AT&T FACULTY-STAFF AWARDS IN INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY
2012-2013 Faculty-Staff Competition
Course APPLICATION FORM

Course Identifier: (e.g. TLC801) ___Sw290_____

Course Name: Surviving the Coming Zombie Apocalypse: Catastrophes and Human Behavior

Department: __Social Work_____ College: ___Social Science_____

Primary contact name, phone number, and email *(normally this will be the lead instructor)*

Glenn R. Stutzky, 517-980-0311,
stutzky1@msu.edu_____

Faculty and Staff Involved in Developing and Offering the Course *please list full name, position at MSU, email address, and project role for each person*

NAME	MSU Affiliation	PROJECT ROLE
Glenn R. Stutzky	Social of Social Work, College of Social Science	Instructor
Keesa Muhammad	Learning Design and Technology, IT Services	Producer
Christopher Irvin	Learning Design and Technology, IT Services	Creative Producer

Which Competition Are You Entering (select one):
_x__ FULLY ONLINE COURSE (no required face to face component)
___ BLENDED/HYBRID OR FLIPPED COURSE (some face to face learning is replaced by online learning)
___ TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED LEARNING INNOVATION (one specific technology innovation in a face-to-face, blended, flipped, or online course)

Semester(s) offered in 2012-2013 and number of students enrolled:

SEMESTER	# STUDENTS
US2012	179

Please address these categories:

"In times of catastrophes some people find their humanity, while others lose theirs".

Surviving the Coming Zombie Apocalypse is a groundbreaking course that has been mentioned in over 100 media outlets worldwide. It fuses, social theory, history, survival methods and techniques, social media, video, team building skills and Zombies all in the environment of an educational course.

I. Course Description (400 word limit)
(*broadly, what does the course teach, how is student performance assessed, what aspects of the course are online or technology-enhanced*)

Zombies are a popular metaphor for apocalypse both in popular culture and mainstream academic pursuits, even being used by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for teaching emergency preparedness. "Surviving the Coming Zombie Apocalypse: Catastrophes and Human Behavior" uses current research and science on Catastrophes and Human Behavior together with the idea of a Zombie Apocalypse to learn about the nature, scope, and impact of catastrophic events on individuals, families, societies, civilizations, and the Earth itself.

The question examined at the center of this course is "how and why humans behave as they do during disasters and catastrophes -- why some survive and others don't -- and the implications for planning, preparedness, and management before, during, and in the time following theses events". Are there ways to increase our odds at survival and preserving civilization?

