

Plan a Digital Project for Your Course

Instructional Core
Strategic Digital Learning Initiatives
Faculty Development

Spring 2024

Agenda

1. Situational factors
2. Planning the project
3. Framing the project



What is your idea for a digital project?



1. Situational factors

Situational factors

Unique to every class,
instructor and student

Ability to identify and
consider resolving
needs and constraints

Preparation to make
executing digital
projects smooth

Step 1: High-level considerations

The balance of your available time

Priorities this semester;
Time to ideate, explore and sketch.

The course calendar and assignment/project enhancement

The cadence of assignment submission;
Possible assignments/projects that can be enhanced or replace.

Establishment of a new digital project

Timing when to start and what is needed to start.

What does a digital project require to start?

- Timeline/Pathway
- Digital tool, resources and support
- Clear deadlines
- Feedback and scoring
- Example outcome (optional)



2. Planning the project

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Step 2: Examine your schedule

- Look for open time and identify where you can make it open.
- Identify the constraints that you face and ways to work around them.
- Decide when you want to implement this project.

Example: Podcast Project

Factors

- I want to try this with my students in Fall '23 semester, which starts in late August
- For this project, I need to:
 - Draft project assignment directions
 - Select and learn about digital tool we'll be using
 - (If time) generate or find a sample to show
- Outside the project, I am:
 - Preparing for and presenting at a conference for two weeks in May
 - On vacation with my family in July

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Step 3: Fit it into your course calendar

- Decide if this is an individual or group project.
- Identify project milestones and deadline to submit.
- Determine the intervals you can provide feedback. Decide how you will do this.

Example: Podcast Project

Assignment details

- Replacing my existing research project/presentation
- Students will work in groups
- Students will aim to tell a story with audio and possibly visual documentation
- Project milestones
 - Submit a topic for approval
 - Submit planned three episode “arc”
 - Submit draft first episode and documentation for feedback
 - Submit final three episodes with citations
 - Submit peer feedback

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Step 4: Map your digital project

- With your course calendar, draft project milestones for students and feedback points for yourself.
- Plan to ideate and draft an example to share as well as to learn from.

*Note: You are making a **framework** for how you will operationalize the project. Things will change, but you will adjust.*

Example: Podcast Project

Project plan

- August (08)
 - Search for podcast project examples and bookmark
 - Reach out to Jason and Caitlin for ideas
- September (09)
 - Draft idea, project directions and ideal example
 - Conference prep last two weeks – no time
- October (10)
 - Ask a colleague, TA or Instructional Core to review your project directions
 - Identify digital tool; Contact SDLI and/or CREATE Digital Studio; Ideate the example
- November (11)
 - Design and develop the example; Revise instruction
 - Take a break!
- December (12)
 - Finalize project directions and rubric
 - Add in to the syllabus and Blackboard
 - Set-up CREATE Digital Studio visit for students

Ideate and draft an example

Formulate the idea

- Get the idea out of your head
- Break the idea into increments
- Outline what will happen in each part
- Tools: Whiteboard, Miro, Freeform

Build an example

- Access digital project tool; take tutorials; reach out
- Learn and document the steps
- Demonstrate what you want to see in student projects
- Don't seek perfection; identify growth areas

Who to turn to in LAI

Instructional Core – SDLI

- Pedagogical and (digital) storytelling support
- Visual media design
- Professional recording studio and post-production
- Access to digital learning initiative opportunities

CREATE Digital Studio

- Technical production support
- Training your students
- Leasing media capture tools



3. Framing the digital project

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Step 5: Write project assignment language

- Digital projects involve students translating what they learned using a digital tool
- Multi-step and multi-component projects can risk getting lost in directions
- Planning assignment language can help clarify your expectations for students

