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A Course Wiki: Challenges in Facilitating and Assessing Student-Generated Learning Content for the Humanities Classroom

Rasma Lazda-Cazers

New Web technology allows for the redesign of traditionally lecture-centered humanities courses by fostering active learning and engaging students as producers of learning content rather than passive consumers of expert-to-novice presentations and textbook content. A wiki, for example, may contribute to a collaborative learning environment. Designing a course with a collaborative wiki as a goal has its challenges, and trials and errors are unavoidable. This article presents my experiences with a redesigned Germanic Mythology course for undergraduate students at a university. I describe how students created a learning content wiki and their responses to the experience. The creation of the wiki posed challenges and learning opportunities for both students and instructor alike. Students had to obtain technological literacy and enhance their research skills in order to create reliable learning content. They had to learn how to do the following: (a) use a wiki; (b) find, paraphrase, and reference appropriate sources; (c) collaborate with peers by communicating ideas and building consensus where needed; and (d) accept the openness and fluidity of wiki content by giving up ownership of individual pages. Throughout the semester, students had to submit an assigned number of wiki entries. I had to do the following: (a) learn how to use a wiki; (b) grapple with an initial feeling of loss of power

over content and course; (c) establish guidelines for the creation of learning content; and (d) come up with a system for the assessment of the diverse wiki entries, as well as for the evaluation of individual contributions to the wiki as an entity, such as discussion threads, editing, and proofreading. At the conclusion of the course, students provided feedback by filling out a survey on the course wiki as a whole and commenting on their personal experience with this learning environment. Despite the various challenges, student evaluations indicated a positive experience with the wiki, and students commented overwhelmingly that the course should be taught in the future in a similar format.

Related Literature

With educational technology on the rise, wikis are becoming more popular in an educational context, especially since they have the potential to foster active and collaborative learning. A wiki (from the Hawaiian *wiki wiki* for “fast”) allows for the easy and fast authoring of interlinked Web pages. The best-known example of a wiki is the collaborative encyclopedia Wikipedia. Anyone can publish new entries and edit already existing entries. Wikis are, therefore, the epitome of collaborative projects. The content on a wiki page (text, images, and hyperlinks) is open and may be edited at any time. A “page history” feature allows tracking the changes on every page, providing information on what was changed and who authored the change. At any time, earlier versions of a page may be viewed. A wiki is by its nature predestined for further collaborative learning on several levels. Previously researched content is first generated in an initial draft and then edited by others to be shared with one another in an open online space. It allows for the combination of the knowledge and research of many to create one reliable subject-specific entry. Wikis may serve various educational purposes, such as presenting class materials (syllabi, handouts, work sheets, etc.), keeping an archive for knowledge, storing documentation for a research project, or supporting collaborative writing projects (Parker & Chao, 2007). Furthermore, these storing capacities of a wiki prove to be a green alternative in support of a paperless classroom. A number of studies on the educational benefits of using wikis have emerged in recent years (Boulos, Maramba, & Wheeler, 2006; Bruns & Humphreys, 2005, 2007; Carr, Morrison, Cox, & Deacon, 2007; Cole, 2009; Elgort, Smith, & Toland, 2008; Engstrom & Jewett, 2005; Hamer, 2006; Kessler, 2009; Lund & Smørtdal, 2006; Ravid, Kalman, & Rafaeli, 2008; Stoddard, Hofer, & Buchanan, 2008; Trentin, 2009; Wheeler, Yeomans, & Wheeler, 2008). Bruns and Humphreys (2005) experimented with wikis for the M/Cyclopedia Project in order to engage the students in “collaborative and individual knowledge building” (para. 14), explaining the challenge

that the students faced in producing wiki entries that adhere to Wikipedia's neutral point of view. Engstrom and Jewett (2005) wished to incorporate new information and communication technologies in order to overcome the disconnect between technology in the everyday life of students and its lack in the educational setting. They designed a model for middle school students investigating the long-term effects of the damming of the Missouri River. Boulos et al. (2006) argue for the use of wikis, blogs, and podcasts for the sharing of medical and health information intended for students, health professionals, and patients. They cite the FluWiki as an example for the dissemination of medical information but call for further empirical research in support of the pedagogical benefits of the use of such applications in a medical context. Hamer (2006) describes the use of a course wiki in two computing courses based on the "contributing student approach," concluding that a "contribution-based pedagogy offers students a very different experience from traditional higher education" (p. 71). Lund and Smørdal (2006) report on their experience with a MediaWiki for a fictional town in the United Kingdom created by secondary school students in Norway studying the United Kingdom. They state the need for design principles to be set by an actively involved teacher. Carr et al. (2007) present the use of wikis for the collaborative writing of student groups in an undergraduate political science course. Based on activity theory, they discuss the advantages and shortcomings of the use of wikis, mainly that the students were generally underprepared and felt uncomfortable sharing, especially initial drafts, because of fear of exposure. They conclude that a wiki may function as a powerful tool for collaborative writing "within appropriate learning design and activity systems" (2007, p. 279). Elgort et al. (2008) assess student and teacher perceptions when using wikis for group projects in two graduate courses taught in the School of Education Management and indicate that both students and teachers perceived wikis as a valuable tool for collaboration but that student attitude toward group work was mixed. Simply using a wiki does not improve such an attitude. Ravid et al. (2008) report on the use of a wiki for the development of an introductory academic textbook on information systems in collaboration with faculty and students. The project resulted in a wiki textbook free of charge, showing the potential for the empowerment of students and teachers who are not driven by financial interests. However, caution must be exercised, and the authors call for more controlled studies before making bold general claims for how wiki textbooks as new business models further student empowerment.