The course was developed using the Angel Learning Management System and it consisted of 7 major course themes, including: Earth's History of Catastrophes, An Act of God?, Human Behavior Before, During, and After Catastrophes, Building a Better Survivor, and Future Catastrophes: Planning and Preparedness.
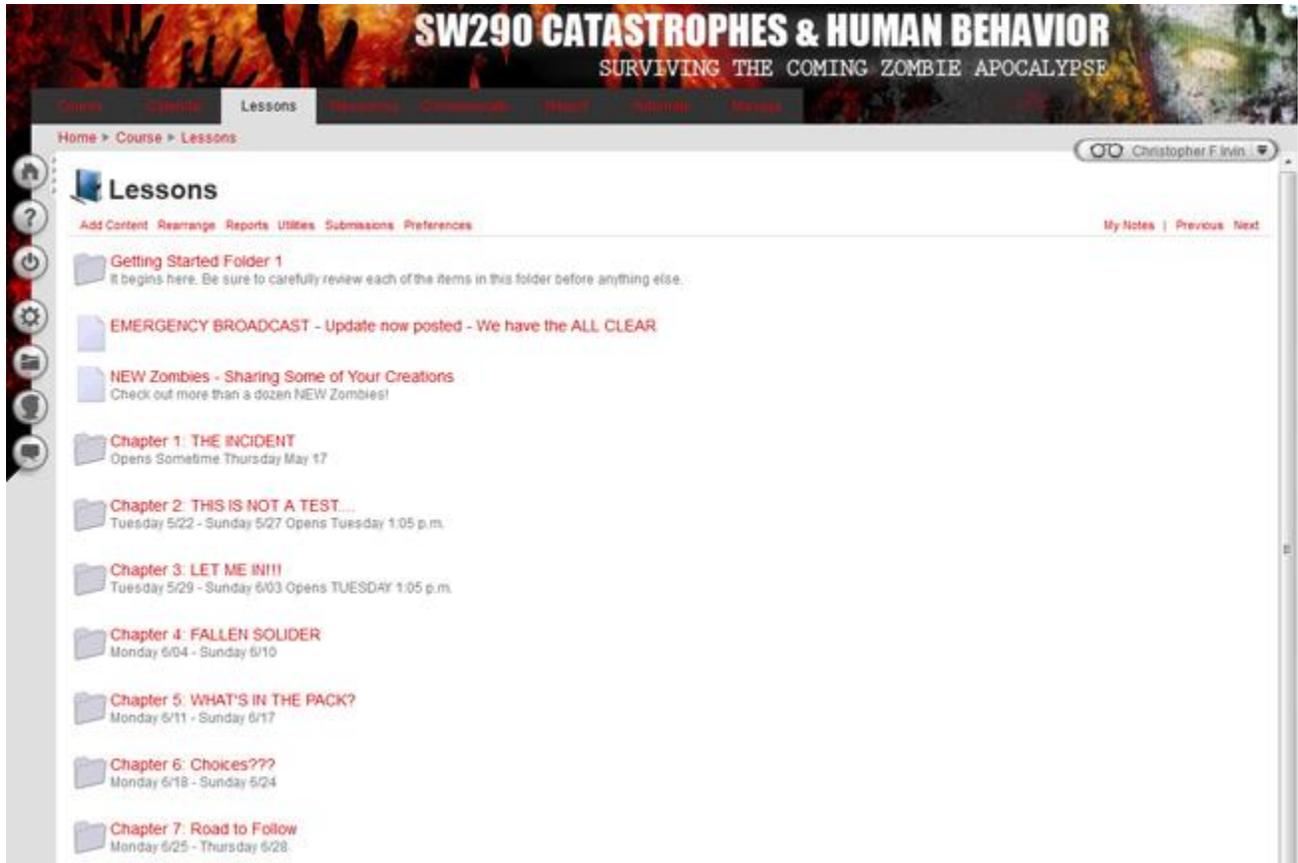
Student performance was assessed by multiple methods, out of a 200 point total, ranging from traditional individual quizzes (75pts); written research assignments (50pts); and within the Student Survivor Groups (35pts) through participation and completion of weekly challenges and tasks. Students also maintain an Online Survivor's Journal (PENZU)(35pts) chronicling their experience within the Group as they faced the Catastrophe. These entries were submitted on a weekly basis for monitoring and assessment.

Technology was used within the course to enhance the the interaction, connectedness, and engagement between the Instructor and Students; Survival Guides (Course Assistants) and students; and Student to Student. Through the use of multiple social media platforms such as:Twitter, Facebook, Skype, Google+, Youtube and PENZU we created more of a "real-time" environment.

The Instructor, Survival Guides, and the "Zombrarian" all had Twitter accounts that the students signed joined to receive crucial information and resources necessary for completing the course. We used software applications such as Hootesuite to manage these platforms.

Example of a Survival Guide Introduction: http://mediaspace.msu.edu/?id=1_jmjglrsi

Technology was also employed through the use of videos to assist in creating an "Immersive Online Catastrophic Event Simulation" (a Coronal Mass Ejection Incident (CME) has caused a Zombie pandemic). Students were assigned into Survivor Groups and located in varied geographical settings to face the challenges of living and surviving together during a Catastrophic Event.

