

Integrating Design Qualities of Choice to Promote Student Engagement in a Computer Applications Course: Health Promotion Book Publishing Project

Mark Tomita, Julie Freelove-Charton, Vic Sbarbaro, Jan Campbell, Linda Bilsborough
Department of Health and Community Services

Pamela Johansen, Jean Schuldberg
School of Social Work

ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND. Since 2002, the Department of Health and Community Services has continually upgraded the HCSV 260 Computer Applications in Health Education course to prepare Chico State graduates with extensive desktop and electronic publishing skills to meet the technological challenges in public health education. HCSV 260 is the only course of its kind among health education, health promotion, and public health programs in the USA, requiring students to develop basic computer competencies in at least a dozen software applications.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT. The computer applications education strategy is to integrate design qualities of choice (product focus, affiliation, affirmation of performance, novelty and variety, choice, and authenticity) (Schlechty Center, n.d.) to enrich student learning experiences. Students are taught state-of-the-art technologies in public health, and are required to work collaboratively on real-life computer projects that result in meaningful and tangible student learning outcomes. The students produce actual health promotion products. In this enriched learning environment, student-faculty interactions are greatly increased, mimicking professional roles in public health practice. Questions remain about the effectiveness of using this approach to computer application education. For example, "Is student engagement transferable from one application to another?"

FACULTY ENGAGEMENT. While student engagement is a frequent topic of conversation, faculty engagement is not. Faculty engagement is an often overlooked, but essential variable to promote student engagement (see preliminary model). One of the project's goal is to engage interdisciplinary faculty in collaborative scholarly publishing with undergraduate students. This goal is consistent with an engaged institution. In this project, two of the three books are being produced with six College of Behavioral and Social Sciences faculty other than the project coordinator. Faculty are involved in a collaborative project with students that: 1) increases scholarly inquiry in the university, 2) provides opportunities for faculty to explore related areas of research, 3) results in a meaningful and tangible product, 4) creates another level of scholarship for retention, tenure, and promotion.

THE PROJECT. The students learn the publishing process from start to finish, and have hands-on experience assembling the book, designing covers, and marketing the product. This paper examines the publication processes of three undergraduate student/faculty books published in 2008: (1) *Poems in Health Promotion: Sustainability* (Tomita, 2008), (2) *Promoting Intergenerational Health: Stories by Chico State Students* (Tomita, Johansen, Schuldberg, Freelove-Charton, 2009), and (3) *My Favorite Elementary School Teacher: Stories by Chico State Students* (Tomita, Bilsborough, Campbell, Sbarbaro, 2009).

ASSIGNED COMPUTER PROJECTS

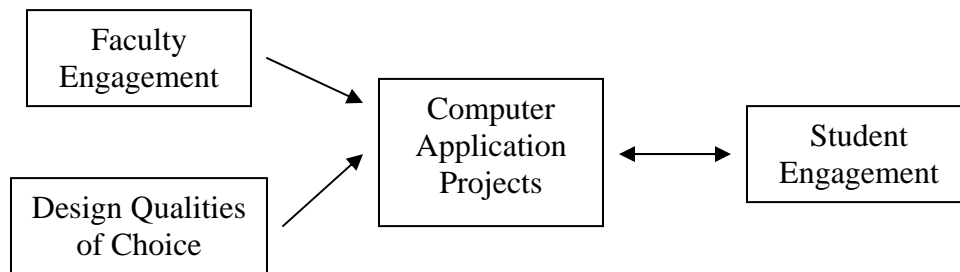
1. PUBLISH HEALTH PROMOTION BOOK
2. Format scholarly journal article for publication (MS Word)
3. Create form letters and mailing labels (MS Word)
4. Design three-fold health education brochure (MS Publisher)
5. Design professional slideshow and learning module (PowerPoint)
6. Design health education consumer poster (PhotoShop)

7. Design scientific conference poster (PhotoShop & PowerPoint)
8. Design health education board game using (PhotoShop & MS Word)
9. Design PDF fill-out forms (Acrobat)
10. Design electronic portfolio on CD-ROM (Dreamweaver, Icon Maker, NotePad, Xenu)
11. Create health education podcast (Audacity)
12. Design book covers (PhotoShop)
13. Design CD-ROM labels (Discus & PhotoShop)
14. Take digital photos and edit photos (Nikon, PhotoShop)
15. Create budget spreadsheet (MS Excel)
16. Analyze data, present results with tables and graphs (SPSS)

DESIGN QUALITIES OF CHOICE

1. **PRODUCT FOCUS** – The health promotion book is the actual product being produced
2. **AFFILIATION** – Work on project collaboratively with other students, family, and faculty
3. **AFFIRMATION OF PERFORMANCE** – Feedback from family and faculty experts
4. **NOVELTY & VARIETY** – students select strategies for writing their stories
5. **CHOICE** - students choose content to write
6. **AUTHENTICITY** – project is tied to student and family interests and values

PRELIMINARY MODEL FOR TEACHING COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN HEALTH EDUCATION



REFERENCES

Staff. (n.d.). Theory of engagement. Retrieved November 25, 2008, from <http://www.schlechtycenter.org/pdfs/theoryofengagement.pdf>

Tomita, M. (Ed.)(2008). Poems in health promotion: Sustainability. Chico, CA: North State Academic Press.

CONTACT

Mark Tomita, PhD
 Department of Health and Community Services
 California State University, Chico
 Chico, CA 95929-0505
 Ph. 530-898-4417 (Office)
 Cell. 530-354-6910 (Preferred)
 Fax. 530-898-5107
 E-Mail: mtomita@csuchico.edu
 URL: <http://www.csuchico.edu/~mtomita/>

STUDENT BOOKS