Stoddard et al. (2008) present an example of their model of a historical inquiry they called "wikinquiry" to be used in middle and high school. Here, students are asked to take on the role of a historian at a university and research the answer to an initial question (i.e., "What caused the 'starving time' in the

Jamestown colony?"); they read the textbook account and compare it to sources presented by the teacher. Next, they rewrite in different groups the textbook entry on the wiki, compare their different accounts, and discuss them in class. Assessment focuses on the collaboration of the group members and follows a rubric previously given to the students. The wikinquiry thus combines a WebQuest with a wiki and presents the student accounts on a single wiki page, ranging in length from 144 to 232 words. The authors claim that "the added power of a wiki" is that it allows for "greater collaboration between students within and across classes and allows teachers to easily access, store, view, and retrieve the groups' reconstructed accounts" (2008, para. 25). At the heart of the activity is the WebQuest, with the analysis and collaboration of students in creating a new textual account; however, the potential of the wiki is barely exploited. For the editing of their text, students could also have used a word processor, and in this model, the wiki mostly serves the teacher to disseminate information and store the final student entries. Learning itself is guided by the scenario and initial question as presented by the teacher. Nonetheless, the model could be easily extended to provide for more learner input. In a different setting, every collaborative group of students could build a site around the presentation of a historical event with various pages linking to sources, background information, illustrations, and the like. The model also illustrates that a wiki may have its place in a humanities classroom. According to Wheeler et al. (2008), wikis support the creation of communities of practice to expand knowledge with their open architecture of participation. The authors present their experience with groups of education students using a wiki as part of their undergraduate teacher training and relate positive and critical feedback from students, with the conclusion that the "benefits appear to outweigh the limitations" (2008, p. 994).

Kessler (2009) reports on the use of a wiki for the collaborative writing of nonnative future teachers of English in Mexico to improve their English language skills. Participants liked the collaboration within the autonomous environment of the wiki and focused less on accuracy and the correction of grammar errors and more on meaningful communication and vocabulary building. Trentin (2009) addresses the problems in evaluating the individual contributions of students in a collaborative learning project of co-writing. A wiki allows the evaluation of each student's contribution to the collaborative process by weighing and calculating the number of messages in categories involving content and/or coordination with co-decision. These objective data may be calculated with the help of mathematical formulas and combined with the subjective data of peer and teacher evaluations. At this point, such calculations appear to be highly complicated, but Trentin (2009) states that his future research "will involve 'equipping'

a general purpose wiki engine with specific functions related to the process of evaluating collaborative interactions” (p. 53).

Cole (2009) reports on the failure of a class wiki to engage students by inviting them to create course content for an undergraduate module on information systems. Even though Cole’s attempt to integrate a wiki for educational purposes failed, the lessons learned prove helpful for further studies. She attributes the failure of the students to participate in the wiki to the lack of instructional scaffolding and assessment. She concludes with the profound statement that “it is not enough to simply add a Wiki into a course with a traditionally designed content and expect students to automatically participate. Rather, course content needs to be explicitly redesigned around Wiki use” (2009, p. 144). In the majority of previous studies, a wiki is mainly used as a supplementary course component and for the most part, in information technology and science courses. Cole’s conclusion poignantly stresses that in order to be successful, instructors need to redesign course content around the wiki and to fully integrate it into the course. Further studies with a wiki as a central component of the course design are, therefore, necessary. In this study, I envisioned the course wiki as the central component of my humanities course without realizing at first to what extent my role as the teacher would shift from a content expert into a facilitator for learning; I thus created new challenges for both myself and students alike.

Theoretical Framework

Following the Vygotskian principle of fostering an environment that encourages the learner to reach a higher level of knowledge, the teacher takes on the role of an educational facilitator who offers as much assistance as possible by encouraging students repeatedly to feel at ease to ask for help if necessary. Classroom conversation and negotiation are an essential part of such a learning environment, and the instructor repeatedly inquires how best to support the learners by being observant and sensitive to their needs. As a facilitator, it is crucial to build trust through open communication; one must continually ask, “How can I help you? What can I do to support your learning?” in order to accommodate the needs of the learner and provide the necessary scaffolding. Feedback from instructor and peers alike is essential to create a community of learners, and the community includes the instructor. The social exchange in the classroom—one-on-one, in groups, and in online discussion groups and threads—is supportive of social interaction and helps to reach the full potential of the “Zone of Proximal Development” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). A constructivist framework is skeptical of learning, and consequently teaching, that occurs without such

social interaction. A focus on traditional teaching, or a purely objective approach to learning, may just lead to “a large accumulation of facts” (Kelly, 2003, p. 4). Without censoring the collection of information *per se*, constructivist teaching, instead, stresses the variables involved in personal learning. Learning, thus, always involves constructing a new reality, building on an already existing construct. Correspondingly in philosophical terms, the existing pre-understanding—say, the previous personal experiences a reader initially brings to the reading of a new text—is constantly challenged by new experiences. The earlier “horizon of expectation” (Jauss, 1982) is revised in a perpetual hermeneutic circle. In other words, understanding takes place in a process of the “fusion of horizons” (Gadamer, 1989). Learning therefore never occurs in the empty space of a *tabula rasa* but within an existing tradition. Habermas (1971) goes a step further and stresses the sociocultural context in the generation of knowledge. Knowledge can never be separated from the society from which it emerges. Knowledge is, therefore, always a product of the society and never value-free. Still, it also has the potential to emancipate and liberate and, hence, offers not only social criticism but also the possibility to transform society. Traditional hermeneutical understanding is, therefore, replaced by a critical social science that pursues human emancipation. Likewise, both teachers and students are always constructing new meaning, and, hence, their roles are never static or inert. In constructivist terms, the roles of teacher and student are fluid, reciprocal, and dynamic. They are both learners and teachers alike within the given social setting of the classroom and perpetually exchanging and negotiating meaning. The open and democratic nature of a wiki, thus, has the potential to create a new constructivist community of learners and appears especially suitable for the humanities classroom. To investigate the applicability of a wiki to educational praxis, I decided to design a new course with a wiki at the center and invite student feedback throughout the semester.

Methodology

A grant from my home university afforded me the opportunity to advance the understanding of issues relating to active and collaborative learning (e.g., methods of assessment and rubrics for evaluation). The selection of interactive instructional technology coincided with a prior interest in employing a wiki to facilitate active and collaborative learning in the classroom. I chose to redesign a 200-level course called Germanic Mythology, which had not been taught for a number of years, and made the wiki a core part of the course. It was also cross-listed with World Literature, was taught in English, and required

no course prerequisites. I provided an independent course Web page with a syllabus indicating the overarching course goals. These were for the students to learn about the world of the Germanic gods; to realize the influence Germanic mythology had in more recent history and continues to have in popular culture; to gain an understanding of how myths may be transformed from generation to generation; to gain an understanding of how myths may be reappropriated for political purposes; to recognize the presence of motifs and imagery from Germanic mythology in contemporary culture; to realize this influence on politics, warfare, literature, art, music, and video games, as well as on belief systems such as neopaganism; to recognize and identify the importance of myth and mythmaking in everyday life; to learn to discern critically between reliable and less reliable information for collaborative projects; to develop skills in collaborating with other students for a meaningful project for the here and now; and to strengthen written and oral communication skills. Initially, the assignments included, in addition to the creation of a course wiki, a collaborative PowerPoint presentation, two larger tests, and a final exam. The tests and the final consisted of two parts: a first section with questions requiring short answers and a second section with an essay question. The two tests were based on the two main readings for the course. Students were required to read *The Prose Edda* by Snorri Sturluson, *The Saga of the Völsungs*, one additional primary source of their choice, and numerous secondary sources, most of which were placed on reserve in the library.

