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Redesigning a sustainable English capstone course through a virtual student-faculty partnership

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Redesigning a sustainable English capstone course through a virtual student-faculty partnership

Abstract

This collaborative essay between undergraduate students and a faculty member illustrates the importance of partnerships between students and faculty when redesigning courses. We ground this partnering in Students as Partner (SaP) praxis. SaP reinvigorates the faculty and student relationship as one in which both students and faculty serve as active agents in curriculum development, redesign, and assessment. In this essay, we introduce our partnership, locally ground our partnership, and highlight how we redesigned a sustainable English Department capstone course to include a cumulative, integrative assignment. Our partnership was not designed to lead to a quantifiable direct output (i.e., a publication or even a redesigned class); instead, our goal was to build community, to support each other, to learn, to write for ourselves and each other. We conclude by offering brief qualitative data on the effectiveness of our redesign efforts and how our approach may work as a model for redesigning courses in different contexts/institutions.

Practitioner Notes

1. Faculty and undergraduate can, and, when able, should partner together when redesigning courses.
2. Faculty-student partnerships during course design can help ensure sustainable redesigned courses.
3. Discipline-specific capstone courses should include a cumulative, integrative assignment.
4. Faculty-student partnership should arise from and respond to local context.
5. Those working within faculty-student partnerships should attend to issues of potential student labor exploitation.

Keywords

Capstone courses, students as partners, curriculum development, curriculum assessment, English

Introduction

For ten months, every Wednesday at 9am, we, a group of students and a lecturer, gathered on Zoom. With our kids and dogs in the background, sharing our screens, and sharing our writing, we deepened our partnership, supported each other through the challenges of life amid a pandemic and talked deeply about how to design a senior capstone course. Capstone courses often serve as the culminating course for many two- and four-year degree programmes. We sought to design a senior capstone course that supports students' learning and is a sustainable part of an English department curriculum. We use the word *partnership* intentionally to signal our commitment to Students as Partners (SaP) praxis (e.g., Cook-Sather et al., 2014; Healey et al., 2014; Mercer-Mapstone and Abbot, 2020). SaP praxis re-envisions the faculty and student relationship as one in which both students and faculty serve as active agents in curriculum development, implementation, and assessment. We return to SaP praxis in more detail because it shapes the work we do.

Our partnership consists of Michael, faculty member, and Zoë and Kellie, undergraduate students, and serves affective and scholarly purposes. We report on both the affective and the scholarly because when researchers enter into research projects, they do so with their minds and bodies; we are no different. In this paper, we highlight how we developed and sustained a partnership between a tenured faculty member and two undergraduate students and how this partnership helped us redesign a discipline-specific capstone course to include an integrative, cumulative assignment. We specifically highlight how we sought to develop a sustainable capstone course, one that has staying power within our department, and we peek into our in-progress, human-subject approved study designed to gauge the effectiveness of our redesign efforts on student learning. We write together, as a collaborative, and use *we* to signal our collective voice. But we also write as individuals with unique experiences and positions. Following the example of Healey, Matthews, and Cook-Sather (2019), we integrate our individual words, set off in italics, throughout this article. We refer to each other by first name, and author order represents an alphabetical decision not level of contribution. Since our work is responsive to local needs, we begin by introducing our university and then pivot to two exigences that led us to partnering together to redesign a senior-level English capstone course.

Local context

We labour and learn at the University of North Georgia (UNG), a five-campus university located in the northern part of Georgia in the southeastern United States of America. Though primarily a four-year baccalaureate degree-granting university, UNG does have a pathway for students to receive a two-year Associates degree. Enrollment stands at roughly 20,000 undergraduate students with a small number of students enrolled in graduate programmes. UNG is a primarily white institution at four of the five campuses. Many students come from the metro-Atlanta-area (the capital of Georgia), and we are seeing a growing number of Latinx students, students from rural areas of the state, student-veterans, and first-generations students. The English Department is one of the largest academic departments at the university, home to roughly 80 faculty members. The Department offers a Bachelor's degree in English and students select one of three possible concentrations within this major: Literature, English Education, and, the one we focus on here, Writing and Publication. The Writing and Publication concentration prepares students for a wealth of job opportunities post-graduation. Recent Writing and Publication students have worked as communication managers at telecommunication companies in Atlanta, communications staff for the former governor of Georgia, managed social media accounts for local not-for-profits, attended law school, and entered the children's books publishing world. All Writing and Publication students complete a capstone course titled English 4880: Senior Seminar in Writing and Publication. This

class serves as the summation of their college-career and serves as a springboard into life post-graduation. The UNG course catalogue describes this three-credit hour, one-semester course thusly:

> *This is the capstone class for the English Major with a Writing Concentration. Review of training in scholarship, review of personal writing portfolio, extensive discussion of writing theory and preparation for professional careers as well as graduate school. Development of a sound sense of identity as a professional in writing will be encouraged. It is recommended that students take the Senior Seminar in their final semester; however, to accommodate unusual circumstances, advanced students may request instructor's permission to take the class as juniors*. (University of North Georgia, course catalogue, 2021)

Michael, the faculty member on this collaboration, has taught this course each semester for the past six years. At the time we drafted this article, neither Kellie nor Zoë, both Writing and Publication undergraduate students, had taken this class. They were helping redesign a class that they would take in the future.

Our exigencies

The exigence for our work arose from both our personal experiences and broader higher education initiatives. In italicized text below, we offer our personal experiences that led us to partnering together.

> *Michael: I taught this course for many years, but I never felt content in how I constructed and delivered the course material. I didn't feel I was preparing students for life after graduation. This feeling was reinforced over the years as former students would email me and relay narratives of unsuccessful job hunting; as former students would sit in my office, sometimes in tears, and express confusion about what to do now that they have graduated. Through these challenging conversations with my former students, I saw how English 4880, as I currently constructed it, did not fulfill the qualities of a capstone course; it did not serve as a summation of one's college experiences; it did not prepare one for life after graduation. The felt sense of not delivering an effective course for my students, despite my attempts, pushed me toward literature on designing effective capstone courses. This affective experience eventually led to the research and work I did with Kellie and Zoë.*
>
> *Zoë: Prior to accepting this work, I had little-to-no direction as to what I wanted to do with my degree. Working on this project and learning about the Senior Seminar course has shown me that I am not the only one who feels this way. I know that by amending this course, I can help eradicate that fear and that uncertainty from the minds of those like me.*
>
> *Kellie: This project stood out to me because of my personal struggle with obtaining my undergraduate degree. This project created the opportunity – after 8 years at 3 different schools with 7 different majors – for me to feel connected to my own learning experience; it has shown that teachers and students can offer the other their own invaluable perspective to create a curriculum that is effective, engaging, and sustainable, relying on the expertise of the teacher and the needs of the students.*

Research on course design also drove us toward our work. As US students, teachers, and researchers, we began our capstone redesign efforts by attending to US higher education initiatives, specifically

work by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U). The AAC&U is a US higher education leadership organization dedicated to supporting and strengthening liberal arts higher education. The AAC&U might be best known for their work on high-impact practices and their creation of rubrics to assess various aspects of student learning such as written communication, critical thinking, and information literacy. Specifically, we leaned into the AAC&U's work on signature experiences and capstone courses. Signature work is guided by the following parameters: student must have some agency in leading the work; students must have the opportunity to apply their learning to complex or unscripted problems; students must integrate learning from across their major, general education, elective classes and their co-curricular and extra-curricular experiences; and students must have an opportunity to reflect on their learning over the course of their college career (Budwig, Ratliff-Crain and Reder, 2018). The phrase *signature* points to the individual student creating and engaging with a project that is meaningful to them and invites them to integrate their complete undergraduate experience into this summative project. While the AAC&U advocates for signature experiences, which they identify as a high-impact practice, they do not advocate for locating this signature experience in a particular class or at a particular moment in a student's undergraduate career. Indeed, students may engage with a signature experience through first-year undergraduate research, in thematically-linked courses, in service-learning or community-based learning courses, or in capstone courses. As we entered into this partnership, we imagined the possibility of students completing their signature experience in English 4880, our local discipline-specific capstone course.