II. Learning and Interaction Goals of the Course or Technology-enhanced Innovation
(what learning and interaction outcomes did you hope to achieve in your use of technology, why is this an award-worthy course or technology-enhanced learning innovation)

There were several learning goals within this course:
- Understand the complex nature of human behavior and relations during catastrophic times
- Learning about historical catastrophic events
- Explaining the difference between a catastrophe and a disaster
- Exploring the topic of Where is god during these events
- Understanding leadership and organization
- What does preparedness mean
- What approach will the students define when it comes to the survival of the planet.

One of our over arching goals was to use technology to help establish and build a "sense of community", especially between students within their Survival Groups and with the Survival Guide assigned to them.

Through the creation of the nation's first "Zombrarian" (a Librarian embedded within the course) our goal was to increase traffic and meaningful use of the university's library system. To be successful on certain assignments students had to interact with the Zombrarian, as a portal, to access the necessary library resources.

http://libguides.lib.msu.edu/content.php?pid=324989&sid=2698001

Weekly videos/pictures were used as a narrative to unfold the Catastrophic Simulation Event and set the stage for the students challenges and tasks both as a group and as individuals. The technology contributed in helping put the student(s) "in the reality" of the Catastrophe.

The classroom version of PENZU (online journal) was used as a "Survivor's Journal" with the goal of giving students an opportunity on a weekly/daily basis to reflect upon experiences with their Survival Group in real time as events progressed.

This course used technology not just to enhance certain aspects but to create an entirely new and innovative approach both in promoting a course for enrollment ; with the aggressive use of social media, and the continued use of those platforms and applications to deliver the academic content and strengthen the teaching relationships within .

The use of a Zombie-themed technology enriched approach attracted both national and international attention in both educational media; such as Chronicles in Higher Education, Inside Higher Ed International Business Times - Hong Kong and news media like Headline News Now - CNN Headline News, World News Now - ABC News Network, Yahoo! News, Daily Telegraph Australia, Ottawa Sun - Online (Canada), The Orissa Telegraph (India).

Even Conan O'Brian and Adult Swim made fun of it (in a good natured way).

This course has also attracted the attention of the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the instructor has been invited down to their Atlanta Campus for a conversation with the Associate Director of Communications for the Office of Emergency Preparedness and Response and some members of his staff. They are interested in seeing how we used technology to engage college-age students to deliver important material regarding disaster preparedness, planning and response.

