Accomplishments To-Date

Building cluster projects into existing courses
  • Examples: Applied Health Promotion course

Using experimental courses, special topics, and independent studies
  • ST: Human Trafficking

Collaboration across courses
  • Examples: Campus Climate Survey Project; Community Health Assessment Project

Collaboration across disciplines
  • Examples: Cybersecurity minor; Certificate in Justice and Welfare of Children and Youth; Cluster Composition
Goals and Timeline:

**General:** Develop a system that allows for the flexibility and innovation we need while maintaining integrity and consistency of credit-bearing cluster experiences.

**Summer 2017:**
1. Committee Retreat and Curriculum Development work(?)

**University Days and Campus Cluster Events in August 2017:**
1. Work with faculty to refine definitions, procedures, outcomes, etc. for cluster experiences
2. Gather input from faculty on topics such as coding and labeling systems for cluster experiences
Goals cont’d

By October 2017:

Publish and begin using initial procedures and definitions for cluster experiences. These include the following:

1. Working definitions of credit-bearing cluster experiences
2. “Course shells” with syllabus templates and shared outcomes for most popular experiences (established with your assistance)
3. Procedures for how to propose/approve cluster courses
4. Guidelines for using experimental and special topics courses as needed to test and develop cluster experiences not yet established or considered

Beyond October:

Gather feedback and refine/expand cluster experiences as well as associated procedures and definitions.
Ongoing Considerations

1. How do we best label (code, define and describe) cluster experiences so that they are as simple as possible while meeting our needs for flexibility and change?

2. What does it mean to be a “cluster” experience? Disciplinary vs. cross-disciplinary vs. interdisciplinary

3. How do we ensure consistency in and across cluster experiences (e.g., hours required per credit)?

4. How do we help students navigate cluster curriculum? (Understand, find and engage)

5. How do we include students in curriculum development?

6. How do we ensure (or guide students to ensure) they are not overwhelmed with cluster experiences in any given semester?
Preliminary set of cluster-based course types based on faculty input to Curriculum Committee or Cluster Guides

- Toolkits
- Projects
- Service Learning
- Capstones
- Applied Labs
- Assistantships
- Travel
- Research
- Practicum
- Internships
- Special Topics

Focus of today’s forum

Already existing workable models
BU-3040-73/F73 – Building Professional Blogging Skills - 1 credit course

Fall 2016 – Tuesdays – 12:30pm-1:45pm & online – Hyde Hall Rm. 116
Teaching Lecturer: Denise Hutchins | Email: dmhutchins@plymouth.edu
Office: Hyde Hall Rm. 232 | Office Hours: 8:15am-9:15am Tuesday & Thursday | Syllabus on Moodle

Course Description – This writing course prepares students to professionally blog for themselves or an organization. Students will learn to write properly formatted posts, create interesting reads, select topics, and establish a sustainable blog. Areas of focus will include digital writing, finding your voice, imagery, links and technology.

Course Objective – The goal is for you to be confident in your writing and blogging skills so you can create and sustain a blog as part of your professional life.

Student Learning Outcomes – After completion of the class, students will:
1. Learn how to create a blog
2. Understand all the different aspects to establishing a blog - finding an audience, keeping it fresh and driving engagement
3. Comprehend how to craft a blog post and utilize the necessary elements for maximum impact and reach
4. Learn how to write effectively for your audience

Full Value Contract – As the instructor of this class, I will do my best to facilitate a supportive learning environment. I promise to do my best to make this class interesting, fun and practical, but I cannot do it without your support. That means there is real work involved. Learning is an active process in which we will all need to participate fully to experience the “full value” this course offers. I expect each of you to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings and share relevant examples from your own life. In return for your active attendance, preparation, participation and support for one another, you can expect me to return your work in a timely manner, come prepared to class, and to do my best to inform and educate each of you in fun and innovative ways.

Required Text – There is no required textbook for this course. We will use articles and blogs. We will write using Associated Press style. Optional Text - Associated Press Stylebook Editing marks will be used from the AP 2011 Stylebook.
Sample syllabus: Toolkit Course*

*posted on IC site

CM2xxx: Writing & Editing for Style I.