I set up a course wiki with the goal to gather information on the subject of Germanic mythology. I was aware that my first time using a wiki as an educational tool would require openness and flexibility, and the students were informed accordingly at the onset that both course content and assessment were negotiable. I was prepared to engage in an iterative approach, conducting a cycle of impromptu testing to determine which aspects of the wiki worked and which needed further scaffolding in order to achieve success. This openness meant giving up control of a previously strictly planned classroom procedure in order to allow for ongoing discussions and student collaborations. Students were first asked to determine the content of the wiki (e.g., linguistic information, background geography, reception history, etc.). In a second step, they had to determine responsibility for the tasks at hand. Third, they discussed how to approach and fulfill those tasks. They also had to decide on what specific area of content they wished to work. According to interests, students collaborated in groups, discussing and splitting up the tasks at hand. In collaboration with the students, I had to establish a structure for how to assess the tasks and evaluate individual student work.

Findings

The student distribution was as follows: a total of twenty-three students attended the course; eleven were female, and twelve were male (see Table 1). Most of the students were equally divided among sophomores, juniors, and seniors, and there was one first-year student and one graduate student.

Table 2 presents data related to student distribution by major. Seven students were German majors, four had a German minor, two were undecided, and fifteen other majors were represented as follows: art, 2; English, 3; music, 1; history, 1; political science, 1; international studies, 1; biology, 1; marketing, 1; pre-business, 3; and finance, 1.

At the end of the semester, twenty-one out of twenty-three students anonymously completed a survey on their experience with the course wiki (see Appendix A). The survey consisted of three parts: a section made up of yes/no questions, a series of statements requiring scaled responses, and a final series of questions requiring short answers. Of the twenty-one respondents, eighteen had no previous experience with a course wiki, and three had some experience with a wiki serving mostly as a supplemental tool for information for the course content (Survey Question 1, Appendix A). Using a wiki for the first time myself, I anticipated obstacles but was somewhat surprised by how I experienced them.

Initial Obstacles I Experienced as the Instructor

Learning to Use a Wiki. I was no stranger to instructional technology and had created course Web pages for more than a decade, created and used WebQuests, maintained course-specific blogs, used online applications, and co-authored an

TABLE 1 Student Distribution by Class Year

Students ($N = 23$)	First Year	Sophomore	Junior	Senior	Graduate Level
n	1	7	6	8	1
%	4.3	30.7	26.1	34.8	4.3

TABLE 2 Student Distribution by Major

Students ($N = 23$)	Undecided	German Major	Other Major	Other Major with German Minor
n	1	7	15	4 (out of 15)
%	4.3	30.4	62.2	17.4

interactive online textbook. Having an interest in instructional technology and being familiar with online applications, I did not consider it an obstacle to research various wiki platforms or learn to use a wiki effectively. The platform chosen was Wetpaint (<http://www.wetpaint.com/>); at that time, the site offered to run ad-free education sites, now a premium option. There are also a number of other collaborative Web services available. The Web service chosen proved user friendly with tutorials, and I found it very easy to set up the site, add to it, and edit it. This perceived accessibility led to the assumption that students would have an equally easy time working with the wiki, which proved erroneous; rather, it constituted an obstacle for at least some students.

Grappling with an Initial Feeling of Loss of Power. My initial feeling of loss of power proved the most surprising. Yet, from the beginning, I saw my role as a facilitator and was open to negotiating the actual content or material presented in the wiki. But this obstacle stemmed in fact from having to give up the structure of a previously thought-out lesson plan or course structure as a whole. I prefer to plan every class session at the beginning of the semester, including required readings of primary texts, other assignments, and topics covered in each segment of the course in order to present the students from the outset with the structure of the entire course. Such a structure helps to keep everybody on track, including me. However, the need to react immediately to questions and problems regarding the class wiki required more flexibility and time than usually taken for discussing course logistics. To accommodate the needs of the learners, I asked repeatedly how I could help the students to learn better. Their feedback was essential to solve any technical problems in working with the wiki but also to create a community of learners. The length of these question-and-answer sessions was unpredictable.

Because it was available in the public domain, students took their work more seriously but were also anxious about making mistakes. For example, the technicality of writing an encyclopedia entry required repeated discussion. Much time was devoted, on multiple occasions, to questions regarding what to include, what was of lesser importance, how to establish the reliability of a resource, and the necessary neutrality of the writing. As a result, it was impossible to maintain a more orderly class environment, especially during the first half of the semester. This initial feeling of loss of power had less to do with students choosing what content the wiki would present and more to do with giving up the structure of the course and the resulting loss of class time. Occasionally, I felt frustrated that so much class time needed to be spent working through technicalities.

I also felt a loss of power upon discovering that my plan for testing students needed to be revised. I realized that if the wiki was indeed to be at the

center of the course and not an addendum (Cole, 2009), I would need to make test composition part of the collaborative process. Occasional short quizzes I designed determined whether students understood the primary texts, but instead of the initially planned traditional tests with questions and an essay, I opted to let students write a certain number of wiki entries. This change meant that I did not design the test; rather, the students themselves again chose what topic to research further.

Establishing Guidelines for the Creation of Learning Content. Student engagement was initially uneven due to the absence of detailed guidelines for the creation of learning content. I, therefore, recognized the need for further scaffolding of the task and first submitted a sample entry to the wiki for the students to follow as a model. Then the various steps were further discussed in class, and, finally, instructions for how to prepare an entry were further broken down in bullet points and published on the course Web page and the wiki home page (see Table 3).