III. Points of Interest and Innovation

When developing this course we took the approach of giving the students a "simulated game" like educational experience where having the students being able to make "choices" in their journey as the nucleus. In order to create this environment, we had to make the course highly visual and allow the students to be immersed within the different elements of the course. We utilized several forms of technology and methods to communicate activities and to establish a sense of presence not only for the instructor but for the students as well. Our goal was to create a simulated experience where the sense of urgency of zombies being present and them having to react to their experience was captured throughout their journey in the course.
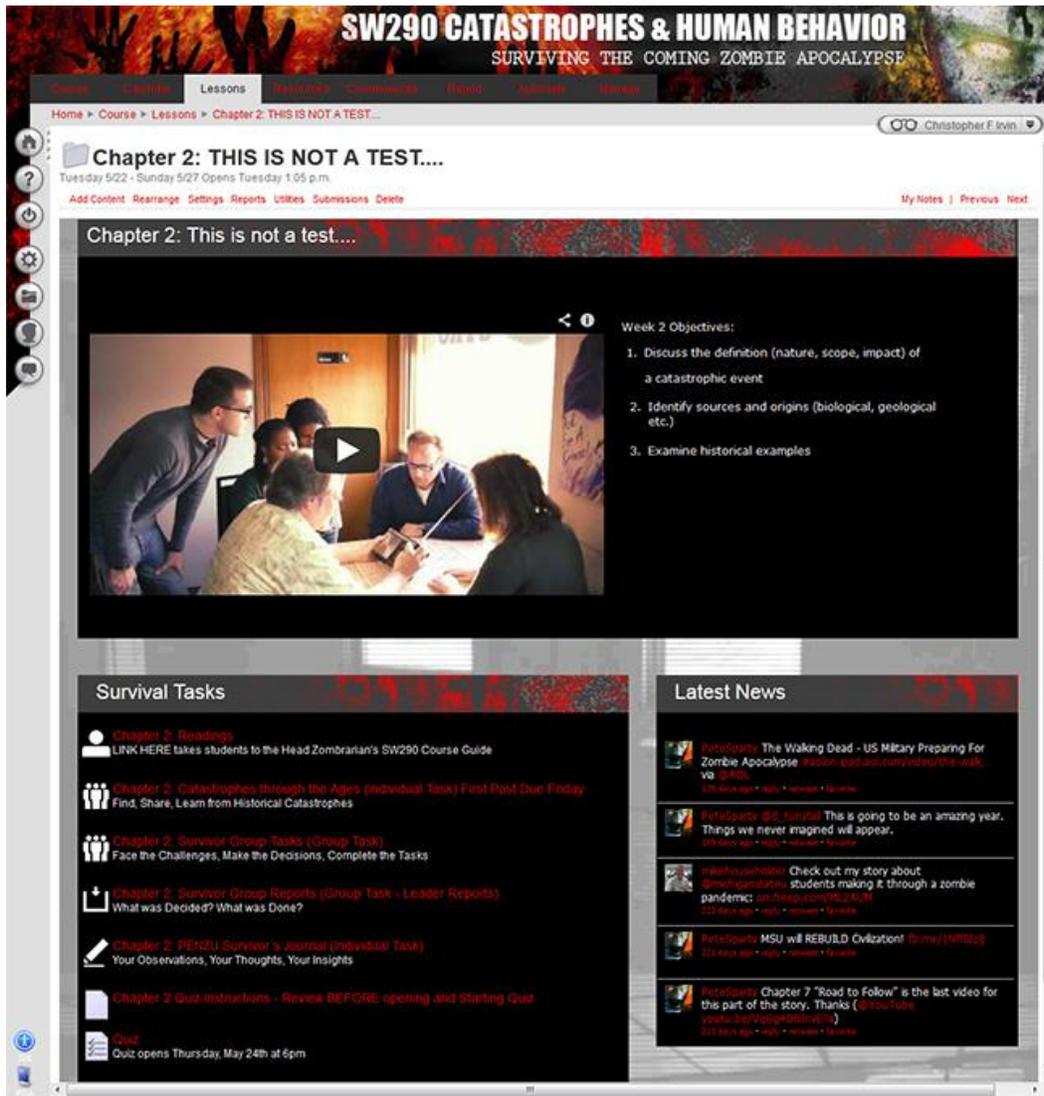
We used the following methods and techniques to bring this environment to life:

<u>Marketing</u>
We used viral marketing approach to get the word out about the course by combining a traditional print mediums and social media communications. Both mediums were used not only to bring immediate attention but we also used them as tools of immersion for the course.
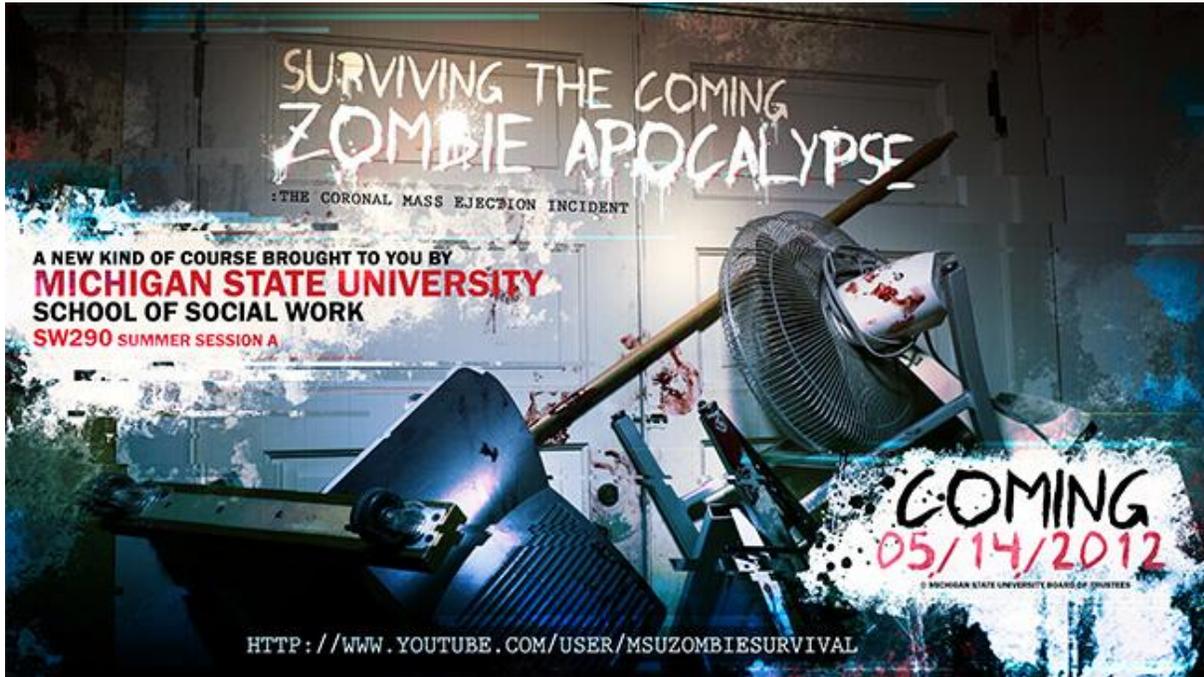
YouTube channel and facebook pages were used to promote and market course description and registration information. . We made sure we used strong visuals to connect the course content and the outside elements.
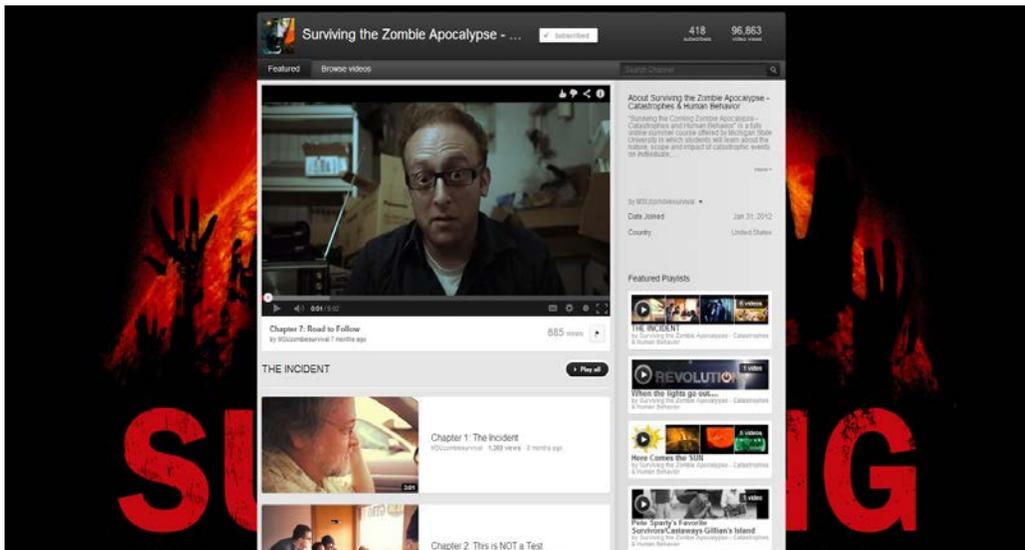
Facebook was used to post up-to-date information on the surrounding topic of zombies and it also shared status information on what they students were doing within the course.

Class urls:
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-3jmu1X2aE
- http://www.facebook.com/SurvivingTheComingZombieApocalypse

Twitter was used as tool for communication for course announcements, questions from students, and a means of feedback from instructor as well as survivor guides for the students. Twitter helped the students become engaged into the simulation as well as it helped push out change of behavior throughout the course utilizing emergency broadcasts as well as course intros from the professor.

