New Media: Engaging and Educating the YouTube Generation

Anu Vedantham, Ed. D.
University of Pennsylvania Libraries

Marjorie Hassen
University of Pennsylvania Libraries

Today's undergraduates are clearly comfortable as consumers of technology and new media—purchasing ring tones for their cell phones and tunes for their iPods, text-messaging from handheld devices, scanning and tinkering with photos, keeping up with their Facebook friends and watching viral YouTube videos, sometimes all simultaneously. We share examples of classroom assignments integrated with library support services that engage today's undergraduates with academic materials in a variety of course contexts. We discuss how specific arrangements of library learning spaces and the alignment of space and staffing can help undergraduate students succeed with new media projects for class assignments.

Introduction

Jack stares malevolently up through a porthole. He follows her with his eyes. Kate runs breathless and panicked through narrow hallways trying to escape. She breathes in terror, standing in the dark. He breaks down doors in angry rage. With a few choice selections of video and audio clips, four freshmen in Jacqui Sadashige's writing seminar[1] have created a three-minute trailer for a film that has never existed—*The Titanic* as a stalker flick. Cherry-picked scenes from the movie cleverly combined with excerpts from the soundtrack convey a meaning significantly different from that intended in the original film, creating a tongue-in-cheek critique of the sugary romantic drama.

The fake *Titanic* trailer is one of 300 new media projects created by undergraduates at the University of Pennsylvania as graded assignments during the Spring 2008 semester with significant involvement from staff at the Weigle Information Commons at the Van Pelt-Dietrich Library Center. Sadashige discusses her use of classroom video projects over several years in a [faculty development case story](#) published in 2010 through the Project MERLOT national initiative funded in part by the U.S. Department of Education. At the Information Commons, we typically see between 200 and 500 new media projects each semester, with video as the most popular medium, followed by podcasts and graphical creations. These projects span a range of disciplines and employ a variety of technologies. Since its opening in April 2006, the Commons has fostered student engagement with technology and, more significantly, faculty interest in incorporating new media[2]

into the classroom has grown—a direct result of the resources and services the Commons provides.   In this paper we describe the types of new media assignments that are of interest to faculty and students, the processes library staff have used to support such assignments and the creative use of flexible learning spaces for teaching and learning.

Today's undergraduates clearly are comfortable as consumers of technology and new media—purchasing ring tones for their cell phones and tunes for their iPods, text-messaging from handheld devices, scanning and tinkering with photos, keeping up with their Facebook friends and watching viral YouTube videos, sometimes all simultaneously. Of more than 26,000 undergraduates surveyed nationwide in 2007 by EDUCAUSE, 22% reported owning five or more electronic devices (phones, iPods, etc.) and 86% reported owning three or more ([Salaway, 2007](#)). Of more than 36,900 undergraduates surveyed nationwide in 2010 by EDUCAUSE, 89% reported owning a laptop ([Smith, 2010](#)). At the University of Pennsylvania, several smaller surveys have reported that close to 100% of undergraduates own laptops.[3] It is not uncommon to observe a study group of six students in library spaces using six laptops, some of which may be library-provided.

The capabilities of today's laptops allow students to easily perform video- and audio-editing tasks that would have required rooms full of equipment just a few years ago. Use of powerful cell phones is ubiquitous. Library staff have commented on the number of emails received that

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Anu Vedantham, Ed. D. is Director, Weigle Information Commons, University of Pennsylvania Libraries. Contact her at vedantha@upenn.edu.

Marjorie Hassen is Director of Public Services, University of Pennsylvania Libraries. Contact her at hassen@upenn.edu.

[1] Andy Cao and classmates created [this video](#) for Jacqui Sadashige's freshman writing seminar at the University of Pennsylvania in Spring 2007.

[2] New media is a term that describes the variety of forms of electronic communication that have appeared since the original, mainly text-and-static picture forms of online communication have been available.