Establishing a System for Assessment. It proved a considerable challenge to establish a system of assessment for the diverse wiki entries, as well as for the evaluation of individual contributions to the wiki as an entity, such as discussion threads, editing, and proofreading. Because the students could contribute in more than one way to the course wiki, it was a challenge to establish a system to evaluate the various contributions that differed in length and type. For the entries, some students chose to focus on certain characters, such as Germanic gods. However, some articles dealing with well-known gods, such as Odin or Thor, were necessarily much longer than those for lesser-known gods. In addition, images for lesser-known characters were not always available, and the number of

TABLE 3 Guidelines for the Submission of Wiki Entries

- Follow the formatting of the sample article for the cow *Audhumla*.
- You have to provide your references; web references alone are not acceptable.
- You may not simply cut and paste from an existing web page; if doing so, you commit plagiarism.
- When using sources and references, rephrase in your own words. Exact quotes have to be indicated by quotation marks.
- Your references have to follow MLA style, but instead of underlining use italics.
- Make use of the primary sources (*Prose Edda*, *Saga of the Völsungs*). You should provide at least one representative and appropriate quote from a primary source.
- Add appropriate pictures if available. You must provide the source of the picture.
- Make sure your entries are accurate. You have to verify your information.
- All information has to come from a reliable source.

references in primary sources was also fewer. Using a sample article, the course participants and I decided to divide the wiki entries into four groups according to length: “very short entry (*Ratatosk*), short entry (*Audhumla*, *Asgard*); medium-size entry (*Baldr*); long entry (about twice the size of the *Baldr* entry).” This system made it easier to design assignments (e.g., “Submit either six very short, three short, two medium-sized, or one long entry to the course wiki”) and to evaluate them. Once the guidelines for wiki entries had been established, these could be evaluated with a rubric based on these guidelines. For the rubric as used then, see Appendix B; after completion of the course, I realized that a number of changes to the rubric were necessary.

Another problem was the evaluation of various tasks aside from wiki entry submissions, such as editing the existing entries of others, adding hyperlinks, proofreading, correcting wording or grammar, correcting bibliographic entries or other format-related issues, establishing new headings for entries, and organizing those entries. An advantage of a wiki is that it shows in every member’s profile the total number of page edits. These edits can be easily checked for their scope by following another link (in Wetpaint named “Contribution”) in order to determine the extent of all edits (see Table 4). This feature was immensely helpful during the evaluation process.

I prepared an initial rubric to be used to evaluate all forms of contribution to the wiki, and students were then given the opportunity to review and discuss it. Then, independently, students followed the rubric to evaluate their own entries; next I completed my own assessment with the same rubric; finally, I compared the two scores and recorded the mean as the grade. The process of self-evaluation allowed the students to check whether their submitted contributions met the requirements. At the same time, they appraised whether the rubric was an effective instrument for assessment of the task performed. The students often evaluated their own work more critically than I did, but most

TABLE 4 Example of an Edit to an Existing Wiki Page

Date/Time	Made By	Edit Note	Type	Scope
Apr 30 2009, 1:24 EDT	xyz		edit	1 word added 1 word deleted 1 image added 1 image deleted
<p>Change: left: Sigtuna Box with the Dróttkvætt verse from above. Friesen, O. von (1912). <i>Runinskrifterna på en koppardosa funnen i Sigtuna, augusti 1911</i>, in Ekhoﬀ, E. (ed) <i>Fornvännen årgång 7</i>.[1] pp. 6–19. <i>Eddic Poetry: Poetry collected within The Poetic Edda and composed by an anonymous author</i> View changes from previous version. (Word count: 1133)</p>				

of the time the evaluations produced congruent results. The students thus took the evaluation process seriously. Table 5 presents an abbreviated form of the wiki grading rubric; for the complete rubric, see Appendix B.

Initial Obstacles Experienced by the Students

Using a Wiki. The students had to learn how to use the wiki. Considering that every new generation of students is more and more computer savvy and spends considerable time on social networking sites such as Facebook, I anticipated few problems with learning how to use and navigate the wiki course site. This assumption proved correct for the majority of students, but several students were more reluctant to use the wiki. In the final survey, all students marked yes when asked whether they feel comfortable using a computer (Survey Question 2, Appendix A). Nineteen answered positively when asked whether they feel comfortable using and contributing to a wiki, and only two answered no (Survey Question 4, Appendix A). However, when asked to indicate their preference in the statement “If I have a choice, I prefer not to use the computer,” five students answered yes, and sixteen answered no (Survey Question 3, Appendix A). In the short-answer section of the survey, Question 28 inquired: “What obstacles did you encounter during your participation in this wiki?” Four of the five students who indicated a preference not to use a computer commented on problems getting used to the wiki, such as “Adjusting to the site and how to operate it,” “Using the wiki,” and “As I would originally handwrite

TABLE 5 Abbreviated Wiki Grading Rubric

Criterion	Description	Possible Points	This Assignment
A	Contribution (Number and/or Extent of Edits)	0–10	
B	Content (Research, Analysis, and Evaluation)	0–10	
C	Writing and Resources (Convention and MLA Style)	0–10	
D	Presentation (Organization and Appearance)	0–10	
E	Collaboration (Discussing and Working Together)	0–10	
Total		0–50	

contributions, sometimes my contributions would be done by someone else in the meantime.” This student answered Question 32, “What did you like least about the wiki experience?” with, “The wiki part—putting it on the web in the format,” and another one from the group answered, “Using the wiki.” Of the sixteen who indicated a preference for the computer, only three mentioned getting used to the wiki format as an obstacle; all other comments pertained to content.

The reluctance of five students to use a wiki coincides with a number of students performing fewer edits than most others. The number of edits ranged between 37 and 255, with 87 as the mean; setting aside the highest number of one student who was extremely engaged, the mean drops to a more representative total of seventy-nine edits. Of the twenty-three students, nine contributed between 37 and 64 edits; seven, between 67 and 87 edits; and seven, between 97 and 255 edits.

Learning how to use the wiki and navigating the site required some effort on the students’ part. I had anticipated fewer technical problems with using a wiki, but about 20–25 percent of the students expressed some reluctance to work with a wiki or possibly a computer beyond word processing.

Finding, Paraphrasing, and Referencing Appropriate Sources. Some students struggled with finding, paraphrasing, and referencing appropriate sources. Writing for and publishing on the World Wide Web in a wiki, which everybody on the Internet could access at the time, made students more cautious about writing and research. It was obvious that students were used to relying heavily on the Web, especially Wikipedia, for information. In the survey, three students commented that it was at times hard to find enough information. One student also mentioned this obstacle as what he or she liked least about the wiki experience. As the guidelines for entries stipulated, it was not permissible just to copy and paste from an existing Web page, even though some students did so in the beginning. If reliable Web sites were used, such as those from museums or educational institutions, they had to be cleared with me beforehand. Besides a limited number of permissible Web sites, students had to consult books that were on course reserve in the library. Once the information was gathered, students needed to discern between more and less important information and how to present the information without bias. This requirement also posed an additional challenge since a well-researched and nonbiased encyclopedia article requires a different writing style than that of a more argumentative essay, which is the more common type of student assignment.