Spring 2018  Online

OBJECTIVES
When you have completed this course, you should be better able to:
- Write, edit, and proofread your own work and others.
- Implement strategies that enhance the clarity of your writing and those you edit.
- Implement strategies that enhance the concision and elegance of your writing and those you edit.
- Implement strategies that enhance the coherence and cohesion of your writing and those you edit.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This one-credit course focuses on writing and editing for a more readable style. Students will learn strategies for writing sentences that are more clear, as well as paragraphs that are more cohesive and coherent. Prerequisite: EN1200. Springs.

EVALUATION
Your final grade will be calculated as follows:
- Forum Posts........................................ 10%
- Weekly Exercises................................ 40%
- Journal............................................ 15%
- Editing protocol............................ 15%
- Final Exam........................................ 15%

A note on my grading philosophy: I do not give an A (i.e., full credit) simply because your work meets my expectations. Work that meets my expectations is given a C (which equates to average). B’s are reserved for work that surpasses my expectations and A’s are reserved for truly outstanding work. I am always happy to discuss grades that you may have questions about, but be prepared to explain why you believe your work surpassed my expectations or represented outstanding work.

WRITING & TECHNOLOGY
This is a writing course. You will write every week and I expect that writing to be professional. What’s more, it’s a course about writing and editing for clarity, concision, and coherence. While this is not a grammar course, you’ll be expected to recognize and adhere to grammatical rules. That means you will have to take care to proofread for spelling, word-usage, punctuation and other “mechanics”. It’s also a technology course. Technology, and the willingness to adapt to it, is not only crucial to the work of professional writers. It is crucial to almost every 21st century job you can conceive of.

CM2xxx: Writing & Editing for Style II.

Spring 2018  Online

OBJECTIVES
When you have completed this course, you should be better able to:
- Write, edit, and proofread your own work and others.
- Implement strategies that enhance the clarity of your writing and those you edit.
- Implement strategies that enhance the concision and elegance of your writing and those you edit.
- Implement strategies that enhance the coherence and cohesion of your writing and those you edit.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This one-credit course focuses on writing and editing for a more readable style. Students will learn strategies that build on Writing and Editing for Style I. To compose paragraphs that are more cohesive, and documents that are more coherent. Prerequisite: EN1200, CM2xxx. Springs.

EVALUATION
Your final grade will be calculated as follows:
- Forum Posts........................................ 15%
- Weekly Exercises................................ 40%
- Journal............................................ 16%
- Editing protocol............................ 15%
- Final Exam........................................ 15%

A note on my grading philosophy: I do not give an A (i.e., full credit) simply because your work meets my expectations. Work that meets my expectations is given a C (which equates to average). B’s are reserved for work that surpasses my expectations and A’s are reserved for truly outstanding work. I am always happy to discuss grades that you may have questions about, but be prepared to explain why you believe your work surpassed my expectations or represented outstanding work.

WRITING & TECHNOLOGY
This is a writing course. You will write every week and I expect that writing to be professional. What’s more, it’s a course about writing and editing for clarity, concision, and coherence. While this is not a grammar course, you’ll be expected to recognize and adhere to grammatical rules. That means you will have to take care to proofread for spelling, word-usage, punctuation and other “mechanics”. It’s also a technology course. Technology, and the willingness to adapt to it, is not only crucial to the work of professional writers.... it is crucial to almost every 21st century job you can conceive of.
Sample syllabus: Cluster Project Course*

The Complexity of Conserving a Migratory Bird Species That Migrates Between Two Forested Habitats in two different regions
(Tourism, Environment, Sustainability, and Development Cluster Project); Course Syllabus for TESD 2xxx, 1 credit, pass/fail, spring ’18

Students will spend approximately between 12 and 15 hours involved in four events (moderated movie, conference with participants creating educational visual material based on invited guests’ presentations, exhibition planning session, exhibition opening and associated workshops). The events will begin in the fall of ’17 and occur over two semesters during the ’17-18 academic year. The culminating event—the exhibition—will open in spring ’18 and after this, students will submit their final reflections on the essential questions posed at the various events.

