

Learning from Experience: Developing Portraits of Practice Part II

I. **Community Curator(s).** Who has prepared Part II of this Portrait on behalf of your LC? What date was it completed?

Barbara Toth, May 14, 2008

J. **Key Resources.** Who and what are the beneficial people, organizations, materials, websites, and other resources you have utilized? What help/support did you get from instructional designers, IT staff and other tech support personnel? What types of support did you receive from departments, colleges, administration? Of all resources, which were essential and why were they essential?

Several people and organizations have been beneficial--

The staff at Center for Teaching Learning and Technology, BGSU, provided on call assistance and podcast workshops

Respective Campus Information Technology Services answered incidental questions.

The technology support staff at SnapKast answered questions about this software as we learned the program

Jeremy Schnieder, BGSU, participant assisted all the participants with various relevant hardware and software technologies including microphones, SnapKast and Audacity. He was the on call staffer.

If I have to signal out on party for their usefulness, it would be Jeremy.

K. **Your Assessment Strategies.** How did you evaluate your work/successes? How did you assess member learning, (including technology learning)? your community's growth over the year? student learning or change connected with your project?

What have you observed or concluded at this point with respect to member learning, your community's growth, and student learning?

Participant growth can be measured by comparing the number of participants who were familiar with Audacity before and after the OLN grant. Of the total six participants –

Two were familiar with Audacity before; six were familiar with Audacity after. The level of familiarity of the two who were originally familiar was greater afterward.

Participant growth can also be measured by comparing how many participants were familiar with SnapKast before and after the OLN grant:

Zero were familiar with Snapkast before; six were familiar with Snapkast afterward.

Participant growth can also be measured by comparing how many participants were familiar with Second Life:

Zero were familiar with SL before the OLN grant; two were familiar with SL after the grant.

Growth can also be measure by looking at the number of podcasts constructed by the participants to date:

Bowling Green State University--5

University of Toledo--3

University of Findlay-7

Lourdes--2

Owens Community College--5

Participants also reported growth in the area of constructing text to be heard, i.e., for use as a podcast and text to be read, i.e., for use as a document.

What have you observed or concluded at this point with respect to member learning, your community's growth, and student learning?

Member learning is revealed in the testimonials of individual participants:

One participant has written: "I've learned a lot in a short period of time about podcasts/vodcasts and the grant gave me the extrinsic

motivation to make this a priority. From negotiating with the software rep for delivery, to networking with tech support at my own university, to learning more about the application of the technology, I've had learned much. I'm planning on applying my new knowledge to my classes in the fall by sending podcasts of paper feedback (and thus avoiding the complaints about my illegible handwriting). The creation of podcasts can also remain an option for tutors looking to develop a project as part of the writing center course.

Another participant has written about learning so much that he now is sharing what he has learned with other colleagues at his institution:

"I've also recently taught the podcast information to a colleague who plans to use it during orientation here at the university."

Another has written: "I've learned more about the operation of four other writing centers and about the roles and responsibilities of my peers. This connection is a valuable one that I hope to maintain in some ways in the future, perhaps through additional cooperative ventures."

Student learning will be assessed in the future. There will be two parts to this assessment: assessment of the learning for students who constructed podcasts and assessment of student use of constructed podcasts

A survey is being administered to all students who have constructed podcasts and results will be shared with OLN. For the latter, at this point we plan to track the amount of usage of various podcasts. User surveys will also be used. Hopefully, if well marketed, students not only across Ohio, but across the country will use the podcasts.

My general observation is that all of the participants have learned more about technology, other writing centers and staff, and even more about themselves. My conclusion is that, despite time constraints, this collaboration was a productive one, technologically, professionally, pedagogically, and socially. My prediction is all participants will continue to grow technologically and professionally. This OLN grant has provided the incentive to learn and to keep on learning.

L. **What Others Know About What You've Done.** Beyond your community members, who else is vested in what you're doing? How did you communicate and update these stakeholders on your efforts and successes? What questions do your colleagues have? What have you told your students about your learning community?

BGSU SL Coordinators Anthony Fontana and Bonnie Mitchell, How did you communicate and update these stakeholders on your efforts and successes? To Date – -East Central Writing Center presentations at Ohio State University April 2008 -Writing Center listproc -Ohio Writing Center Consortium Upcoming – -College Composition and Communication Conference, Spring 2009 in San Francisco

M. **Dissemination.** What visible bridgework -- structural elements, findings, lessons, ideas, beauties, legacies, processes, relationships, etc -- is your learning community leaving, that inspires others to *build their own bridges as they walk on them*? What digital resources have you developed that you will place into the E-Learning Athenaeum of Ohio? What might members offer, such as informal "brown bag" lunches, research, written articles, and presentations about your work? What is important to tell others "not to do"?

Our podcast library is labor intensive; at this point, we are still in the construction phase. But I think once the podcast is "up," the beauty of it will inspire others in and out of our field to think digitally – and in our case audio-ally. When I met the director of the Miami University at the ECWCA this past April, he wanted to join into and benefit from our OLN podcast

grant. Not doubt there will be a legacy and the beauty of our work is still coming.

N. **20/20 Hindsight.** If you were to start over again, what would you do differently and why? What key challenges, problems, solutions, struggles, and failures, would you handle differently? To what degree would you change your goals? What additional successes would you enjoy? What worked - or didn't work -- and why?

Somehow creating more time for meetings would have been good. But writing center people are some of the hardest working/busiest people around. So how to have more time to meet is something we still haven't figured out. We're just still plugging along, making out podcasts, trying to meet student need, and meeting as we can. The OLN grant has definitely made new connections among us members in a lot of various configurations, however.

O. **What's Next?** Will your community continue? Formally? Informally? What could be next in another cycle of reflective practice? The next steps may not be totally predictable, yet they may take you in another fruitful direction that builds upon your community's growth and knowledge.

We definitely will keep working together; we have more podcasts to make and the podcast library to be uploaded and made accessible to others.

This is the end of Part II
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[Submit Part II to nwlccenter@bgsu.edu]