TOPkit DIGEST

Bringing TOPkit Digest To You

This month's TOPkit Digest content is brought to you by **Susan Jardaneh**, M.A., MFA, who earned her Master of Arts in Instructional Design & Technology, e-Learning from UCF, and her Master of Fine Arts from UNC-Greensboro. Her research interests include quality online instruction, diverse and inclusive teaching, and active online teaching and learning strategies. She works at the Center for Distributed Learning, University of Central Florida (Susan.Spraker@ucf.edu). Susan discusses the topic of **authentic assessments.**

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Video Tip

The Role of Authentic Assessments in Instructional Design

Overview and Examples

In this video about Authentic Assessments, you will see a short overview about authentic assessments and examples of its use.

MUST-READ ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Upcoming Florida Instructional Designer Network (IDN) Events - Visit the IDN website for details.

  - 2:00 – 2 :50 p.m., **March 16, 2022** - Register Now
    "Seeing Green" Student Mental Health Series: Handling Anxiety During Transition Time
    Guest Speaker: Ritzy Ettinger, University of Florida
  - 2:00 – 2 :50 p.m., **April 11, 2022** - **Save the Date**
    Age, Gender, and Cultural Biases on Online Courses
    Guest Speaker: Tina Calandrino, University of Central Florida

- TOPkit wants to feature your practices or strategies on TOPkit.org to recognize your efforts and empower your faculty development colleagues with professional tips from you! Complete this Call for Contributions by **April 1, 2022**.
- Last week TOPkit Workshop 2022 empowered state, national, and international faculty development professionals with a variety of intriguing sessions. Badges were issued to participants engaging in this live, virtual event.

Top Tips

How to Get Authentic when

Designing Assessments
Facilitating Student Learning with Authentic Assessments

Even before the COVID pandemic, academic integrity and assessment were problematic in online learning. The shift to emergency remote teaching and learning revealed that while remote proctoring technologies had gotten more sophisticated, lockdown browsers and visual surveillance of test-takers also had disadvantages. These disadvantages settled around equitable design for all students in an online course, such as students' access to technology, test anxiety, privacy, and security concerns. When designing assessments, the established focus is on student learning rather than controlling students. Authentic assessments are an alternative because they require applying what students have learned. Grant Wiggins, a forerunner of authentic assessments, asserts that authentic assessments use complex real-world situations that allow students to practice and get feedback on their performances. Here are suggestions for implementing authentic assessment for instructional designers and faculty developers:

#1 - Break it down. Many students get overwhelmed easily, so the design should incorporate small steps for a project or assignment. Scaffolding a project into smaller tasks or skills, modeling skills, and giving time for practice can all help students take control of their learning.

#2 - Work backwards. Many instructional designers already understand the idea of Backward Design that comes from Wiggins & McTighe as one that starts the design process with the final assessment in mind. By knowing the desired learning outcomes, the design can plan more purposefully the activities and assignments best fitted for those outcomes.

#3 - Get creative. Authentic assessments design has students create something with their learning that applies to a real-world context. While these assessments require more planning, they can also tap into students' interests and motivations more easily. Some examples of authentic assessments are case studies, simulations, portfolios, project-based learning. These kinds of assessments allow students to immerse themselves in the complexities of their content, have substantive conversations about problems and situations, and work in higher-order thinking.

#4 - Ensure rigor. Authentic assessments value learning by practice and feedback, activities that call for testing, experimenting, and revision so that the process can be messy for those reasons. Using well-crafted rubrics can help be a planning tool for instructors and students as it guides both through the project. Create rubrics with the

learning goal/objective in mind: what should students be able to do? **When designing rubrics**, the focus should be on identifying what good performance looks like with this activity and the required evidence in the activity.

#5 - Reflect, reflect, reflect. Reflective activities help students identify their learning process and how they overcame challenges, managed misconceptions and complexities, a. Rather than building reflections only at the end, design the authentic assessment to reiterate reflection.

From The Community

Engaging Conversations and Practical Advice for Instructional Designers and Faculty Developers
Implications across Multiple Communities of Practice - Moving from Research to Application

These resources explore the ways in which designers and developers from different environments are implementing evidence-informed practices in their work.

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Content Contributions

Designing a Virtual Community of Practice (vCoP) for Faculty Professional Development

Don't miss new TOPkit content in the area of planning, Designing a Virtual Community of Practice (vCoP) for Faculty Professional Development, by Marti Snyder and Alfreda Francis.

NEW!

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Top Community Topics

- TOPkit Workshop 2022
- Call for Contributions
- Evaluating - Checklists & Rubrics
- Developing - Sample Course
- Developing - Using Video in Online Learning

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Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit

UCF Digital Learning Newsroom