Transparent Design



*These
assumptions
may be wrong*

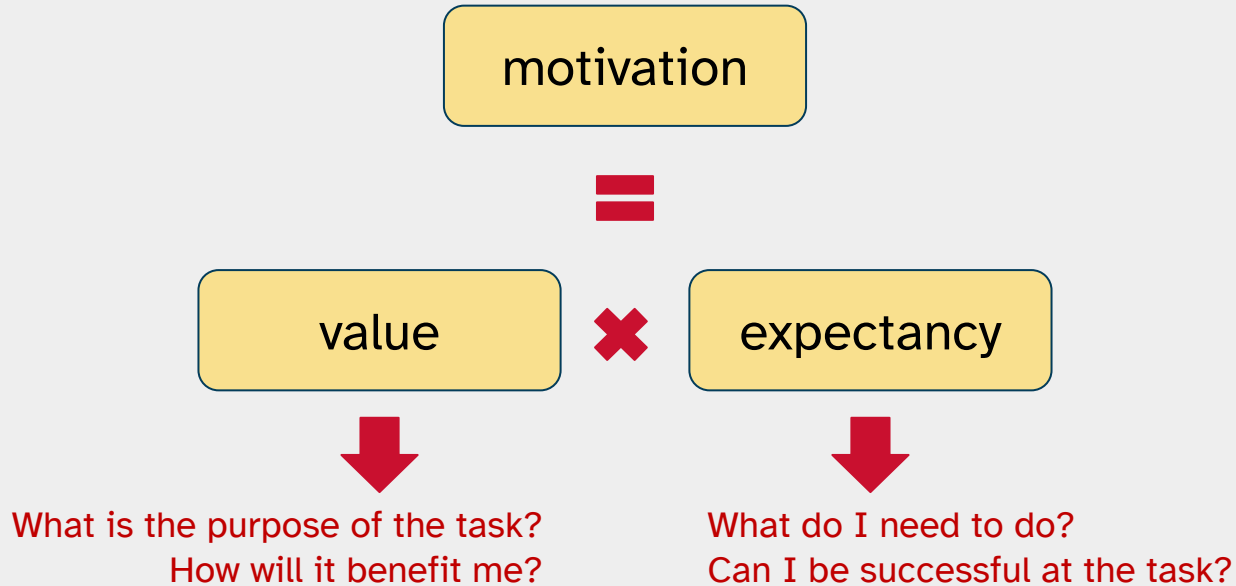


When assigning course work,
we may *assume* that students:

- **Understand** our expectations
- **Know how** to tackle the work
- **Know what** success looks like
- **Know how** to use digital tools and where to get help

Motivation

Expectancy-value theory (*Atkinson 1957; Eccles 1983*)



Are we making the answers explicit for students?

Transparent Design Framework

Purpose

- Skills practiced
- Knowledge gained

} long-term relevance to students' lives, skills for their future careers
connection to course learning outcomes, digital skills

value

Task

- What to do
- How to do it (steps to follow, what to avoid)

Criteria

- Checklist or rubric supplied in advance to help students self-evaluate their work
- Provide examples so students know what excellence looks like

expectancy

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Step 6:

Beautiful questions

Generate interesting, controversial questions based on course content and objectives

Create wonder in your students and hook them into learning

Frame the purpose of the assignment – answer the question

Pique student curiosity to engage learning and promote storytelling skills

Writing a Beautiful Question

- Why/what-if/how are good starts to curiosity and inquiry
- There shouldn't be one definitive answer - it should generate *more questions* from students
- Can this question spark a greater story that students can use digital tools to tell in different versions/angles?



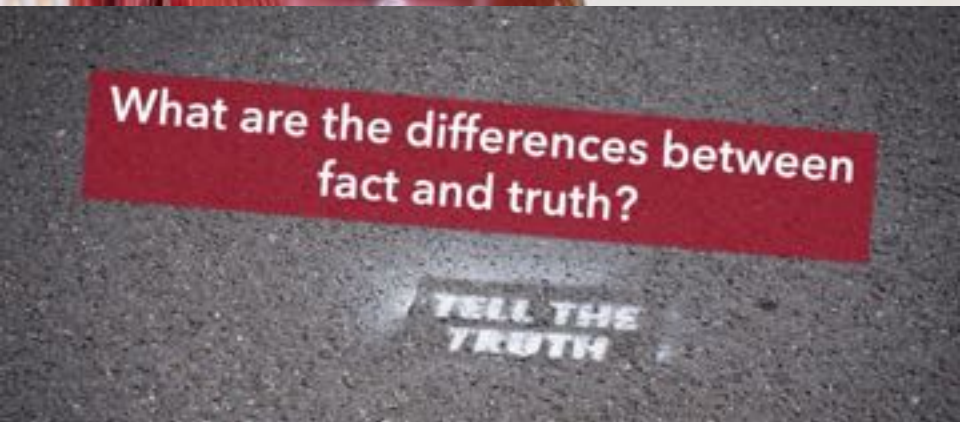
What do you need to survive, and what do you want to live?



