

Faculty Professional Growth Summer Project Final Report Draft

Use this Word template to compose your responses to questions that are part of the new online summer project application form, and take advantage of spell checking. You can then cut and paste this to the online system.

Do not bother with fancy formatting as none is preserved in the online form.

Summer Project Title

Digital Storytelling Research

Abstract

Write a concise summary with descriptive information about your project, location, time span, your relationship to it, etc. Include specific information-- since you have completed your project, your knowledge is valuable and can be shared with your colleagues (200 word limit).

I attended the Digital Storytelling “Bootcamp” / festival in Sedona at the Yavapai Community College Technology Center from June 6, 2004 to June 13, 2004. Prior to this, I researched applications for digital storytelling in the classroom at ASU. My research and “hands-on” experience at the conference have allowed me to explore ways to integrate teaching communication skills with script writing and technology. The focus of the information was to provide innovative classroom / lab activities for non-native English speaking students. I now understand the benefits and limitations to digital storytelling as an academic tool to aid students in language acquisition. The two days (June 14 & 15) following the festival were devoted to creating teaching material to be used in digital storytelling classes at MCC. Along with the digital story I created and produced at the festival, I created and produced a second one to be shown in the class which demonstrates how a student can use this medium as a replacement for a traditional college “term paper.” To view both of these stories see: www.mc.maricopa.edu/~beckman. In addition, (and most importantly!) this project allowed Cyndi Greening and I to have our first experience as a “learning community”. We better understand how to teach the course. Both “storytelling” and “technology” need to be mastered by the students. Initially we believed that storytelling could be taught first and then the technology could be taught second. By working together on this project, we have designed an approach which “weaves” technology with storytelling. This will allow students to gain flexibility with their stories as they edit them given the restraints of the software they have chosen to complete the story.

Outcomes

In a paragraph or two describe what worked well. Did you accomplish your objective(s)? Were you able to complete your summer project as written? If not, what did you modify and why? What did not go as well as expected, if anything? Were there any surprises? **Note: Use the questions as guides for your outcomes. Do not include detailed list of workshops attended, speakers who presented, or a list of items you have seen, heard, or read.**

The “bootcamp” / festival was a wonderful opportunity to learn more about the art of storytelling. However, due to time limitations, we only learned one type of software. This was unfortunate since MCC students may use a variety of software programs available to them in our media art lab. Also, two days was not enough time to review all of the information we gained at the bootcamp / festival. We needed at least a week in our lab to apply the skills we learned. An added bonus to this project was meeting people from around the world who use digital storytelling in educational settings and commercial environments. If we have questions many of these people are “en e-mail away”. The workshop provided an opportunity to expand our network of creative professionals.

In short, if this project could have been modified, we would have given ourselves more time before and after the conference to research how other institutions are using digital stories to teach college students. I am grateful for this summer project and look forward to attending additional conferences on digital storytelling in the future.

Professional Growth

Your own professional growth is a large part of your project. Your professional growth is important to you, your students, your college, and possibly other colleagues. How did project affect you professionally? What skills did you learn? What environments were you working in and how might your summer project influence your teaching or other responsibilities? Did you gain a different perspective? Was it professionally valuable for you?

The summer project was definitely valuable for me. As a full time faculty member and doctorate student, I do not have the time to take a tradition 16-week class to learn the software. By attending the bootcamp I was able to gain a working knowledge of "ITunes" & "IMovie". I also learned new features in Photoshop. Specifically I can adjust the color and clarity of pictures using Photoshop options that I had not used before. Though I know how to write scripts for storytelling, I did not know how to effectively edit them to fit the format of a 3 – 5 minute digital story. I will be a much better teacher in the classroom as I apply some of the techniques I was taught about writing first person narratives to an expanded audience. The Yavapai Technology Center was an excellent environment for digital storytelling. Each student had two monitors to organize their pictures on, there was a soundproof room, and full length screen to showcase the stories at the end of the festival. Being exposed to these amenities allowed me to see how these facilities could help students at MCC. I gained a "professional perspective". By that I mean I was able to work in an environment similar to what commercial media artists work in. My expectations for the media lab were raised. I now know of other options we can provide students with.

Dissemination

How will you share this information with your colleagues, department, students, or campus?

I will be showing both of the digital stories I created in my communication classes. Both of these stories are now on my MCC webpage so others (especially interested students) can view them. One of my stories showcased the oldest operating elementary school in Phoenix. Faculty member Corky Stewart in the education department viewed the story and now will be showing it in her education classes.