Pete Sparty
@PeteSparty   FOLLOWS YOU
http://www.facebook.com/#!/SurvivingTheComingZombieApocalypse

Class urls:

https://twitter.com/PeteSparty

<u>Filmmaking</u>

This course used High-end traditional and digital special effects when developing the video simulations. We got back to the pure basics of filmmaking scouting locations, creating a production schedule, enlisting actors (many students participated), and using digital filmmaking techniques to enhance the quality of the video experience.

This course also held a premier of the first ever course Intro: http://youtu.be/fCdDpEf6BmU

<u>Student Interaction and Facilitated Teamwork</u>
The structure of this course was designed to have the students research, study and learn the academic content while at the same time providing them a dynamic simulated environment to apply what they were learning.

The academic side of the course included the traditional research assignments, required readings, lectures, discussion forums, quizzes, etc. Then on both an individual and group level the information was put to the test in the Catastrophic Online Simulation Event.

Students were randomly placed in small "survival" groups. This approach was used to emphasis the fact that when a Catastrophe occurs you are with whom you are with. It could be that you are with family, friends or coworkers, but you also could be with complete strangers. This becomes very important as relationships, groups dynamics, leadership, and conflict quickly become central. Students learn that survival rest more on what group you find yourself a part of than your own individual abilities, plan, and preparations.

With the same reasoning we randomly located the "where" of the survival groups.
Like with the "whom" when a Catastrophe happens you are "where" you are.
It could be at home, at work, the grocery store, in church, at a restaurant, or in jail. This also is crucial to survival as resources in any given location are varied and finite. Locations also in terms of safety are not created equal.

First we allowed the student to meet one another (before the Event began) and begin to learn a little about each other and what they as an individual might "bring to the table". Dynamics and issues of leadership began to emerge even from the beginning.

We told the groups that at a certain day and time (a Thursday afternoon at 3:02 p.m.) there would be an "important announcement" released. At precisely that moment the 3 Survival Guides tweeted out to each

of their Student Survival Groups just a set of numbers, nothing else. These numbers were the latitude and longitude of their group's geographic location at the moment the Catastrophe began.

We sat back and wondered at what point later in the day or evening we might hear back from any of the groups. Within 3 minutes one of the Survival Guides reported that one of her groups had already figured out what the numbers represented and correctly identified the building that they were located in. Soon others began to report in and I could only wish that in the middle of a Thursday afternoon I could command such attentiveness and response from any of my face to face classes.

As a reward we sent a picture that contained additional information about the Catastrophe to the first group (of each Survival Guide's groups) to correctly identify their location.

The Survival Group's first challenge and task was to decide, in those crucial first hours what is the priority? Is it securing safety, gathering supplies, finding weapons, establishing communications? Once they have made a decision, in a report sent in by whomever is their leader, they had to provide their reasoning and realistic details as to how they went about accomplishing that priority.

Example of a Student Survival Group Leader's Report: http://mediaspace.msu.edu/?id=0_kxv7lqvc

IV. Accessibility

At the time of development, our team did not focus on accessibility within this course offering. We did however make sure that all video content was viewable for the many students we had in various countries, including China, which restricts access of other forms of media.

In doing so, we utilized MSU Kaltura Mediaspace which allows universal access of media.

URL: http://mediaspace.msu.edu/

V. Evidence of Effectiveness with Students

Although this was a 2 credit course the participation amongst the class was near 100%. Those that were not participating the survival guides were there to help them through so no one was left without direction. Everyone participated, ask questions, gave feedback and was overall engaged in the course content.

Letter #1
To Whom It May Concern:

I was a student in SW290, Surviving the Zombie Apocalypse, during the summer of 2012. This was an online class that placed us in groups of "survivors" and together we had to meet objectives that could

ensure our survival or lead to our demise. During the week we read articles that related to disaster survival, such as hurricanes and floods, which we then applied to a zombie survival scenario.