Coupled with our reading on signature experience, we undertook broad research on capstone course design. This research took us outside of the US context and into the work our colleagues across the globe were doing in capstone courses. The genesis of capstone courses can be traced back to the early 1900s, but in the past two decades, higher education teacher-scholars have dedicated energy toward articulating effective capstone experiences across various disciplines and geographic contexts. For example, researchers have looked at how a legal course in Australia prepares students for life-long learning (Butler et al., 2017), how a capstone course in the US supports transformative learning (Martin and Strawser, 2017), how to assess students' capstone work in a US (Brooks et al., 2004) and Australian context (Hammer et al., 2018), and how a physiology capstone course shaped students' research skills (Julien et al., 2012). This sampling of recent research on capstone courses signals the breadth, depth, and importance of this research.

Our guiding principles

Our work is guided by Students as Partners (SaP) praxis. SaP is an approach used internationally within teaching and learning scholarship and an outgrowth of the undergraduate research movement. According to Mercer-Mapstone et al. (2017), by grounding SaP labour in a "values-based ethos" students and faculty shift to "co-teachers, co-inquirers, curriculum co-creators, and co-learners across all facets of the educational enterprise" (p. 2). Such an ethos helps faculty and students contribute meaningfully to teaching and learning.

We come to SaP because, as Mulya (2019) argued, student-faculty partnership "might contest" (p. 86) hallmarks of the neoliberal discourse pulsing through higher education. These hallmarks include "marketisation, competitiveness, and standardisation" (p. 87). Mulya argued how SaP contests each of these hallmarks in turn. For example, by focusing on "community and belonging," we can combat drives toward individualism that are inherent in neoliberal forces (p. 88). Mulya's words inspired our partnership. We came together to develop meaningful space for relationships and conversations amid increasing moves toward neoliberalism that shunned these spaces for relationships and

conversations. We intentionally moved slowly to combat neoliberal demands for more productivity. Our goal was not a quantifiable direct output (i.e., a publication or even a redesigned class); instead our goal was to build community, to support each other, to learn, to write for ourselves and each other. Thus, we aligned with SaP because it offers partnerships as a third space for community-building and not necessarily critique and change. However, through our community-building, we learned of spaces that required change and ways to enact this change.

We started our first Zoom session together with I-commit statements. In advance of our first meeting, we individually wrote down what we were committed to bringing to each weekly meeting. Our italicized text relates our experiences with the I-commit statements.

> *Zoë: At the beginning of this internship, I commit and continue to commit to providing thoughtful and meaningful research. I commit to thoroughly completing all tasks for the benefit of my personal research and for the success of the group.*
>
> *Kellie: I commit to being open-minded to new perspectives. I commit to using my own experiences as an undergraduate to attempt to help future students get the most out of their own undergraduate experience.*
>
> *Michael: I commit to being present and being prepared and for learning when to slow down and let others steer. As a faculty member, I bring a level of expertise, expertise with course design, with research, with publishing research, that my undergraduate partners do not bring. But for this partnership to flourish, I need to commit to learning when to lean into my expertise and steer and know when new voices and new perspectives are needed.*

Process outcomes

We began by drafting aspirational course goals for English 4880. We asked ourselves: what do we want students to remember five years after this course has concluded? We agreed on the following goals:

- To build on student's confidence as an important member of society and that their skills are valuable and will benefit themselves and others;
- To prepare students for the professional world or continued education;
- To serve as a meaningful, cumulative conclusion to the undergraduate writing experience; and
- To understand that learning does not end at graduation, that succeeding in both professional and personal live requires life-long, integrative learning and continued personal growth.

These aspirational goals then led to us creating course objectives grounded in clear, measurable verbs. We agreed on the following objectives:

- Assemble a final e-portfolio in which you demonstrate your growth as a writer;
- Prepare a cover letter to your portfolio in which you interpret and reflect on the culmination of knowledge gained in your undergraduate experience and how it pertains to your identity as a writer; and
- Design a signature work, in which you integrate knowledge across your undergraduate education in meaningful ways to engage with a real-world issue that matters to society and you.

The aspirational goals and course objectives are aligned with research on curriculum design, capstone courses, and the unique mission of our institution. These objectives look outward toward research but also inward to our context. With these goals and objectives in place, we turned our attention to the notion of a signature experience: what would a signature experience look like for this class and with these goals and objectives? We were led by AAC&U research on signature experiences and knew we wanted to design a signature experience that

- Provided students agency in topic, how to purse this project, and what the outcome would be (e.g., an essay, presentation, movie, series of posters);
- Invited students to integrate all their college experiences from general education courses, co-curricular courses, extra-curricular experiences, and experiences within their major;
- Included a place for students to reflect on their work they have accomplished; and
- Challenged students to undertake a complex project or tackle what Hanstedt (2018) refers to as a "wicked problem." This is a problem that is complex, ever evolving, and includes multiple stakeholders.