[3] Unpublished data from dormitory, freshman writing and undergraduate computing surveys in 2011.

include a "sent from my Blackberry" or "sent from my iPhone" tagline and have noticed that students seated at the computers situated less than 50 feet from the reference desk will choose to contact the library's IM/Chat service rather than walk the short distance to speak with a librarian face-to-face. Students sit in large lecture halls, their attention divided among the speaker at the front of the room, the images on their laptops, and the ongoing text message conversations they are conducting by cell phone. What can arguably be characterized as the frenetic nature of undergraduate technology use complicates the work of faculty, who are faced with the challenge of engaging these students in both lecture halls and seminar rooms. While not yet true for the majority, faculty are increasingly interested in trying to harness the allure of ever-present new media into productive academic activity. In many of the examples we discuss, the shift in the student's role from consumer of technology to media producer and designer has been a key element in increasing both the level of engagement with process and commitment to the quality of the finished project.

Gaps in and Standards for Student Knowledge of Technology

The standard-setting and data collection work of the EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research (ECAR), the Pew Internet and American Life Project, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) and the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) help place the behavior and experiences of today's undergraduates in a larger context. The annual reports from the ECAR Study of Undergraduate Students and Information Technology describe rapid changes in how undergraduate technology use has shifted in the last decade (Salaway, 2007). The Pew Internet & American Life Project notes that young people view modes of communication such as texting, email and video quite differently from their parents and grandparents (Boase, 2006). Students' expertise with texting, twittering, managing their Facebook presence, sharing viral videos, and mixing music tracks is well-documented. Gaps and weaknesses in technological knowledge are harder to perceive and redress.

ISTE has convened a national network of K-16 educators to create the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS), setting broad goals for what every student should know before entering college (ISTE, 2007). The evolution of NETS, from the 1997 standards to the most recent 2007 edition, reflects changing perceptions of technology—a movement away from narrowly defined skill sets ("can you trim a video clip?") to broad fluencies ("can you create original works in new media formats?"). The NETS 2007

standards include six basic components: Creativity and Innovation; Community and Collaboration; Research and Information Fluency; Critical Thinking, Problem Solving and Decision Making; Digital Citizenship; and Technology Operations and Concepts. The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy for K-12 further discuss detailed media literacy goals including for Grade 12 students, "Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., quantitative data, video, multimedia) in order to address a question or solve a problem."

Undergraduates are typically facile consumers of technology but they are not necessarily confident or adventurous content creators. Nor do they always understand the limitations and the complexities inherent in the online environment in which they work and live. Furthermore, the finely-honed critical thinking skills that are integral to their future success are often lacking when they arrive on campus. The NETS standards provide a framework within which these competencies can be addressed.

The Visual Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education approved by ACRL in October 2011 provide an interesting counterpoint to this case study (Association for College and Research Libraries, 2011). The newly approved standards discuss eloquently the problem that "the pervasiveness of images and visual media does not necessarily mean that individuals are able to critically view, use, and produce visual content" (p. 1) but do not include any discussion of video as a medium. Although the standards deliberately focus only on image-related content, many of the concepts discussed would translate well to a discussion of media literacy or video literacy standards.

In comparison to NETS and the new Visual Literacy standards, the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education are somewhat dated, published in 2000 by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) Standards Committee and endorsed by the American Association of Higher Education and the Council of Independent Colleges (Association for College and Research Libraries, 2000). The 63-page standards document mentions the word "video" once and the word "multimedia" twice. Video is noted only as a possible source of information. Multimedia is mentioned as a possible source of information and in the context of tools to enable "studying the interaction of ideas and other phenomena" (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000, p. 11).

In addition to standards that examine expectations during undergraduate educational experiences, it is also important to mention here the concept of lifelong learning, which will be critical as undergraduate students move from campus to the workplace. The ability to think creatively, to

develop original ideas, as well as to build something new based on the work of others, are all skills integral to understanding, utilizing, and exploiting technology. Several of the new media projects we have supported at the Commons rely on these skills and, for many student participants, were eye-opening experiences. Completion of these technology-rich projects has come to depend increasingly on the technological and academic support resources available in college and university libraries

Supporting Student Learning: The Information Commons

Lippincott and Greenwell (2011) describe the modern learning commons as a "flexible environment built to accommodate multiple learning activities." The Weigle Information Commons opened in April 2006 as a high-tech collaborative space in Penn's main humanities and social sciences library, and addressed a long-standing need on campus for centrally-located academic support services and technology-rich study spaces for students that facilitate collaboration, experimentation and the exchange of ideas. In addition to a number of group study rooms and flexible work areas, the 6,600 square foot Commons includes several specialized spaces.