In addition, learning how to incorporate information without plagiarizing was problematic for a number of students. Initially, several copied and pasted information from Web sites without marking the copied parts with quotation marks, merely providing the source of the copied text at the bottom of the entry. On several occasions, I had students discuss in groups how best to paraphrase or integrate existing information into their own writing. The survey also reflected some of this confusion with paraphrasing (see Table 6).

Even though students were aware of efforts to prevent plagiarism, such as having to submit papers via Turnitin, many were not certain what actually constituted plagiarism. Collaborating with others helped to address the issue, and about half of the students indicated in the final survey that they now had a better understanding of what constitutes plagiarism (Survey Question 23, Appendix A).

An overwhelming majority of survey respondents claimed that they were aware of correct citation styles from the beginning of the semester (Survey Question 18, Appendix A); however, errors and inconsistencies were numerous in the wiki entries, indicating that students needed to either pay more attention to detail or practice further with citations. One might think that finding, paraphrasing, and referencing appropriate sources is not necessarily appropriate work for a course wiki. Yet publishing a contribution on the wiki led the students to adopt a certain seriousness and heightened responsibility for the accuracy of writing. Students were accountable not just to me but also to an audience at large, starting with the other students in the course. The data in Table 7 show that the majority of students believed that a wiki is a valuable tool to learn about the mechanics of objective or scholarly writing.

TABLE 6 Responses to Survey Question 19: “I was not always sure how to rephrase in my own words.”

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	4	2	2	3	–	5	2	1	–	1	1
%	19	9.5	9.5	14.2	–	23.8	9.5	4.8	–	4.8	4.8

TABLE 7 Responses to Survey Question 22: “I feel that a wiki is a good tool to learn about the mechanics of objective or scholarly writing.”

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	2	–	–	3	–	1	3	5	5	1	1
%	9.5	–	–	14.2	–	4.8	14.2	23.8	23.8	4.8	4.8

Collaborating with Peers by Communicating Ideas and Building Consensus. Students have different preferences when it comes to collaborating with others; some like to interact with others, while others prefer to work on their own. For this latter group, collaborating with others may be challenging. Collaboration took place primarily in three ways: in class discussion groups among students researching the same knowledge area (e.g., gods, dwarves, language, places, etc.); on the wiki discussion boards for these same groups; and finally in reading and editing the entries of others. In general, the majority of students preferred face-to-face discussions over the discussion board, but a small group actively exchanged ideas online, which seemed to be a matter of personal preference. I encouraged online collaboration, but it depended entirely on the students. All students had to research and compose entries, but some students divided tasks once a first draft was submitted to the wiki: one focused on proofreading and style; another focused on formatting (e.g., quotations marks, italics, diacritical marks, citation style); a third addressed technical issues such as consistency with Web formatting, hyperlinks, the hierarchy within the site as a whole, and setting new tasks. Responsibility for these tasks within a group could be extremely fluid. An additional obstacle emerged because students were quite reluctant to criticize the content of others.

In the survey question asking students what they liked least about the wiki experience, the most common response (a total of five) was that not all participants contributed evenly (“not doing their fair share”). The survey’s sequence of scaled responses reflected a similar impression that not everyone had contributed equally; however, the self-evaluation about their own contribution differed from their evaluation of the amount of work done by others. A number of students were highly invested in the course wiki, and I had the impression that they were the ones who felt most disappointed with the efforts of their peers. However, student self-evaluations were the main instrument for evaluating collaboration (see Table 8).

TABLE 8 Responses to Survey Questions 15 and 16

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
15. I feel I was an active contributor to the wiki.											
n	–	1	–	1	–	2	1	4	3	5	4
%	–	4.8	–	4.8	–	9.5	4.8	19	14.2	23.8	19
16. I feel that all members of the class contributed to the wiki proportionately.											
n	2	3	3	3	1	3	3	1	1	–	1
%	9.5	14.2	14.2	14.2	4.8	14.2	14.2	4.8	4.8	–	4.8

Accepting the Openness and Fluidity of Wiki Content by Giving Up Ownership of Individual Pages. It was a challenge for certain students to accept the openness of the wiki and its ever-changing nature. Because most students were accustomed to writing their own essays and taking ownership of their writing, the open structure of the wiki took some getting used to. Students were uncomfortable with the fact that their writing could continually be changed or commented upon by others. The students also had to choose which sections to work on, rather than being assigned a topic by me. Within the established course theme, the majority of students liked this opportunity to explore and research according to their own interests. For a few, this freedom felt somewhat overwhelming. About 50 percent of the survey respondents expressed a preference for the instructor to have assigned topics, while the other half was either undecided or reacted negatively to a statement in this regard. However, the clear majority indicated strongly that they liked the freedom of choosing their own topics (see Table 9).

In the survey's short-answer section, three students commented that the openness of the wiki was what they liked least about the wiki experience: "It was hard to figure out what was needed"; "Too disorganized"; "Maybe for me it was a little too open-ended, though that also gave me freedom to explore my interests." In the question regarding what they liked best about the wiki experience, the majority (ten students) commented on the freedom and flexibility to follow their own interests: "It let us research what we wanted to"; "Doing my own research"; "Being able to research an aspect of the subject matter that was interesting and important to me."

Overall, the response to the wiki was favorable. Only four students thought the wiki made the class less interesting, while seventeen found it more interesting (Survey Question 12, Appendix A). Sixteen students recommended a course wiki.

TABLE 9 Responses to Survey Questions 13 and 14

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
13. I liked the freedom the class wiki provided (choosing topics to write about according to my own interest).											
<i>n</i>	–	–	–	1	1	1	1	4	4	2	7
%	–	–	–	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	19	19	9.5	33.3
14. I would prefer not to have to choose topics but for the instructor to assign topics.											
<i>n</i>	–	2	2	5	1	4	2	1	1	1	2
%	–	9.5	9.5	23.8	4.8	19	9.5	4.8	4.8	4.8	9.5

Given the choice between the same course with or without a wiki, fifteen chose the course with the wiki, and six chose the course without the wiki. One student commented, "I think for an 'experiment' this went quite well." In the final class discussion, students commented that they felt proud of their work and achievement in the course.