What does the body know?



Who is really an adult?



What are the differences between fact and truth?

TELL THE TRUTH

Sample Beautiful Questions

What is your beautiful question?

Use the Zoom annotate tool to write on this slide, unmute, or write in the chat!

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Formative and summative feedback

- In supporting student creation of digital projects, we should provide **formative feedback**.
- Can be peer-to-peer or informal check-ins focused on students sharing work in-progress.
- Mind your time and boundaries – **formative feedback** may be 2-3 areas of improvement, versus more detailed feedback.

The Learning Scaffold: Climb with Confidence

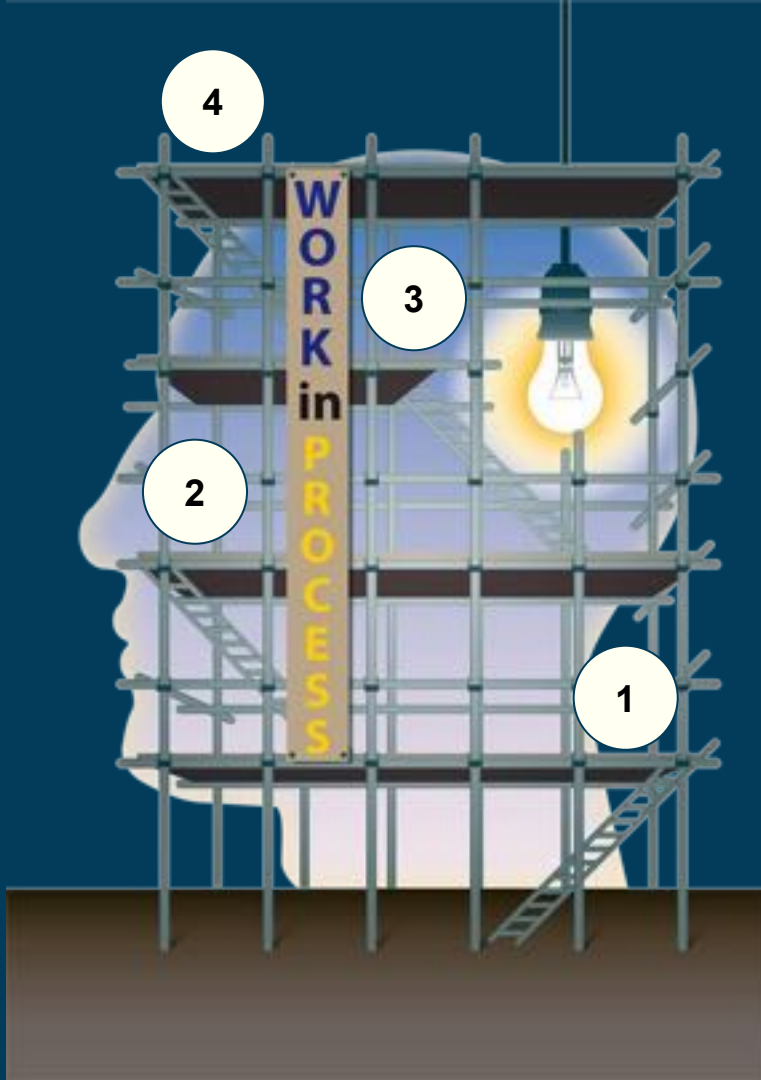


Level 4:
High stakes *summative*

Level 3:
Low stakes *formative*

Level 2:
Low stakes *summative*,
instructor

Level 1:
Low stakes *formative*, *peer*
feedback



Example: Podcast Project

Scaffolding

Week Two: Podcast Pitch

Week Four: Three Episode “Arc” Outline

Week Eight: First Episode Draft

Weeks Nine - Twelve: Submit Materials for Office
Hours Feedback (optional)

Week Twelve: Final Three Episodes

Week Thirteen: Peer Feedback

Example: Podcast Project

Project feedback

- **Formative:** for Pitch, Arc Outline and Episode Draft, grading is pass/fail on submission. Instructor feedback is broad, less formal and provides constructive steps for students to move forward with projects. Make explicit that students can come for Office Hours for thoughts as well.
- **Summative:** for Final Episode submission, grading via a rubric provided to students at beginning of project with criteria for success.



**What questions do you have
about planning your digital
project?**