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Teaching with Wikipedia

Lynne Stahl

A large red square with a white border, centered on a white background. Inside the square, the text "Teaching With Wikipedia" is written in white, bold, sans-serif font.

Teaching With Wikipedia

Introduction

Instructors

- Lynne Stahl, Humanities Librarian
- Jeff Werst, Science Librarian

Purpose:

- Provide you with resources and techniques to address the challenges and opportunities that Wikipedia presents for teaching and learning
- Provide conceptual background for open pedagogy and relevant principles

Learning Objectives

- Gain exposure to the philosophy of Open Pedagogy and the ways in which it can be used to empower students in the classroom and beyond
- Understand various options for using Wikipedia as a resource for teaching and learning
- Learn how to develop assignments that allow students to write for a wide range of audiences by editing, contributing to, or authoring Wikipedia articles while improving their research skills



The “open movement”

- Open Access
- Open Source
- Open Data
- Open Science
- Open Knowledge
- Open Pedagogy
- Open Educational Resources



What makes something
“open”?



What makes something “open”?

In the public domain, or licensed to allow the 5 Rs:

1. Retain
2. Reuse
3. Revise
4. Remix
5. Redistribute



The value of “Open”



The value of “Open”

- Cost savings for students
- Flexible
- Customizable
- Dynamic, evolving
- Collaborative, interactive
- Learner-directed, learner-centered



Open pedagogy:

A set of pedagogical practices that include engaging students in content creation and making learning accessible to all

Elder, A.K. (2019). *The OER Starter Kit*. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Digital Press. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.31274/isudp.7>



Principles of Open Pedagogy

- Open Pedagogy is shared with others
- Open Pedagogy depends on open licenses
- Open Pedagogy is active

[“Open Pedagogy Assignments Compilation” by Quill West and Contributors is CC-BY 4.0](#)



Features of Open Pedagogy

- Learners are empowered to shape the world as they encounter it
- Students are knowledge creators, not just consumers
- Assignments are renewable rather than disposable



Against disposable assignments

“These are assignments that students complain about doing and faculty complain about grading. They’re assignments that add no value to the world after a student spends three hours creating it, a teacher spends 30 minutes grading it, and then the student throws it away. Not only do these assignments add no value to the world, they actually suck value out of the world.”

David Wiley (2013). “What is Open Pedagogy?” <https://opencontent.org/blog/archives/2975>

Spectrum of Open Education

RESOURCES

PEDAGOGY

more open

Students & instructors collaborate & create resources

Instructor selects free resources

Institution pays for resources

Student buys affordable resources

Student buys high cost resources

- Student and/or instructor created texts and assignments with CC license
- Open materials/texts, OER repositories with CC license
- Materials in the public domain
- Free materials protected by copyright
- Free to student library/subscription resources
- Affordable paid print materials OR copied non-OER materials
- Pay-for-access print and online materials

Students and instructor actively participate in knowledge construction

Instructor continuously revises knowledge

Instructor gives student fixed/static, downloadable knowledge

Open for whom?

less open

Wikipedia!

WIKIPEDIA

The Free Encyclopedia

English

6 245 000+ articles

日本語

1 252 000+ 記事

Deutsch

2 534 000+ Artikel

Español

1 659 000+ artículos

Русский

1 697 000+ статей

Français

2 296 000+ articles

Italiano

1 672 000+ voci

中文

1 175 000+ 條目



Polski

1 454 000+ hasel

Português

1 055 000+ artigos

EN ▾

Read Wikipedia in your language ▾

MOST COMMON

Create or Expand an article

Students research and write an article from scratch, or expand a shorter article

Course with fewer than 50 students

6 - 12 weeks alongside regular syllabus coursework

GREAT FIT FOR: MOST DISCIPLINES, REPLACING WRITING OR RESEARCH PROJECT

Translate an existing article

Students translate high-quality articles from language they are studying to share on Wikipedia of their native language