Discussion

I intended to facilitate active and collaborative learning by organizing a course around a wiki. My goal was to engage students actively and grant them as much power as possible, while also emphasizing that the creation of the course wiki would be a learning experience for both students and instructor alike. I gave students many responsibilities from the outset: they had to research how to write a good wiki entry (i.e., devise guidelines) and then construct rubrics for evaluating their contributions. This "wiki-extreme" approach overwhelmed many students, as expressed in this statement from the survey: "There was so much to do on it that it seemed it could never be complete." Both students and I struggled with the lack of structure. The single most frequent comment regarding how to improve the course in the future referred to the initial lack of structure, a clear call for further scaffolding. I followed the iterative approach, using ongoing discussion, feedback from the students, and then immediate delivery of further scaffolding. Close supervision of learners is necessary to monitor whether they are functioning within their zone of proximal development. This strategy proved successful in the end. I realized early on that, in order not to frustrate the students and myself, I had to promote better collaboration, model expectations, and in general define the tasks in more detail; otherwise, the task would appear impossible. As Lund and Smørdal (2006) point out, "One major challenge for learning in technology-rich, collaborative environments is to develop design principles that balance learner exploration with a more goal directed effort" (p. 37). It is indeed important that when using technology-based instruction, instructors provide a specific structure and clear goals. The assumption that all students are comfortable with computer applications and easily adapt to technology in the classroom is erroneous. This notion is comparable to saying that American college undergraduates are completely comfortable writing in English. Cole (2009) reports that 37 percent of her students cited difficulties with the technology as the reason for not posting anything on the course wiki. Even taking into consideration that a number of students might have claimed such difficulties under false pretenses, we must realize that a fair number of students need more support with technology than expected. Instructors likely hold unrealistically high expectations of the younger generation of students when it comes to

computer literacy. Students sensing this expectation may be reluctant to admit when they need help, especially since many of their peers display little patience for others struggling with technology. Based on my own experience, I agree with Lund and Smørdal (2006) that instructors, therefore, “play a key role . . . and that educational wiki designs need to allow such a role in order to support group knowing” (p. 37). Instructors must take this heightened responsibility seriously and be ready to provide the students with better scaffolding if necessary. At the same time, instructors should show their willingness to be actively involved in the learning process, including learning how to use a wiki. Students struggling with technology will likely be more motivated if the teacher also makes an effort to learn about the wiki environment instead of passing on the logistics of the wiki to a graduate student or instructional technology support. Once a structure for how to use the wiki site is built into the system, along with guidelines for composing a wiki entry and rubrics for task evaluation, a course is set to run smoothly as long as accountability accompanies the academic task.

Student accountability is another key component for the success of a course wiki. Simply setting up a wiki is not enough to motivate students to submit entries (Cole, 2009). Without assigning specific tasks, the wiki is bound to fail, even if the course is specifically designed around the wiki and it is not just an addendum to the course. For this study, students were immediately required to set up their profile, but only a few students also began posting entries. After two weeks, a number of students still had not submitted any entries, and I began to set specific requirements regarding the number and length of entries to be submitted by a given date. At this point, the wiki began to evolve, and it grew when students realized that their grade depended, for the most part, on the amount and quality of their contributions to the wiki. This observation confirms that students need to be accountable for academic tasks because “accountability for work drives the academic task system” (Doyle, 1983, p. 189). In other words, there is no task without accountability. Additionally, accountability influences the quality of academic performance. In the case of the wiki, students need to be monitored even more, especially in the beginning. Feedback in the form of evaluation and assessment is necessary to establish accountability. In addition to postings on the wiki page, students may also present a wiki page to the class instead of using a PowerPoint presentation, thus adding another form of accountability. For this course, students did individual class presentations on one of their wiki entries, explaining why they chose this specific subject and its significance in general. Students spoke freely and spontaneously, were engaged, and displayed confidence in their achievement. Certain procedures, therefore, seem to produce positive results: establishing and distributing the requirements

of a wiki entry in the form of guidelines, setting specific deadlines for the submission of entries, and issuing self-evaluation rubrics for assignments. With this structure in place, students contribute and make an effort to adhere to the guidelines and fulfill the requirements to earn positive assessment. The level of self-efficacy rises accordingly, and students take a more active role in learning.

The evaluation of the contributions of each wiki member poses a problem; current evaluation formulas based solely on the number of edits and contributions can be deceptive since they do not and cannot address the quality of the discussion or editing performed. A wiki with functions that would indeed allow and simplify the evaluation of each contributing member as envisioned by Trentin (2009) is highly desirable and would further support teaching with wikis in a collaborative learning environment. At this time, the teacher must check the contributions of every individual for their value and scope. A student can post actively on the discussion board while contributing little actual information, whereas others hardly post at all but, instead, perform valuable editing tasks on the pages of their peers. An evaluation formula that tracks and rewards these tasks accordingly could, therefore, be valuable but would require testing.

Teachers also confront the problem of what to do with the wiki at the conclusion of the course. If the same course is taught again, the new students could pick up where the previous students left off, but at some point most of the contributions would just consist of editing the existing database. On the other hand, deleting a course wiki with many valuable pages appears almost unethical, especially if the accumulated knowledge is well researched. In the current case, the students generated an impressive number of entries for the course wiki on Germanic mythology, some more exhaustive than others, but overall constituting a valuable database. How would students react if they knew that their entries would be deleted? The motivation to perform in-depth research would likely be diminished.

Further studies of how to combine a student-generated course wiki with other more “traditional” assignments, such as tests and/or essays, are also called for. In general, it seems that wikis have been used (or reported on) less frequently in the humanities classroom, especially at the university level. More examples of successful integration would benefit educators and administrators alike.

Because course wikis are an excellent tool to facilitate collaborative and active learning, campus administrators are called upon to provide faculty with resources and opportunities to educate themselves and learn more about successful examples at their own or other institutions. I myself conducted my own experiment with a course wiki after receiving a teaching grant that allowed me to educate myself on the subject.

Conclusion

For a course with a wiki as the central component, an iterative approach proved to be helpful. The instructor must be flexible but also assume a key role and make sure that students familiarize themselves with the technicalities of the wiki platform used. Web tutorials offered by the provider of wiki sites should be assigned to ensure that students do not feel intimidated but, rather, empowered to contribute to the wiki. Their level of self-efficacy rises accordingly, and students take a more active role in learning and producing learning content. Guidelines for the composition of a wiki entry should be clearly spelled out from the outset. They need to be presented to the students and discussed with them. Close supervision of the learners is needed to monitor whether enough scaffolding is in place and whether students are functioning within their zone of proximal development. Instructors should create a system of accountability that establishes a timeline for contributions. Course-specific evaluation and assessment criteria must be developed by the instructor and discussed with the students with room for negotiation in order to guarantee a democratic learning process.