Working as a group, we learned about evaluating our surroundings, the importance of group cohesion, and how to understand the different elements of broadcasted information. Though many classes are offered online, this class had a special component to our learning as we were given videos every week that portrayed actions taken by a survivor group. The videos were the highlight of our weekly experience as we saw the benefits and pitfalls of our decisions before our very eyes.

We also got information via Twitter. The use of social media gave our simulated experience a realistic spin by incorporating aspects of life that are not typical of higher education. The online setting of this class gave you the feeling of isolation as you made your way through the material. In the videos you could get a feeling of the confusion, the loss of hope and desperation, which made the experience real.

Combined with the use of Twitter as an information outlet you felt as if you were actually living in this post-apocalyptic world. It was more than simply reading articles and handing in assignments; the videos drew you into the situations and you got a full view of the life threatening situations at hand.

When the course was over you not only felt like you had gained the information necessary to survive a disaster, but you felt like you had survived a real disaster yourself. The use of videos put the students in the seat of the survivor and made the course thrilling and entertaining.

It was truly a once in a lifetime opportunity and I am honored to be a part of that class. The chance to offer this course again, or apply Professor Stutzky's teaching techniques to other courses would be beneficial to any student enrolled.

Danielle Brophy

Letter #2
To Whom It May Concern,

My name is ███████████ and I took SW 290, taught by Professor Glenn Stutzky, in Summer 2012. I highly recommend this course for the "best technology-enabled innovation" award. This class uses various tools that are easily accessed in your web-browser to enhance learning capabilities by keeping you engaged.

Before taking this class, I had no idea how powerful MSU Angel could be as a tool. Usually, professors only use Angel to distribute assignments and send class-wide messages. However, SW 290 utilizes those plus Angel's Discussion Forums, embedded YouTube/media player, online tests, completed homework drop-boxes, and not only showing grades, but also comments from your grader on certain assignments. Professor Stutzky even changed Angel's default background to further distinguish this course from other Angel using courses, which is a nice touch.

Assignments are very easy to keep track of because most of them follow the same format every unit, and each unit is covered in exactly 1 week. The workload is never overwhelming, but some assignments can only be completed within certain windows of time. This is particularly engaging because you have to stay active throughout the whole week rather crunching over the weekend.

Now, what makes this class especially innovative is the zombie apocalypse simulation. Complementing the subject material (major catastrophes and their effect on society), you are placed in a "survival group" and must survive a catastrophic zombie outbreak together. With each unit release, there's a video of Professor Stutzky's survival group revealing a new situation for all the survival groups to deal with and explaining the consequences of the last unit's handling.

This set-up accomplishes a lot. For one, it leaves you excited for the next unit; the mystery of what's in store eats away at the back of your mind while you work on your present tasks. Also, Angel's Discussion Forum has survival group members comment on each other's assignments so that your peers recognize your work.

But perhaps the simulation's greatest accomplishment is that it allows you to explore the course material on a personal level in meaningful ways. It's engaging as hell!

Additionally, Professor Stutzky uses facebook and Twitter to post fun, zombie-themed sundry and assigns PENZU Survival Journal homework each week. Everything is accessible online, but you are encouraged to participate in other class activities. For example, I personally met with my group using Google + hangouts, gave video reports as opposed to written ones, and even had the privilege to act for one of Glenn's weekly zombie videos. It's awesome to not only have the opportunity to participate outside of graded material like this, but also to have the desire to do so.

In conclusion, SW 290 uses innovation and technology brilliantly. Please consider it for the award.

Best regards,

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VI. Plans for Sustainability

We are currently working on several modifications to enhance the "game-like" activity of choice and survival skills for the students. The videos created will be re-used but also enhanced upon with additional scenarios being added in the future.

A few enhancements that are being created for "summer 2013:

- The role of social media in disasters
- The use of crowd sourcing/mapping software within the simulation events
- Offering as a 400 level course - Graduate student will be able to enroll