Each of twelve Data Diner booths is equipped with one laptop (with video webcam) and one desktop with a flexible monitor arm to ease sharing and collaborative authoring. Three video-recording rooms have ceiling-installed cameras and microphones and a self-serve DVD recording system. Simple videos can be made with a one-touch recording system; more complex videos can be staged with a wireless remote camera control that has zoom capabilities.

One large seminar room, with laptops (20 Mac and 20 PC) and a room-based video recording and video conferencing system, provides a high-tech teaching space. Faculty who utilize the technology can teach in the space or they can arrange for library staff to provide instruction on software such as iMovie, Audacity, or Photoshop. Faculty can bring classes here for work sessions with media-authoring assistance from library staff; such sessions can provide just-in-time assistance for students trying to learn new technology skills under the shadow of looming assignment deadlines.

The Vitale Digital Media Lab is a relatively modest facility with 11 workstations that has become a collaboration hub for small-group work. Staff provide one-on-one assistance to patrons with video, multimedia, comic book and web graphics creation, poster design, and the extract and digitization of short video clips. The lab supports conversion from several media formats including multi-region DVD, VHS, slides, film and vinyl records, and

provides short-term loans of video and still cameras, audio recorders and microphones. Faculty will design a class assignment to take advantage of one aspect of the learning space, such as video assignments that directly and solely use the video-recording rooms. More typically an assignment will involve the use of a video recording room, a group study room and the Media Lab at different points during the semester.

As Scott Bennett describes, "Information commons emphasize the interdisciplinary character of information and the power of digital technology to manage apparently disparate information resources as one" (2003, p. 37). Programmatic activities of the Weigle Commons are purposefully aligned with the capabilities of the physical space. The Commons hosts academic support services that are designed to address the needs of undergraduate students. Central to the Commons' mission are the services provided by the "Program Partners," a group of administratively disparate campus agencies that have joined forces in this central space to collaboratively support undergraduate education. Together the partners develop services, design workshops and plan events geared to undergraduate students. Full-time staff and peer tutors offer walk-in and appointment-based one-on-one assistance as well as group workshops. In addition to library staff--librarians who provide research assistance and dedicated Commons staff who support technology and new media use--the Commons includes three program partners.

Communication Within the Curriculum (CWiC) is a peer-mediated communication program where undergraduates trained in public speaking help their peers to develop their public speaking skills and to prepare for presentations and interviews. CWiC provides a walk-in Speaking Center in the Commons where advisors are available to offer feedback and students can learn to structure a presentation and manage nervousness.

The Weingarten Learning Resources Center provides professional consultation services to students, supporting a variety of academic skills, and also manages the campus Office of Student Disabilities Services. In the Commons, staff provide walk-in assistance and formal workshops on study and reading strategies, note-taking and time management.

The Marks Family Writing Center oversees the critical writing seminars taught on campus each semester that fulfill the University's freshman writing requirement. A student can make an appointment to meet with a Writing Center tutor in the Commons for a critical review of a research paper or essay. In addition, writing center faculty actively use new media for both class instruction and assignments—the small class size and program structure have proved to be a good fit. Every semester several critical writing classes meet weekly in the Commons.

The role of the Commons as both a training provider and aggregator for the campus community has expanded substantially since opening in 2006. From an initial offering of two workshops per semester, we now offer between 30 and 50 workshops monthly—scheduled by faculty request for an individual class or open to the entire campus—on topics including podcasting, graphic design, productivity software, online research tools, new technology releases, media production, web design and data analysis.

Workshops are conducted by a variety of individuals including library and university staff, guest presenters, and students. (Student-presented workshops are part of a new initiative to add evening and weekend programming.) One major effort is the Commons' signature workshop series, "From Assignments to References," which is offered over the course of each semester and leverages the expertise of the Program Partners. Workshops are presented on research, public speaking, time management, reading strategies and writing. The series, designed for undergraduates, follows the flow of the academic calendar so that project planning is taught at the start of the semester, bibliographic management software is taught around midterms and the "editing and revising your writing" workshop is taught near the end of the semester.