Students take responsibility for their own research and writing because they know that they are writing for the instructor, their peers, and also an unknown audience at large. In the process of researching and composing their entries, they deepen their understanding of what it means to write in an unbiased style. Following Wikipedia's neutral point of view, students learn to discern what constitutes a reliable source and to quote and paraphrase without plagiarizing previous research. All along students collaborate with their peers by negotiating meaning, critically evaluating information, and editing one another's work if necessary. Students learn about the open and democratic nature of a wiki that is never complete but, rather, invites editing and updating information. During the editing process, students ideally feel less attached to their own wiki entries. In general, the ownership of "personal pages" shifts to group ownership of the entire site.

Appendix A: Survey Results for GN 250, Germanic Mythology, Spring 2009

Survey Question	Yes/No Statement	Response ($N = 21$)	
		Yes (%)	No (%)
1.	I have used wikis before.	3	18
2.	I feel comfortable using a computer.	21	0
3.	If I have a choice, I prefer not to use the computer.	5	16

4.	I feel comfortable using and contributing to a wiki.	19	2
5.	I feel the wiki was a good idea for this course.	20	1
6.	I would have preferred to write essays in place of the wiki entries.	4	17
7.	In general I feel that a course wiki can help with learning.	20	1
8.	I would recommend the use of a course wiki.	16	5

9. After completing the class I feel more comfortable using and contributing to a wiki.

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	–	–	–	–	–	–	2	1	5	4	9
%	–	–	–	–	–	–	9.5	4.8	23.8	19	42.8

10. It made me nervous to contribute to a wiki that everybody can access online.

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	1	5	7	–	1	3	1	1	–	1	–
%	4.8	23.8	33.3	–	4.8	14.2	4.8	4.8	–	4.8	–

11. I would have preferred that only class members could access the wiki.

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	3	5	–	3	5	4	–	–	–	–	1
%	14.2	23.8	–	14.2	23.8	19	–	–	–	–	4.8

12. The wiki made the class less/more interesting for me.

Respondents (N = 21)	More	Less
n	17	4
%	81	19

13. I liked the freedom the class wiki provided (choosing topics to write about according to my own interest).

Respondents (<i>N</i> = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>n</i>	–	–	–	1	1	1	1	4	4	2	7
%	–	–	–	4.8	4.8	4.8	4.8	19	19	9.5	33.3

14. I would prefer not to have to choose topics but for the instructor to assign topics.

Respondents (<i>N</i> = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>n</i>	–	2	2	5	1	4	2	1	1	1	2
%	–	9.5	9.5	23.8	4.8	19	9.5	4.8	4.8	4.8	9.5

15. I feel I was an active contributor to the wiki.

Respondents (<i>N</i> = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>n</i>	–	1	–	1	–	2	1	4	3	5	4
%	–	4.8	–	4.8	–	9.5	4.8	19	14.2	23.8	19

16. I feel that all members of the class contributed to the wiki proportionately.

Respondents (<i>N</i> = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>n</i>	2	3	3	3	1	3	3	1	1	–	1
%	9.5	14.2	14.2	14.2	4.8	14.2	14.2	4.8	4.8	–	4.8

17. I feel that I realize now that writing a good wiki entry is not so easy.

Respondents (<i>N</i> = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>n</i>	–	–	–	2	2	5	3	3	4	–	2
%	–	–	–	9.5	9.5	23.8	14.2	14.2	19	–	9.5

18. I was aware about correct citation styles (MLA) before taking this class.

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	1	–	–	1	–	1	–	4	–	1	13
%	4.8	–	–	4.8	–	4.8	–	19	–	4.8	61.9

19. I was not always sure how to rephrase in my own words.

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	4	2	2	3	–	5	2	1	–	1	1
%	19	9.5	9.5	14.2	–	23.8	9.5	4.8	–	4.8	4.8

20. The mechanics of writing a wiki entry bothered me (correct citation, quoting from source, rephrasing).

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	2	6	3	3	2	1	3	1	–	–	–
%	9.8	28.6	14.2	14.2	9.5	4.8	14.2	4.8	–	–	–

21. I feel that the instructor provided enough information about the mechanics (correct citation, quoting from source, rephrasing).

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	–	–	1	–	–	4	1	2	3	1	9
%	–	–	4.8	–	–	19	4.8	9.5	14.2	4.8	42.8

22. I feel that a wiki is a good tool to learn about the mechanics of objective or scholarly writing.

Respondents (N = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
n	2	–	–	3	–	1	3	5	5	1	1
%	9.5	–	–	14.2	–	4.8	14.2	23.8	23.8	4.8	4.8

23. I am now more aware of what constitutes plagiarism.

Respondents (<i>N</i> = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>n</i>	3	4	2	2	–	1	1	2	3	2	1
%	14.2	19	9.5	9.5	–	4.8	4.8	9.5	14.2	9.5	4.8

24. I feel that the instructor attempted to evaluate my contributions as fairly as possible.

Respondents (<i>N</i> = 21)	0 = Lowest (Disagree), 10 = Highest (Agree)										
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>n</i>	–	–	–	–	–	2	–	–	5	1	16
%	–	–	–	–	–	9.5	–	–	23.8	4.8	76.2

25. If I had a choice to choose the same course with class wiki or without class wiki, I would choose the course.

Respondents (<i>N</i> = 21)	With Wiki	Without Wiki
<i>n</i>	15	6
%	71.4	28.6

Appendix B: Wiki Grading Rubric—GN 250, Germanic Mythology

I will check the individual member history to determine the contribution of each student. Total number of page edits AND quality of page will be evaluated according to the rubric below. If a student contributes only minimally to the collaborative course wiki, the grade will be adjusted appropriately.