We developed the following 'wicked assignment'; this assignment serves as the signature experience for this capstone course. We include the complete assignment sheet:

> *Research shows the importance of students creating a signature work as the cumulative activity of their undergraduate experience. In this signature work, students should have some agency in identifying the nature of their project, integrate knowledge from across their undergraduate curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular experiences, and address, what some researchers call, a wicked problem – that is a real-world issue that matters to society and the students and one that is complex, big, and messy.*
>
> *In this course, the capstone course of your Writing and Publication concentration, I invite you to complete such a signature work. The assignment below is guided by three parameters. I am asking you to*
>
> - Make meaning*: that is, I am asking you to construct new ideas or solutions to problems and new understandings of these problems and their causes;*
> - Integrate*: that is, I am asking you to foreground useful connections among seemingly disparate areas of thought, with the goal of adapting problem-solving methodologies from one context to another;*
> - Make decisions*: that is, I am asking you to act based on your thinking as you make meaning and integrate (bullet points inspired from Hanstedt's [2018]* Creating Wicked Students*).*
>
> *You will undertake meaning making, integration, and decision making within the broader context of uncertainty. What I mean here is that you are thinking and working with a pressing, current problem. This problem has multiple stakeholders invested in it. It has not been solved.*
>
> *Here is your scenario:*
>
> *The financial implications of a global pandemic are hitting US higher education hard. Small private schools are permanently closing their doors and mid-sized public universities are trying to move forward with slashed budgets.* [scenario is fake at this point

> forward] *Georgia state legislatures, in an effort to tighten budget belts and ensure long-term fiscal stability for their states, cities, and counties, are asking the University System of Georgia to cut low-performing and low-enrollment majors. At UNG, senior managers are looking to remove the English literature and Writing and Publication concentration, relocate the English Education degree to the College of Education and dismiss half of the 80 English faculty members, The remainder of the English faculty will be absorbed into the College of General Education where they will only teach English 1101 and English 1102. As an UNG alumnus and English major, you are incensed. In this wicked assignment for English 4880, you will produce an argument against entrenchment. You will fight to save the UNG English Department.*
>
> *The product you produce will be up to you. I invite you to make a written argument, a visual one, or an audio one. You will present your argument to your classmates and select English faculty and UNG senior managers over Zoom near the end of the semester. How might you best reach your audience?*
>
> *In this assignment, you will refer back to our three parameters: make meaning, integrate, and make decisions. Finally, keep in mind that to make an argument, you will need to draw on more than your English major material. What classes have you taken that can help you make an argument about saving the English Department? What have you done outside of class that shows the importance of the English major?*

Sustainability

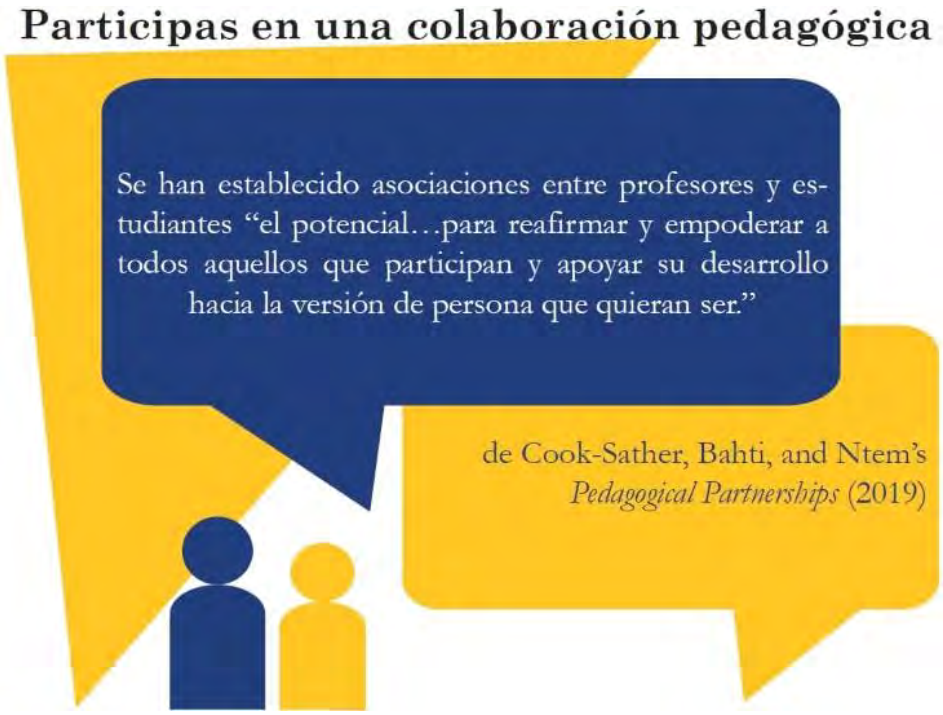
We hoped to design a sustainable course. By sustainable, we mean a course that remains an ongoing fixture in our Department. We did not want to design a course that only fit the needs and interests of Michael, Zoë , and Kellie; a course that only we were interested in teaching and taking. We hoped to design a course that would be taught in this particular way long after Kellie and Zoë graduate, long after Michael leaves the university for whatever reason.