Instructors: Students will sign up for the course with an instructor from their discipline who serve on the Bicknell’s Thrush Cluster Management Team. A Moodle site for the course will be created for posting all resources, announcements about events, and assignments.

Course Description:
Students will be presented with an overview of the Forest to Forest: Bicknell’s Thrush Cluster Project: The Bicknell’s Thrush is a threatened songbird that migrates between high elevation spruce/fir forests in the northeast US and southeast Canada, including the White Mountains of New Hampshire, and their winter habitat most of which is on the Island of Hispaniola (Haiti in the west and the Dominican Republic in the east). Forest to Forest is an interdisciplinary, multi-year, multi-phase cluster project. The main goal of this project is to increase awareness and conservation action for the Bicknell’s Thrush and its habitat. Key issues include: how conservation needs and development of land intersect, effects of climate change on breeding habitat, and the role of public awareness in conserving this species through multiple media. Faculty from a variety of disciplines, students, and external partners are committed to accomplishing the above desired outcomes. Students will participate in a series of moderated events- movie, conference, and exhibit- designed to raise awareness about the complexity of conservation issues related to the Bicknell’s Thrush. Students will reflect, create and write about visuals showcasing their understanding of the challenges of conserving a migratory bird. Students must attend the events in the fall ’17 to register for credit in the spring ’18. Attendance of participating students will be taken at all events.

Student Learning Outcomes: After attending the series of public project events participants will be able to:
* Appreciate the interconnected learning focused on sustainable development, a species of special conservation need and migratory bird ecology.
* Educate the public about the presence of the Bicknell’s Thrush in their breeding and wintering habitat.
* Identify some cultural pressure points that challenge preservation of critical habitat for the Bicknell’s Thrush in the U.S. and the Dominican Republic.
* Describe how conservation of the Bicknell’s Thrush is a case study involving systems thinking about social justice issues including the environment, sustainability, ecotourism, and education.
* Highlight how the Bicknell’s Thrush is an example of how changes to forested landscapes in NH and the DR are linked and strongly influence a species threatened with extinction.
* Explain the strong connection between tropical and temperate forests in the life histories of migratory bird species.
* Engage and empower students and the public in informed action.
* Demonstrate how Tourism, Environment, Sustainability, and Development issues can be communicated through a variety of media, including video and visual representations.

Student Assessment: Students will participate in the series of planned project events and write reflections after each event. Students will create visuals for the exhibit.
Current List of Credit-Bearing Cluster Experiences

- Toolkits
- Projects
- Service Learning
- Capstones
- Applied Labs
- Assistantships
- Travel
- Research
- Practicum
- Internships
- Special Topics

Did We Miss Anything?

This is your opportunity to give us a quick description of an experience you would like to offer that is not accounted for here.
Seven tables are associated with these seven topics

1. Toolkits  
2. Projects  
3. Service Learning  
4. Capstones  
5. Applied Labs  
6. Assistantships  
7. Travel

Tables 8-10 are for new topics or overflow from popular topics.

Please choose a table for the course type you can envision creating.

What might this course look like?
Please take a few minutes to articulate your idea on the worksheet and then we will discuss collectively at each table.
Table Discussion:

• Describe your proposed or envisioned cluster experience to others at your table.
• What are the *shared* characteristics among your ideas? That is, if all of the experiences described are “projects,” for example, what might you say makes a “project” a “project”? 
• If time permits, try to develop a working definition for your selected cluster experience.
Table Discussion

• What are the characteristics you think make this particular experience *unique* compared to other cluster experiences?
• What could you envision as *common outcomes* from this type of course?
• How might we assess these outcomes?
Please use your worksheet and/or extra paper to comment on:

- What do you see as the benefits and drawbacks of our approach?
- Is there anything you think we are not addressing based on our goals and plans?
- The role the curriculum committee is taking on this is different from its usual work. Are you comfortable having the committee take on this work? If not, where should the responsibility lie?
- What do you need from the curriculum committee/cluster guides?
- Any other comments?

We will collect the worksheets and other comments (and return upon request)
Thanks for your time, ideas, and help shaping cluster curriculum.