Project-Based Learning: Lives In Context Cross-Course Collaborative

Goals: 1) to efficiently analyze, design, develop, implement and evaluate projects through the focus of cross-course curricular, project-based learning with community service Instructional Design and Educational Technology (IDET) Lives In Context (L.I.C.) program; 2) to increase social presence in online courses for more meaningful community interaction.

Issue: Consistent implementation of the goal involves many communication and collaboration needs among multiple levels of program students, first time and ongoing target design partners. A concise, effective protocol and resources are needed through the BlackBoard environment for program students that involve direct contact with individual and group community contacts.

Approach: Three-pronged: (1) consistent BlackBoard L.I.C. cross-course collaborative structure; (2) progress development rubric; (3) web conferencing rubric.

Definitions and Frameworks
Lives In Context (L.I.C.) - graduate student project-based learning (PBL) designs with and for an educator or instructional designer toward his or her PBL student learning outcomes applied to a local service project; similar global partnerships preferred
Project-Based Learning (PBL) - an extended process of inquiry while addressing a question, problem, or challenge through carefully planned, managed, and assessed projects to learn academic objectives and soft skills
Inquiry-Based Learning (IBL) - a learning process through questions based upon interests, curiosities, and learner experiences
Cross-Course Collaboration: a combination of learning outcomes from two or more courses toward a meaningfully applied, real-world project, according to a 7-week course cycle model

Cross-Course Collaborative Structure
IDET graduate courses all follow a 7-week session folder structure to better help graduate students plan weekly work. Units are contained within the session folders.

The below 7-week course content session folder structure parallels all IDET graduate courses and is made available in all simultaneously offered IDET courses within a separate L.I.C. BlackBoard course shell. All cross-course collaborations, project analysis, design, implementation, and evaluation components are archived in the L.I.C. Bb shell for project sustainability. Project teams are ideally formed by combining a student from each simultaneous course offering. Students then combine their individual course learning outcomes from two or more courses toward a collaborative project.

Progress Development Rubric
This generic rubric is designed to progressively experience and prepare the final PBL project within a PBL-designed experience. Responses, static document attachments, and links to progressively developing tools are posted to discussion threads. Students are instructed to read rubric rows in entirety. Progress development threads due at the end of sessions 1, 3, and 5.

Web Conferencing Rubric
This generic rubric guides a student’s synchronous or asynchronous participation in the L.I.C. web conferences. The overall purpose is for greater social presence among faculty, students, and community. Included are progress celebrations, collaboration, and higher-level thinking challenges to applying course content through peer review. Conferences held at the end of weekly course sessions 2, 4, and 6.

Assessment
Formative evaluations of this approach within a single course are available from previous course offerings. The approach outlined here will be applied the second carousel or mini-course cycle of fall term, 2013. Student performance will be measured through a final project rubric that will include individual performance, team performance, products, and final evaluations from target design and local service site contacts. An evaluation will be conducted to determine if the use of the process, tools, and resources improved students’ perceptions of meaningful learning outcomes applied to service, which of the aids were most effective, and why.