Technology workshops have expanded to accommodate a rise in the number of class assignments utilizing new media and we provide customized workshops at faculty request to support individual courses. Preliminary conversations are held with faculty to discuss project ideas, what has worked well in the past and potential pitfalls. In some cases, the faculty member arrives at the Commons with an assignment in mind that may be refined after the initial conversation. In other cases, a staff member may share examples of student work with an instructor who has expressed interest in a specific medium, and then a new assignment emerges from the conversation. The faculty member designs and structures the assignment, sets expectations (type of media to be used, acceptable sources of content, duration of the finished product, etc.) and deadlines.

Typically workshops are conducted by Commons staff except in cases where the faculty member prefers to introduce the technology to the students. Common assignment-specific tasks have included clip capture and video editing with iMovie; adding audio commentary to a video clip; creating podcasts and editing audio using Audacity and GarageBand; website design with Google Sites or iWeb; and Photoshop or PowerPoint for poster design.

Training provided as part of class projects is highly customized to the context of the faculty's pedagogical vision, the course structure and informal perceptions of the students' prior knowledge. Training sessions can involve multiple technologies as well as multiple types of software. A simple categorization of faculty-requested training provides insight into topics of interest. For the time period from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, the top five faculty-requested training topics were, in order: webcam video use, iMovie, PowerPoint, Audacity and Excel. The first three topics all included a focus on video and the fourth topic included the creation of podcasts. Workshop outlines and online tutorials are available on the Commons' website and it is not unusual for students to return for one-on-one assistance with an assignment from library staff following a workshop.

It should be noted that as faculty explore the integration of technology into class assignments they are also refining their expectations. Time restrictions, unrealistic assumptions about students' skill levels, and the limitations of the technology itself can negatively impact the success of the experience and discourage students from taking creative risks. Several French faculty, for example, reconsidered a decision to use the Commons' self-serve video-recording rooms to record students' skits after determining that too much time was being spent on technology use and not enough on the language skills themselves.

Currently, the classes use laptop webcams to produce this same assignment. For the instructors, the ease of use outweighs concerns regarding video quality. Other language faculty explored video projects requiring original footage using cameras borrowed from the Commons and other locations on campus. After including this assignment in the course syllabus for several semesters, they became concerned about the time commitment involved and have since simplified the scope of the project. In other instances, faculty have developed intermediate deadlines, reduced the complexity of the assignment and made grading criteria more explicit in an attempt to focus attention on course-specific content and reduce the students' temptation to overly emphasize the clever technical effects possible in video editing.

The learning spaces provide the software and hardware essential for technology projects and the availability of expert staff in the Commons helps connect the instructional sessions with one-on-one assistance throughout the course of the project, especially when most undergraduates need it – just hours before the deadline! Since the same personnel present the training and staff the space, the human aspect of support is strengthened. Students will ask for a staff member by name after they have met the individual during a class training session.
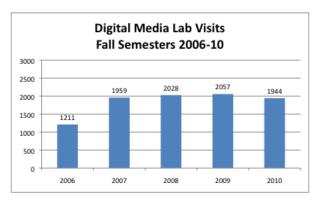
Figure 1. Digital Media Lab use history.

Figure 2. Training and workshop sessions history.

The importance of video editing as a daily activity at Penn for both curricular and extra-curricular activity is clear from an annual analysis of patrons using the Digital Media Lab. During the time period from July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010, the lab served 5,611 patrons. Video was the most popular activity at 32% followed by scanning activities at 21% and graphics activities at 20%. A sizable percentage of patrons indicated that a single visit to the lab included both video and non-video work; integration of multiple media activities is common. The table above lists a selection of the courses, representing several different schools at the University, that have assigned technology projects over the past several years in collaboration with the Commons. The full list is available at http://wic.library.upenn.edu/wicfacilities/courseslist.html.

As some faculty explore non-traditional assignments (posters, short videos, audio commentaries, websites) to replace or supplement traditional research papers, others are apprehensive about the integration of new media into traditional course structures. Issues raised have included the amount of student time spent on technical tasks, perceived difficulty in assessing projects, hesitancy about the complexity of the software and hardware involved, and reluctance to devote class time to technology training. The Commons has addressed some of these concerns by providing an extensive calendar of open workshops, online tutorials, equipment resources and walk-in assistance. We have noted that concerns raised by faculty and the solutions that are eventually considered acceptable are often discipline-specific. Cinema studies faculty, for example, find it easy to adapt video mashups for assignments. Education faculty have found video editing to support ethnographic research and poster creation for conference preparation as good fits for their classes.

