ARTIFACT NAME

B-Social

CURATORIAL NOTE

Beautiful Social, or B-Social, is a collaborative enterprise run by faculty members and students in the Communication Studies Department at St. Joseph’s University that pairs with local nonprofit organizations in inner-city Philadelphia to provide consulting, training, multimedia production, and community research. Students enrolled in the Social Media and Community Engagement course and Nonprofit Communications course “become consultants for clients while studying advanced topics in social media research and applying current theories and practices in semester-long team-based projects with community partners” (“About” [The Beautiful Social Research Collaborative]). B-Social serves as an excellent example of collaborative service learning that integrates social justice issues into course work.

William Wolff, Saint Joseph’s University

Collaboration

Collaborative project

Advanced, Practice, Reflection

Social justice, Student work
through project-based learning. Both the blog, which includes posts by students reflecting on their experience, and the Our Work section, which showcases the final projects, can be used in any classroom as models for collaborative work involving faculty members, students, and community partners.

**Artifact Name**

**Digital Labor, Urban Space, and Materiality**

**Curatorial Note**

In *Digital Labor, Urban Space, and Materiality*, an undergraduate digital humanities course at the University of California, Los Angeles, Professor Miriam Posner asks students to critique the labor and materiality of digital devices already in production. The “device narratives” project is an online publication in which each device featured is a “chapter” written collaboratively by groups of students in the course. These digital texts include maps, photographs, video, and other media hosted on a WordPress site (using the now-defunct ScrollKit). The course's Web site includes links to finished narratives as well as the assignment's goals, timeline, and grading rubric. The structure and key concepts of this project are easily adaptable for any undergraduate or graduate course that focuses on research, writing, and digital literacy.

**Artifact Name**

**Falling Up**

**Curatorial Note**

Professor Michael Wesch organizes his Kansas State University courses around collaborative projects, such as student-designed, directed, and produced videos. In spring 2015, students in Wesch's Digital Ethnography course moved out of their dormitories and into Meadowlark Hills, a retirement community near campus. Students spent the semester getting to know the residents, learning about gerontology and digital ethnography, and using what they were learning to positively affect the Meadowlark community. At the end of the course, students took everything they had learned to create an “interactive empathy game-story” called *Falling Up*. The partnership produced transformative experiences for both students and residents, modeling how
collaborative pedagogy can catalyze institutional change within and beyond the classroom. Having students work together on a multimedia project in partnership with the local community is a terrific way to engage in collaborative learning that will affect the world.

**Artifact Name**

**Feminisms and Interaction Design (IxD)**

**Curatorial Note**

This project was designed by Professor Jennifer Sano-Franchini as the culmination of Issues in Professional and Public Discourse, a course for English majors at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. This course, which won the university's XCaliber Award for excellence in teaching with technology, invites students to investigate a “wicked problem,” defined by designer and educator Jon Kolko as a “social or cultural problem that is difficult to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements” (qtd. in Sano-Franchini). In an interview about the course, Sano-Franchini describes sexism and gender inequality as wicked problems for which interaction design can offer useful approaches. For the final project, students work in groups to design a conceptual prototype (for a mobile application, game, Web site, interface, performance, etc.) informed by theories, research, and ideas in feminisms and interaction design. The artifact includes learning outcomes, a timeline, grading criteria, and more, all of which could be adapted for other courses.

**Artifact Name**

**Distributed Open Collaborative Course (DOCC)**

**Curatorial Note**

FemTechNet is a network of scholars, artists, and students working with technology, science, and feminism. For four years, they have hosted distributed open collaborative courses (DOCCs) in which instructors teaching courses related to feminism and technology connect their learning communities online. Unlike the hierarchical model of MOOCs (massive open online courses) in which one instructor teaches many students, the DOCC is a decentralized network with multiple nodes of engaged,
participatory learning. Citing the *FemTechNet manifesto*, which states that “collaboration is a feminist technology,” K. J. Surkan describes the DOCC’s collaboration as “happening at every level—between teachers as we establish new pedagogical connections across institutions, between teachers and students in Open Office Hours, between students in the completion of group projects, and between scholars through feminist video dialogues, writing and conferencing.” Educators can teach courses as part of the DOCC or adapt the model reap the benefits of networked pedagogy.

**A Student Collaborators’ Bill of Rights**

Faculty members, instructors, staff members, and administrators must carefully consider how to give proper attribution and compensation to students who participate in collaborative digital projects. The University of California, Los Angeles Student Collaborators’ Bill of Rights exists as a guideline for best practices for student contributions to digital work. Collaborative work can and should include students as active contributors; however, power differentials can leave students vulnerable. As this statement notes, “students’ DH mentors may be the same people who give them grades, recommend them for jobs, and hold other kinds of power over their futures. Students may not feel entirely comfortable raising objections to certain practices if they feel these objections could endanger their academic or career prospects.” This site can be a starting place when developing equitable citation and compensation agreements for digital humanities projects, class assignments, or collaborative scholarship that involves student participation.
The OpenLab is a collaborative digital learning platform open to students, faculty members, staff members, and alumni of New York City College of Technology, City University of New York. Built using the open-source publishing and social networking platforms WordPress and BuddyPress, its goals are “to support teaching and learning, enable connection and collaboration, and strengthen the intellectual and social life of the college community” ("About The OpenLab at City Tech"). Classes can work together in shared or connected course spaces, and all members can collaborate on digital projects, participate in clubs, create online portfolios, and share their work publicly online (the [site tour](#) provides example uses). Because the site uses open-source software (and can soon be downloaded as part of the Commons In A Box), institutions can implement and adapt this structure in order to build their own digital platform for collaborative interdisciplinary teaching and scholarship. Additionally, the site contains an abundance of syllabi, assignments, and student projects that educators can adapt to their local context.

Not Your Mama’s Gamer (NYMG)

Not Your Mama’s Gamer (NYMG) is a collaborative blog with regular and featured contributors who critique video games and gaming culture. The site includes podcasts, videos, and outside content oriented toward the mission of “unpacking games from a feminist perspective” ("About" [NYMG]). According to cocreator Samantha Blackmon, NYMG is a pedagogical “tool for social change” that demonstrates “how we can work collaboratively with other scholars, industry professionals, and community members to learn from each other and work together as change agents. NYMG also gives us the chance to show people how we, as scholars, might not only write for an academic audience, but also write in such a way as to become a part of a broader...
“Teaching #BlackLivesMatter: Countering the Pedagogies of Anti-Black Racism, A Collaborative, Crowd-Sourced Syllabus”

“Teaching #BlackLivesMatter” was an event organized by the Mentoring Future Faculty of Color group at the Graduate Center, City University of New York, that explored “how to address racialization and state power as scholar-teachers, working at the level of both immediately executable plans for teaching/research, and longer term strategies for making the academy accountable to racial violence.” In order to extend this conversation to as many voices as possible, the organizers set up an open syllabus using Google Docs. Contributors are invited to share resources, activities, discussion questions, and assignments related to teaching anti-racism. The use of simple technology helped advance the group’s objectives for the event and enabled it to reach a wider audience. This syllabus includes many activities,
It also provides a model for creating a collaborative syllabus, something educators may wish to try in their own classes.

**Related Materials**


**Works Cited**

"About.” NYMG. www.nymgamer.com/?page_id=2


Google Docs. Google. google.com/docs/about/.


Mentoring Future Faculty of Color. "Teaching #BlackLivesmatter: Countering the Pedagogies of Anti-Black Racism, a Collaborative, Crowd


Related Keywords

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- Authorship
- Blogging
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