To sustain the benefits of this initial collaboration, we collaborated with interested others across the university. We arranged Zoom meetings with faculty members in the Department, faculty members who would teach this course and faculty members who would not. Over Zoom, we sought the input of faculty across rank and across our five-campus university. After we made substantial progress, we shared our work with our university's vice provost. To facilitate discussion during our Zoom meetings with faculty and senior managers, we developed PowerPoint presentations.

Additionally, in hopes of gaining faculty buy-in, which, we argue is central to designing sustainable courses, we developed visuals. Kellie, with her graphic design background, took the lead here. She designed printable brochures that introduce potential partners to Students as Partners praxis and to our work; she designed two sets of brochures-one with faculty as the audience and one with students as the audience. She also created two sets of one-page flyers about SaP; again, one set was directed toward faculty and one set was directed to students. Our university has a high-number of Spanish-speaking students and faculty; therefore, Kellie designed a Spanish-language poster about SaP. We used a quote from Cook-Sather, Bahti, and Ntem's (2019) *Pedagogical Partnerships*. They argued that pedagogical partnerships have "the potential … to affirm and empower all those involved and support their development into versions of the selves they want to be" (p. 2). Zoë translated the quote into Spanish with the help of her Spanish professor*: el potencial ... para reafirmar y*

empoderar a todos aquellos que participan y apoyar su desarrollo hacia la versión de persona que quieran ser. Kellie laid out this text on a one-page poster (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Participas en una colaboración pedagógica



The focus on sustainability, we argue, is central to course design or redesign. But sustainability is also key to our broader commitment to SaP praxis. We strive not to create one-off opportunities for faculty and students to work together; we strive not to create one-off courses that only work for this one semester, for this one population of students, for this one professor. The work we do is undertaken in the hopes of bettering the future for all learners – faculty and students alike. We do this work of bettering futures when we keep an eye on wider collaborations (with faculty and students across the university), sustainable partnerships, practices, courses, and curricula.

Evaluation: Methods and findings

To gauge the effectiveness of our redesigned, discipline-specific capstone course, we developed a single-bounded case study that was approved by our local human subject research board. We bounded our case spatially (to English 4800 taught on the Dahlonega campus of the University of North Georgia) and we bounded our case temporally (the Spring 2021 semester in which Michael taught the redesigned class). Data collection included diary entries written by students enrolled in English 4800. Each week, Kellie emailed all students in English 4800 with a link to a survey that consisted of three questions: the first question asked if they consent to the research study, the second asked their name (they could decline to answer), and the third asked them to offer their thoughts on the class. If needed, students could refer to some prompting questions. The prompting questions

were inspired by Tanner's (2017) research on classroom metacognitive activities. Tanner, a biologist by trade, offers helpful prompts for instructors to bring into the classroom and for students to use to gauge their progress in a class. Tanner divides her questions into three cognitive stages: planning, monitoring, and evaluating. Our bullet point questions broadly follow this ordering:

> *Here, we welcome you to describe your in-the-moment reactions to this class: what is most interesting or exciting about the class and the class content so far, what was most puzzling or frustrating, or any other reflections you have on this class as you are experiencing it in real-time. Here are some questions you can use to get started:*
>
> - *Why is it important to learn the material in this course?; How does success in this course relate to my career goals?; What do I most want to learn in this course?; What do I want to be able to do by the end of this course?*
> - *In what ways is the teaching in this course supportive of my learning? How could I maximize this?; In what ways is the teaching in this course not supportive of my learning? How could I compensate for or change this?; How interested am I in this course? What could I do to increase my interest and confidence?*
> - *What will I still remember five years from now that I learned in this course?; What advice would I give a friend about how to learn the most in this course?; If I were to teach this course, how would I change it?*

Through diary entries, students provided their real-time reactions to the class. We also invited all students to follow-up one-on-one interviews conducted on Zoom with Kellie or Zoë. Because Michael taught this class while we were studying the effectiveness of this class, we were, understandably, concerned about issues of coercion. We attempted to ameliorate potential coercion through several means. First, only Kellie had access to the survey instrument, the distribution of the survey, and the incoming results from the survey. She did not share these results with Michael and Zoë until final grades were posted. Additionally, only Zoë and Kellie conducted follow-up interviews with students and they only conducted these interviews once final grades were posted. Even with these measures in place, we do fear that coercion crept into our study, but we do believe the benefits of capturing students' real-time experience in a class outweighed the risks.

Diary entries allow us to read students' in-the-moment reactions to the class. One month into the semester, a student posted the following entry: "It's interesting that I haven't really thought about how I should market my degree to potential employers until now (because of this class). I've been so focused on getting the degree that I haven't thought about how to use it or even why it's useful. So far, this class has helped me shift my thinking towards the future" (Student 01).

Here we are heartened to read a student looking backwards and forwards - backwards on what they learned and forwards to why what they learned might be "useful" to "potential employers." The work of looking backwards and forwards is an important component of capstone courses.

Midway through the semester, students began to work on their wicked assignment. A student posted the following entry: "We have started focusing on the projects/assignments for the course. I'm excited to do both of them. I think the wicked assignment is cool because it gives me some autonomy to produce something meaningful to me, and I think creating the portfolio via website will be nice to reflect on once it is finished." We read this response and key words leap off the screen: *meaningful, autonomy, reflect*. These words are central to our course objectives and to principles undergirding the wicked assignment.

As the semester reaches a close, a student posted a lengthy response. We quote in full to capture this student's thoughts on how they intended them to be read:

> *Creative freedom is a strange feeling for me. I've never taken a class like this one, and at first, I felt uncomfortable by the lack of content, assignments, etc. There is a value in this creative freedom though. I've been able to focus on the assignments that were given and spend quality time thinking about the discussions we have in class. In other fast paced, content heavy classes, I find myself doing the bare minimum just to keep up. I thought the focus on what comes next/understanding the value of an English degree and how to market that value to employers was perfect for this class. I think there is value in reflecting on my undergraduate experience and articulating why what I've done for the past several years is important*. (Student 02)

Here we note that this student compared the class to "other fast paced, content heavy classes" and found "value" in the "creative freedom" of this class. When we redesigned this class, we intentionally wanted students to slow down, engage in deep reflection, and construct meaningful content. We did not want to fill the class with content and instead opted to fill the class with space for thinking. This entry shows how one student found value in slowing down.

We celebrate that, based on this small sample size, students found the class helpful, engaging, and meaningful.

Conclusion

At the close, we offer guiding thoughts on our partnership itself and how readers may adapt some broader practices in our partnership to undertake similar curricular redesign and assessment with student partners. Our work is grounded in and responsive to our local context, as educational practices and research should be. But we see practical and theoretical elements of our work that may be of use to the broad range of *JUTLP* readers.

The three of us have worked together for over a year; the seeds of our partnership were planted months before the global pandemic, we worked closely over Zoom during the pandemic, and began concluding this partnership when our state of Georgia allowed vaccinations for people over the age of 16. As we reflect on the sustainability of our partnership, we see practical steps that we took that kept us working closely together during challenging times. One is ending each meeting with a plan of when to meet next. We knew that Wednesdays at 9am on Zoom were our times. We established that time during the spring semester, kept that time through summer classes, and kept that time during the fall semester. The time fell into the rhythm of our class and teaching schedule; it allowed us time to drop kids off at school, sip some coffee, and gather on Zoom. A second practical step is to end meetings with that clear next meeting date and clear next steps. It is important that everyone knows what the next steps are and what the individual tasks look like. Within those parameters, we were gracious and flexible. Medical emergencies, kids and dogs all interrupted our scheduled meetings. That is OK. But we had established a meeting time, and we stayed with it. We also found the right digital tools to communicate, schedule and complete tasks. Zoom was our video conferencing tool of choice. Microsoft Teams housed all our documents. Find the right tools for your partnership and find the right times for your partnership.