Analogies and metaphors have helped faculty and

Course Number	Course Name
Fine Arts 238	Open Book
Education 546	Sociology of Linguistics
Law 979	Visual Legal Advocacy
Anthropology 231	Anthropology and Cinema
Communications 405	Facing Race
East Asian Languages & Civilizations 302	Japan Reality/Fantasy
English 31	Renaissance Literature
French 121	Elementary French
Health and Societies 003	Technology and Society
History 204	The United States in the 1970s
History 41	Church and Challenge
Music 27	Haydn and Mozart
Science, Technology & Society 061	Text Message
Visual Studies 395	Senior Project
Writing 16	Race and Popular Cinema
Writing 41	Contemporary Art in Philadelphia
Writing 125	Television Critics

Table 1. Examples of courses with new media assignments.

students place new media activities in a traditional academic context and increased their level of comfort with exploring unfamiliar territory. We have found the table below [4] helpful as an explanatory tool for comparing components of video projects to similar tasks with respect

Video / Multimedia Project	Research Paper
Finding film footage	Locating books and primary sources
Choosing clips to include in project	Selecting sections of text to quote or paraphrase
Arranging clips in timeline	Building an outline, finding and organizing evidence, determining the paper's structure
Original footage created by student, audio narration, director's commentary	Translation, original writing, student's voice in the paper
Credits and Copyright	Bibliography, footnotes, citations, references
Mashing up, reusing, repurposing	Analogy is more complex – perhaps a critical interpretation, allusion, metaphor or drawing on a cultural context

Table 2. Analogies between new media assignments and research papers.

to a traditional research paper.

Student reflections written after completing video and poster design assignments indicate that the students themselves have recognized the relationship between their work with new media and traditional writing assignments. One student from an Urban Studies course wrote, "The fact that we had to think about the readings/texts in relation to modern videos/images pushed us to think more in-depth about the texts and provoked some interesting conversations while creating the film." Another described, "With a video, we were able to engage all sorts of stimuli – visual, audio and intellectual synthesis – to present our argument."[5]

The idea of video projects began to take hold on campus in 2006. That fall, the Penn Reading Project, an introduction for incoming freshmen to academic life, assigned Lawrence Lessig's *Free Culture: The Nature and Future of Creativity* as the year's text. Group discussions and a lecture by the author during New Student Orientation were followed by a number of related campus-wide events held over the course of the semester. The Library's contribution to the effort was sponsorship of a mashup contest building on Lessig's theme that our digital culture is in fact exerting a negative impact by limiting our freedom to create. For the

contest, which was directed at undergraduate students, entrants were asked to exploit the video mashup technique, i.e. to juxtapose existing, and perhaps disparate clips of film to create a new product, in this case a trailer that parodied a well-known film (cf. the description of the *Titanic* trailer at the beginning of this paper). Students were encouraged to take advantage of the Commons, where staff provided video-editing workshops and one-on-one assistance. As a result of the publicity surrounding the contest, several faculty assigned mashups in their classes that year and the Commons was soon a hub of activity. While the number of entries submitted was modest, interest has remained high and the contest has become an annual event. Faculty continue to be drawn to the mashup video as a viable class assignment. It is the type of project that relates well to a variety of disciplines and can incorporate a research component with the development of critical thinking, technical and creative skills. The mashup also provides students with an opportunity to combine information from multiple sources in new ways and to connect themes across a variety of media. These assignments build on the behavior of today's undergraduates, who move across software programs with ease, multitasking and drawing connections across experiences with confidence, though sometimes unjustified, in their ability to do many tasks well at the same time (Foster, 2007).

Visual literacy projects are another popular choice for classroom projects. The full-size poster printer that is housed in the Commons has proved to be a valuable service. Students and faculty can design and print posters for display at conferences at a low cost and the availability of staff who provide graphic editing assistance has made it possible for faculty to consider poster design and creation as a viable class assignment. A prime example is an assignment created by a faculty member in the Urban

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[4] Created with guidance from Peter Decherney, English and Cinema Studies faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania.