Criterion	Description	Possible Points	This Assignment
A	Contribution (Number and/or Extent of Edits)	0–10	
B	Content (Research, Analysis, and Evaluation)	0–10	
C	Writing and Resources (Convention and MLA Style)	0–10	

D	Presentation (Organization and Appearance)	0–10	
E	Collaboration (Discussing and Working Together)	0–10	
Total		0–50	

Descriptors

Criterion A: Contribution (Number and/or Extent of Edits)

Points	Descriptor
0–2	<p>Insufficient</p> <p>No or not enough contributions.</p> <p>Does not collect material or develop ideas on topic.</p> <p>The entry frequency does not meet course expectations.</p>
3–4	<p>Weak</p> <p>Does not create any pages or edit anyone else’s work.</p> <p>No contribution or minimal input to development of wiki.</p> <p>The entry frequency is below course expectations.</p>
5–6	<p>Fair</p> <p>Minimal collection of material or development of ideas on topic.</p> <p>Submits only few changes to text other students create.</p> <p>Moderate input to development of wiki.</p> <p>The entry frequency is slightly below course expectations.</p>
7–8	<p>Good</p> <p>Basic collection of material or development of ideas on topic.</p> <p>Creates pages of content.</p> <p>Makes changes to other pages.</p> <p>Adequate input to development of wiki.</p> <p>The entry frequency meets course expectations average.</p>
8–10	<p>Excellent</p> <p>Collects a great deal of information and develops own ideas on topic.</p> <p>Creates required pages of content.</p> <p>Makes changes to more than four other pages.</p> <p>Constant input to development of wiki.</p> <p>The entry frequency exceeds course expectations.</p>
———	Points out of 10 awarded for Contribution

Criterion B: Content (Research, Analysis, and Evaluation)

Points	Descriptor
0–2	<p>Insufficient</p> <p>No or not enough content. Contains many errors, no research evident.</p> <p>Content is not analyzed and evaluated, disconnected.</p> <p>Includes insufficient information about the subject.</p>
3–4	<p>Weak</p> <p>Includes only superficial information about the subject. Content is minimal, little research; there are several factual errors.</p> <p>Content is not well analyzed and evaluated, appears somewhat disconnected.</p> <p>Includes some information about the subject.</p>
5–6	<p>Fair</p> <p>Includes some connections and conclusions, but not all logical, and the sources of information are questionable.</p> <p>Content shows some evidence of research; there are some factual errors.</p> <p>Content is partly analyzed and evaluated, not always connected.</p> <p>Includes some essential information about the subject.</p>
7–8	<p>Good</p> <p>Includes meaningful connections and conclusions related to the subject based on reliable sources of information.</p> <p>Content shows evidence of research; there are no or few factual errors.</p> <p>Content appears mostly analyzed and evaluated, and connected.</p> <p>Essential subject knowledge provided. Subject knowledge appears to be solid.</p>
9–10	<p>Excellent</p> <p>Includes logical, meaningful connections and conclusions related to the subject based on reliable sources of information.</p> <p>Content shows clear evidence of research; there are no factual errors.</p> <p>Content is well analyzed and evaluated, and always connected.</p> <p>Covers topic in-depth with details. Subject knowledge is excellent.</p>
————	Points out of 10 awarded for Content

Criterion C: Writing and Resources (Convention and MLA Style)

Points	Descriptor
0–2	<p>Insufficient</p> <p>Writing contains numerous spelling errors, punctuation, or capitalization errors, and nonstandard English.</p> <p>Entries are of very poor quality (not logical, objective, or free of bias).</p> <p>No list of resources.</p>
3–4	<p>Weak</p> <p>Writing contains spelling errors, punctuation, or capitalization errors, and nonstandard English.</p> <p>Entries are of poor quality (not logical, objective, or free of bias).</p> <p>Incomplete list of resources or containing errors.</p>
5–6	<p>Fair</p> <p>Writing contains some spelling errors, punctuation, or capitalization errors, and little nonstandard English.</p> <p>Entries show a below average, overly casual writing style with a lack of attention to style (not always logical, objective, or free of bias).</p> <p>Provides list of resources, mostly cited correctly.</p>
7–8	<p>Good</p> <p>Writing contains no spelling errors, punctuation, or capitalization errors, and little nonstandard English.</p> <p>Entries show an average writing style (mostly logical, objective, without bias).</p> <p>Provides list of resources, mostly cited correctly and complete.</p>
9–10	<p>Excellent</p> <p>Writing contains no spelling errors, punctuation, and capitalization errors, and nonstandard English.</p> <p>Entries show an excellent writing style (logical, objective, without bias).</p> <p>Provides list of resources. All references are correctly cited.</p>
—————	Points out of 10 awarded for Style and Resources

Criterion D: Presentation (Organization and Appearance)

Points	Descriptor
0–2	<p>Insufficient</p> <p>The information is not organized and has no visual appeal.</p> <p>No use of graphics and images.</p> <p>There is very limited or no use of hyperlinks.</p>
3–4	<p>Weak</p> <p>The information is poorly organized and has limited visual appeal.</p> <p>No use of graphics and images.</p> <p>There is limited use of hyperlinks.</p>
5–6	<p>Fair</p> <p>The information is poorly organized and has limited visual appeal.</p> <p>Graphics and images do relate only partly to the topic.</p> <p>There is limited use of hyperlinks.</p>
7–8	<p>Good</p> <p>The information is organized so that it is relatively easy to understand and has some visual appeal.</p> <p>Graphics and images are relevant to the topic and support the written text.</p> <p>Hyperlinks and other hypermedia are used effectively.</p>
9–10	<p>Excellent</p> <p>The information is effectively organized so that it is easily understood and is visually appealing.</p> <p>Graphics and images are relevant, and support the written text; provides source of image.</p> <p>Hyperlinks and other hypermedia aid understanding and add interest to the topic.</p>
———	Points out of 10 awarded for Presentation

Criterion E: Collaboration (Discussing and Working Together)

Level	Descriptor
0–2	Insufficient Student does not contribute to the wiki discussions. Student may be reading sometimes other contributions.
3–4	Weak Student contributes sometimes to the wiki discussions. Student may be reading sometimes other contributions.
5–6	Fair Student contributes sometimes to the wiki discussions; works collaboratively with his/her partners to make decisions about what needs to be done. Student is reading sometimes other contributions and edits those if necessary.
7–8	Good Student is an active contributor to the wiki discussions; works collaboratively with his/her partners to make decisions about what needs to be done. Student is reading other contributions and edits those if necessary.
8–10	Excellent Student is an active contributor to the wiki and initiates discussions on what needs to be done; works collaboratively with his/her partners to make decisions about what needs to be done. Student is reading other contributions on a regular basis and edits those if necessary.
————	Points out of 10 awarded for Collaboration

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