On a more abstract level, we all stayed within the partnership because all three of us have a meaningful connection to our work. One of us teaches this course; two of us will take this course.

One of us has bounced around between universities and wishes previous teachers had designed courses with students in mind. One of us believes classes need to be revisited often and revisited with student input. Our partnership continued because we had a personal and professional stake in the work we did together. Moreover, the value of collaborative work such as ours needs to be recognized and valued at all levels of the university, from senior managers, to colleagues, to other students. The point of our work was that it involved faculty and students as partners collaborating in meaningful and real curriculum (re-)design. It was not a hypothetical exercise. The course was offered, delivered, and evaluated. It was collaborative action research where the students were involved at all levels. This is powerful stuff. To ensure recognition and sustainability of our course, we engaged in further collaborative actions – inviting faculty and managers to presentations and 'selling' the course to students we wanted to recruit. We invited other voices into our collaboration – for true collaboration begets meaningful action.

To be fair, the specific outputs of our work might not be transferable to all contexts. We see our wicked assignment as unique to US higher education. At the core of our wicked assignment is an invitation for students to integrate their varied undergraduate classes into a coherent whole. US higher education is unique in that students take a wide variety of courses (often labeled *general education*) before pivoting to discipline-specific course work. Additonally, students take multiple elective courses; these courses do not satisfy their major or their general education requirements. US higher education, particularly liberal arts focused schools, are predicted on the notion of providing well-rounded education and leave more skill-based education to technical or trade schools. The idea of integration may not have currency in higher education models outside of the US.

However, we do believe that the broader commitment and practice of partnering with students to improve undergraduate education is transferable across contexts. As readers take up SaP at their home campuses, we ask that they pay particular attention to issues of exploiting student labour. How can faculty establish a partnership with students built on equitable labour practices? We point to the UCLA Digital Humanities Programme's Student Collaborator Bill of Rights (Di Pressi et al., 2015) as a starting point to help us articulate equitable and caring labour practices for working with students. We believe this document can be adopted for local contexts. We conclude with our individual reflections on labour.

> *Kellie: I do not feel my work was exploited during this internship. Yes, there were times I spent four, six, eight hours working on a design for our partnership that may never be viewed by anyone but me and my partners. However, this work provides me the opportunity to practice my newfound graphic design skills in an applicable way. My days are filled from sunrise to sundown with a full-time student course load, this internship's work, and the duties of a stay-at-home mom. If I was not a student at this institution, and if this was not a required course, then yes, I would not engage in the work without some sort of compensation for it takes up at least the same hours as a part-time job, but, in all honesty, I am glad it is a course in college instead of a paid position, because an internship like this would be extremely hard to acquire. We have been given opportunities that undergraduate students can only imagine: the opportunity to redesign a college course's curriculum and witness ourselves if our changes are beneficials to the students. Additionally, we have the opportunity to publish articles as a collective voice to academic journals; another extremely rare honour, especially for an undergraduate student such as myself. The work I have done alongside my faculty and student partners has become the crowning jewels to my resume, and it is work I am truly proud to be a part of.*

> *Zoë: Becoming a student partner provided enough incentive to the point where I did not find it necessary to be paid. The promise of co-authoring a scholarly article and the potential to change an existing course for the better offered ample motivation to work diligently throughout the partnership. I used the first semester of the internship to gauge how much time I needed to dedicate to the project, and I adjusted my schedule the following semester based on what workload I was able to handle. I believe the workload and motivations required and promised through this internship allowed me to confidently commit to being a student partner.*

These are our unique experiences, experiences of weekly Zoom meetings, juggling life and work amid a pandemic, striving to design a class that serves all learners, and doing this work together in a meaningful partnership. Our hope is that our work together is the beginning of future, sustainable partnerships between faculty, staff, and students with the beautiful goal of supporting all learners.

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