[5] Submitted to Andrew Lamas at the conclusion of his Religion, Social Justice, and Urban Development class at the University of Pennsylvania in Spring 2008.

Studies program, [6] who challenged students to design evocative posters to convince the general public to support a specific social cause. He invited a professional graphic designer to the class to critique the students' first drafts. The students then revised their poster designs based on the comments received. With this project the faculty member noted improvements in his students' visual literacy skills as well as in the clarity and focus of the revised posters. He has shared his experiences with faculty colleagues at campus discussions and subsequently several courses each year have included as an assignment option the design of a persuasive or research poster. In addition to, or in place of, writing a traditional research paper, students present their work graphically in a format that they will likely use as professionals within the workplace or at conference poster sessions. Workshops on how to design an effective poster address a number of important elements including appropriate graphic design software (Photoshop, PowerPoint), layout choices (balance, sizing, colors), writing (brevity, clarity, organization) and creativity in visual design.

Several classes have explored comic book design using ComicLife, a powerful and inexpensive software program that is available in the Commons. The initiative began with an anthropology faculty member who offered students the choice of several media including comic books as a tool to synthesize two movies. [7] The instructor's exploration of the world of comic books and the resulting presentation at a teaching and learning symposium in 2008 inspired several writing seminars to explore ComicLife as a tool to help students articulate a thesis and supporting arguments when beginning the process of writing a traditional research paper. The ease of use and features that support integration of web and video content promote ComicLife as an excellent organizational tool for several disciplines, including some that have tackled serious social issues.

Engaging Faculty

In an effort to capture the impressions of faculty who have incorporated new media in the classroom, in March 2008 we engaged five of our faculty-users from a broad array of disciplines—Cinema Studies, Anthropology, Urban Studies, Contemporary Writing and the Law School—in a conversation about their experiences with video assignments. During this informal and loosely-structured discussion, the participants were surprised by the commonality of experience among different disciplines, although the role of the student differed across courses: the

law students served as directors of their films but did not tackle video editing; cinema studies students focused on film critique; urban studies students conducted interviews and shot original video footage; and the anthropology and writing students were intensely involved in video editing and re-mixing. The resulting video, "Thinking Creatively about Video Assignments" has been highlighted on SPARC's Sparky Award website and has engendered interest from a variety of individuals and institutions. Most recently, the library has completed a project, funded through a grant from MERLOT ELIXR, to transform the video conversation into five "case stories" that can be used to support faculty development. This project, which concluded in February 2010, supported creation of five separate case stories, each focusing on an individual faculty member and incorporating examples of student work combined with personal reflections and interviews. Viewable at http://wic.library.upenn.edu/elixr.html, these modules include video interviews with students and with faculty, course syllabi and examples of student-created videos. Several of the videos discuss the integral role of the Commons – both the learning spaces and the staff expertise – in the academic process.

We continue to explore ways to engage faculty in discussions about productive and appropriate uses of educational technologies. Since 2008, the library has organized an annual event, now titled the Engaging Students through Technology Symposium, which helps to facilitate those discussions. Attended primarily by faculty and instructors, each symposium features several faculty who speak briefly about their success incorporating a specific technology in their teaching. In 2010 and 2011, the symposium has also included student perspectives on technology use in the classroom. Inviting faculty to share their experiences in a high-profile annual campus-wide event has proved to be a successful strategy. Each symposium is organized around a different set of technologies and has provided an opportunity for the early adopters among the faculty to share their experiences with more hesitant colleagues. The positive survey responses we receive following each year's symposium underscore the annual program's success. Even more compelling is the number of faculty who subsequently decide to explore the technologies presented at the symposium with their own students. Over the past several years we have seen faculty try their hand at graphic design, website creation and video projects. Of the eight faculty who participated in a ComicLife hands-on session in 2008, for example, four used ComicLife with their students within weeks of the symposium.

The Commons regularly surveys those faculty who have assigned multimedia class projects at the end of academic semesters, and asks them to, in turn, forward a survey to

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[6] Andrew Lamas for his Community Economic Development course at the University of Pennsylvania in 2006.