Course with fewer than 30 students

4 - 5 weeks alongside syllabus

GREAT FIT FOR: LANGUAGE/TRANSLATION, ESL

Create new media and upload

Students produce original media content and upload to Wikimedia Commons

Any size course

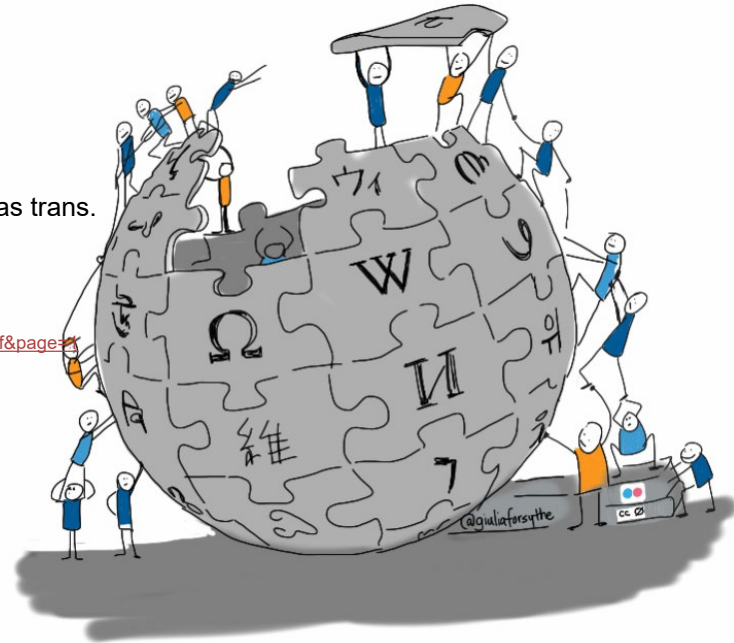
1 - 2 weeks alongside syllabus

GREAT FIT FOR FOR: JOURNALISM, ART/MULTI-MEDIA, ETC.

Wiki and Teaching

- Recommended practices for designing and implementing Wiki assignments
- Existing Manual of Style and other guidelines
- Address gaps in representation
 - Fewer than 10% of Wikipedia editors identify as women, and less than 1% as trans.
 - Only 17% of all biographical articles on Wikipedia focus on women.
 - “Notability” criteria exacerbate gaps in gender and racial representation

Source: https://foundation.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File%3AEditor_Survey_Report_-_April_2011.pdf&page=7



Sample Assignments

- Entire course syllabus on Wiki
- Copyediting
- Translation
- Create/add media
- Research projects
- Evaluating articles

Sample Projects

University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia – Research Methods (Ongoing)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:School_and_university_projects#University_of_Queensland,_Brisbane,_Australia_%E2%80%93_Research_Methods_\(Ongoing\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:School_and_university_projects#University_of_Queensland,_Brisbane,_Australia_%E2%80%93_Research_Methods_(Ongoing))

“This semester-long project provides third-year Arts students with an opportunity to undertake research into the lives and histories of Australian subjects. Using traditional documentary research methods, the students build a knowledge base to underpin a high quality Wikipedia article on people and organisations whose archives are held in the collecting library of the University of Queensland.

I choose the subjects of research and the students work in groups with me to develop the content for the article. After some weeks of research the students begin working in a sandbox to build the article. It is transferred to the mainspace two or three weeks out from the end of semester and the Wikimedia Australia members comment on their work. Learning how to work within wiki software and understanding the place of Wikipedia in contemporary knowledge sharing are essential aspects of this project.”

Sample Projects

St. Charles Community College, Cottleville, Missouri (Summer 2011 - present)

See also: [Wikipedia:School_and_university_projects/HardenPsy101](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/School_and_university_projects/HardenPsy101)

“There are over [1000 psychology-related stubs](#) in [WP:PSYCH](#). Even new psychology students will be capable of improving these articles to a collegiate level. Introduction to Psychology is an introductory overview of the field of [psychology](#). It is an examination of [behavioral](#), [cognitive](#), [psychoanalytic](#), [humanistic](#) and [biological](#) viewpoints in psychology. The course includes [learning](#) principles and applications, [motivation](#), [emotions](#), [stress](#), [psychobiology](#), [personality](#), [abnormal behaviors](#) and approaches to [therapy](#). Contact [Professor Harden](#) for more information.”

Sample Projects

Murder, Madness, and Mayhem

The [University of British Columbia](#)'s class SPAN312 ("Murder, Madness, and Mayhem: Latin American Literature in Translation") contributed to Wikipedia during Spring 2008. Our collective goals were to bring a selection of articles on [Latin American literature](#) to [featured article](#) status (or as near as possible). By project's end, we had contributed three [featured articles](#) and eight [good articles](#). None of these articles was a good article at the outset; two did not even exist.

Caveats

- Edits/additions may be reverted/deleted for a variety of reasons
- Many existing guidelines for editors exist that students should know about
- Potential signup/tech issues: build in time for students to create accounts in advance

Helpful Resources

- [Sandbox](#) for drafting additions and edits
- [Teahouse](#) for questions and assistance
- Existing documentation

Amplifying Appalachia Event Overview

Our Wikipedia Edit-a-thon is focused on amplifying the stories and figures of under-represented Appalachian artists, writers, and other creators, particularly women, people of color, and LGBTQ individuals

March 21-24, 2022

Hosted under the [Art + Feminism](#) organizational umbrella

For more info on participating: email Lynne.stahl@mail.wvu.edu

Questions?