Enhancing the First-Year Curriculum:
Pedagogy, Interaction, Technology and Development

April 27, 2007

Project Coordinator:

Virgil Renfroe
Lecturer
Analytical Reasoning

Project Participants:

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Assistant Professor
Analytical Reasoning

Ms. Ruth Omunda
Adjunct Lecturer
Critical Writing

Faculty Member for Contemporary World: TBA

Faculty Member for African-American Experience: TBA

Project Overview

      This project consists of reconfiguring Blackboard, creating synchronous online learning communities, capturing "bottleneck" lectures in audio format to allow for subsequent student interaction, and creating eLibraries tailored to all sections of UNST 110, 120, 130 and 140. The purpose of the project is to enhance first-year student learning by providing freshmen with more structure, as well as the opportunity to consume their educations from outside the classroom. A second purpose is to assist faculty in fulfilling University Studies learning objectives in a technological yet pedagogically-grounded format exciting and interesting to the student body. Expectations include a student body becoming more engaged in learning and a faculty more enabled in teaching. This project aims to lay the foundation for a Strategic Development team for enhancing and broadening the implementation of these learning tools across the 2008 academic year. The project will run from May 15th to August 15th.

Objectives, Responsible Parties, Timeline

1)   • <u>Activity</u>: Blackboard Reconfiguration.
• <u>Responsible Party</u>: Virgil Renfroe.
• <u>Measure of Success</u>: Four Blackboard home pages equipped with all tools mentioned herein and all working properly.
• <u>Timeline</u>: To be completed by the first day of class for each summer session.

2)   • <u>Activity</u>: Fill course eLibraries with links tailored to 110, 120, 130 and 140, to include Course Periodicals, Interdisciplinary Links, Language Resources and Search Engines folders.
• <u>Responsible Party</u>: All participants, in that all participants will be expected to deliver me with appropriate links for their courses.
• <u>Measure of Success</u>: All links within eLibrary working properly for each course, and the identification of appropriate supplemental materials for each course.
• <u>Data</u>: Number of times particular folders within the eLibraries have been accessed.
• <u>Timeline</u>: Folders to be completed by the end of the first week of first summer session.

3)   • <u>Activity</u>: Identify and capture "bottleneck" lectures. Make these available for student consumption and interaction.
• <u>Responsible Party</u>: All participants.
• <u>Measure of Success</u>: Ten to twelve audio files instructors feel will help students grasp difficult and key course materials. Four innerTOOB pages with at least three working audio lectures each.
• <u>Data</u>: The files themselves, the number of times these files were accessed, and the innerTOOB pages.
• <u>Timeline</u>: Recorded and available at least one week before lecture will be delivered in class.

4)   • <u>Activity</u>: Capture all "After-the-Fact" lectures/supplemental materials. Supply these to enrolled students via links to audio files.
• <u>Responsible Party</u>: All participants.
• <u>Measure of Success</u>: Audio files in which instructors address students outside of class and supply them with materials they feel will shed light on previous or upcoming discussions/lectures.
• <u>Data</u>: The files themselves and how many times students accessed the files. Instructors will be asked to produce at least two of these.
• <u>Timeline</u>: The nature of these will not allow for a specific timeline, although all "After-the-Facts" will be available before final exams.

5) • <u>Activity</u>: Video record a minimum of two "Check-ins" for each course and make available to enrolled students.
• <u>Responsible Party</u>: All participants.
• <u>Measure of Success</u>: Audio/video files containing short clips of instructors assessing how they feel the course as a whole is proceeding, where it is succeeding, and where it appears the students are having difficulties. Participants will be asked to direct students to "bottleneck" lectures when appropriate.
• <u>Data</u>: The video-recordings themselves and how many times students accessed these recordings.

6) • <u>Activity</u>: Create questionnaires designed to gauge outcomes of using these technologies. Create these for both students and faculty, for both pre and post project[1].
• <u>Responsible Party</u>: All participants, with aid from Dr. Barnes, Dr. Simkins, Dr. Williams, Dr. Graves.
• <u>Measure of Success</u>: Completion of questionnaires by all students/participants and breakdown of responses into percentages for study.
• <u>Data</u>: Percentages that can lead us toward strong conclusions about effects of these technologies over the summer.
• <u>Timeline</u>: To be completed by August 15th.

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[1] 1) Survey in what ways implementation of eReading Rooms, eLibraries and TOOB Lectures, has affected faculty strategy for teaching their courses. 2) Survey how Blackboard use (and usefulness) in student body's prior college education compares to student body's summer education. 3) Analyze student use of TOOB lectures, eReading Rooms and eLibraries, in an attempt to establish any relationships between usage and final grade. 4) Survey student confidence level for success in college courses in the past, and whether having on-demand access to "bottleneck" lectures, or participating in eReading Rooms, contributed to a change in confidence level. 5) Survey how much students participated in summer courses versus courses they took in the fall and spring semesters. 6) Survey student and instructor satisfaction with eReading Rooms and TOOB Lectures.

Budget

Personnel: $15,000

Project Coordinator: **$9,000** (3 months @ $3,000)

Duties and Responsibilities: Coordinator will be responsible for all technical development and support for two summer sessions. Coordinator will complete all tasks necessary to prepare Blackboard homepages to support innerTOOB lectures as well as eReading Rooms and eLibraries, and will gather all materials from participants and upload those materials onto Blackboard. Coordinator will create all innerTOOB accounts as well as record, transfer and link all "bottleneck" lectures to those accounts. Coordinator will purchase, install and prepare faculty for all technologies involved. Coordinator will coordinate schedules for all important dates, including but not limited to participant meetings and classroom visits. Coordinator will assist participants in any and all matters concerning above technologies. Coordinator will work with participants to create, administer and draw conclusions from surveys. Coordinator will attend teaching and first-year experience conferences, as well as present scholarly work at the latter conference.

Strategic Planning Committee Stipends: **$6,000** (4 @ $1,500)

Duties and Responsibilities: Participants will identify and work with project coordinator to record two to three "bottleneck" lectures, at least two "After-the-Fact" lectures, and at least two instances where they "check in" with their students. Participants will record these lectures inside and outside of class. Participants will require students to meet in eReading Rooms to discuss upcoming lectures or relevant articles (or what they feel would work best) and assign specific duties to group members. Participants will monitor eReading Rooms. Participants will provide project coordinator with appropriate course links. Participants will attend weekly meetings to provide and discuss feedback. Participants will assist in composition of questionnaires and acquisition of data.

Equipment: $1,570

       Marantz PMD 660 Audio Recorder x 2: $998 + tax = $1,070
       Camcorder: $500

Professional Development + Travel: $1,352

       Conference: **$1,352**

       The 2007 MERLOT International Conference. "The Conference is designed to
       provide you with a number of ways to get connected, get information, and get
       excited about teaching and learning with technology."

       Purpose: To attain relevant information for creating more effective learning
       environments for students, and to pass this information on to core group of UNST
       faculty who will help adapt it to the learning initiative outlined in this proposal.

           Registration Fee: $315
           Round-trip Airfare to New Orleans: $400
           Hotel: $129 + 13% tax @ 3 nights = $437
           Ground Transportation: $30 x 2 = $60
           Per Diem: 4 days @ $35 per day = $140

Total Budget: $17,922