[7] Louise Krasniewicz for her teaching Anthropology and the Cinema course at the University of Pennsylvania in 2008.

Criteria	Faculty assessment of course experience			
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Student Comfort with Software (N=37)	5%	14%	54%	27%
Student Creativity (N=37)	0%	11%	38%	51%
"Bells and Whistles" in completed projects (N=33)	0%	36%	48%	15%
Achieving educational objectives (N=37)	0%	3%	22%	76%
Faculty Satisfaction with course outcomes (N=36)	0%	0%	33%	67%

Table 3. Summary data from faculty survey results, 2008-2010.

their students. The faculty survey asks respondents to rank their perception of the effectiveness of new media assignments. The table below presents summary data from five academic semesters from 2008 to 2010.

The results reinforce the observations of the Commons' staff who work closely with students: while undergraduates are typically expert at navigating such online resources as YouTube, many are still not comfortable with the process of creating and manipulating new media. The sense that such skills are ubiquitous may be due to students' familiarity with the jargon and general agility when exploring a new software program. It is gratifying to note that the projects that had been undertaken were considered highly successful in achieving educational objectives.

Of the 37 faculty who responded, 97% indicated that they would conduct the new media project again in future semesters. When asked about sources of success for the projects, one professor described, "collaboration spaces: booths, alcoves, group study rooms, whiteboards for presentation of results, wireless networking, availability of laptops." Another described:

> Being in the library and at [the Commons] shortens the distance (real and perceived) between the students and the technologies and resources that can advance their research. It is a vibrant, resource-rich environment that my students are always excited to discover. Since this was a graduate class, I found it particularly helpful to be [at the Commons]. The undergrads are more conversant in the uses of technology in their research and coursework.

Asked about changes in student knowledge through the project, one faculty member commented, "My students now know the technology and resources fairly well, and that will serve them well [in the future]." Another wrote, "I was really impressed with the final products as well as how much my students got into it and how hard they were willing to work once they did get into it, particularly since they all tended to be skeptical at the beginning." Faculty

spoke with appreciation about students learning video creation skills that they perceived to be practical, relevant to multiple careers and helpful for contexts in addition to the specific course assignment. They recognized the rapid pace of change in both video cameras and editing software, and the need for students to adjust to being lifelong learners as new versions of hardware and software are released.

Conclusion

Over the past five years the number of students choosing new media projects to fulfill class assignments at Penn has increased from just a handful to several hundred each semester and our support of these projects—particularly those utilizing video—now comprises a major component of the Commons' activities. Many of the projects currently assigned could not have been executed before the space opened due to a combination of factors, including use restrictions at other campus facilities and the unavailability of staff with the expertise necessary to support new media technology. The Commons' facilities and services have made it possible for faculty to both incorporate a variety of technologies into their teaching and to think more broadly about class assignments and student engagement. Our outreach efforts continue, with a goal of reaching faculty for whom new media is still unfamiliar territory.

We hope to facilitate continued discussion on the Penn campus of the value of visual literacy as detailed in the ACRL Visual Literacy Standards (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2011). On a broader level, we expect that the dissemination of lessons learned from our work, especially the video interviews with faculty and students and the examples of student work, will be helpful to other institutions that are developing programs to support new media use in the classroom. Our experience echoes the argument of Scott Bennett that "perhaps the greatest obstacle to [advancing information literacy] is the isolating way in which we traditionally define the roles of faculty, librarians, and information technologists" (Bennett, 2007, p. 164]. The use of video as a medium of expression of opinion and research both resembles and differs from the

use of visual images. Learning how to create an effective video can build on knowing how to work with visual images, but also will require some additional skills in terms of story-telling, pacing, audio effects and editing. We expect that the ease of video creation will increase over time and may reduce the need for formal instruction by library and academic support staff.

Areas for further research include investigation of how faculty and students use video creation on different campuses. Do students make videos as part of the academic processes in courses and in research? How do they learn video creation skills? Do faculty show interest in video creation as a way to describe their teaching and/or their research? With the rapid increase of YouTube viewership for all age groups in recent years (Gannes, 2009), the importance of being able to create video and to assess video created by others is likely to grow as well.

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