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Project-Based Learning: What Did I Do and Learn?

Amy Leh
California State University - San Bernardino, aleh@csusb.edu

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Project-Based Learning Reflection:
What Did I Do and Learn?

The Project-Based Learning institute organized by Brian Heisterkamp and Andrew Oakes was one of the best institutes I have ever participated in. Although I have utilized project-based learning in my courses prior to the institute, participating in the institute has further enhanced my understanding of project-based learning. I especially appreciate the opportunities to interact with the participants of the institute, learning how they integrate project-based learning into their courses. Below describes what I did for the project-based learning project and what I learned from the experience.

I integrated project-based learning into my ETEC544 Design and Develop Instructional Material course during Winter 2019. The course objectives were:
1. Articulate human learning.
2. Define instructional design.
3. Identify different approaches to instructional design.
4. Discuss different instructional design models.
5. Compare and contrast different approaches to instructional design.
6. Apply one or more approaches to instructional design.
7. Develop educational or training products using an instructional design process.
8. Collaborate successfully on an instructional or training project with a team.
9. Discuss issues and concepts relating to instructional design and development.
10. Construct e-Portfolio Design/Development section.

Objective #8 above was where project-based learning came in. This was a team project, and students selected their own team members based on student introduction at the beginning of the quarter and their autobiographies posted online. The team went through the following process:
1. Identify a problem/challenge of a professional setting they were familiar with.
2. Propose a possible solution using technology.
3. Apply instructional design principles/models to a project including technology.
4. Develop the project (instructional or informational material).
5. Conduct usability testing on the team project.
6. Conduct peer critique.

To ensure that students contribute to the team project, I clearly spelled out my expectation on teamwork collaboration. On my syllabus, I stated, "When your group conducts teamwork, your group needs to follow the acceptable collaboration format below:

Acceptable	Unacceptable
All team members will • Review all assignment materials, • Participate in discussions on every part of an assignment,	• One team member writes one part of an assignment while another team member writes another; no discussion is adequately conducted within the

• Collectively decide on assignment construction. • Etc.	team. • A group divides responsibilities of conducting different parts of an assignment and lacks collaboration spirit.

It is your responsibility to ensure that collaboration is successfully conducted. If you notice a collaboration problem, you need to inform Dr. Leh as soon as possible."

In addition, I conducted peer review (confidential) and individual Q&A. For the peer review, the team members needed to complete a form assigning points to their team members based on their contributions to the team project. They also needed to provide rationale on the points given. For the individual Q&A, I met the team and asked questions to each team members about their project and his/her understanding between their project and the course content. Each team member needed to respond to my questions individually and independently. All aforementioned information was given to students at the beginning of quarter, and all students were clear about what was expected from them, especially about their team project.

I learned that project-based learning fit very well with this course. It was valuable for students to identify an authentic problem or challenge in a real professional setting and to develop a project (instructional/informational material) in an effort to solve the problem or challenge. I also learned that clearly spelling out my expectations and my evaluation on student team project right at the beginning had motivated and directed them to put their best efforts into the team project. Students addressed these values/strengths in course evaluation as well as in their reflection paper at the end of quarter.

I learned from some of the participants of the project-based learning institute that they involved industries or stakeholders in their project-based learning projects. It was admirable. I didn't try it because I was not certain if I could pull off a project of such a large scale. With my success in ETEC544 during Winter 2019, I hope that in the near future I would go toward a larger scale of project-based learning project.