Course Identifier: (e.g. TLC801)    IAH 241E

Course Name: The Creative Process

Department: Center for Integrated Studies Arts and Humanities

College: College of Arts and Letters

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

Joni Starr, 360-317-5944, starrj@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

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>MSU Affiliation</th>
<th>PROJECT ROLE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Joni Starr</td>
<td>Assistant Professor, Department of Theatre</td>
<td>Instructor and course developer</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:starrj@msu.edu">starrj@msu.edu</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Guy Larcom</td>
<td>Educational Technology staff for College of Arts and Letters</td>
<td>Technology support and course collaborator</td>
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<td>MSU Senior in the College of Education</td>
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Type of Course:

___ FULLY ONLINE (no required face to face component)

_X_ BLENDED/HYBRID (some face to face time is replaced by online learning)

___ TECHNOLOGY-ENHANCED FACE-TO-FACE (a face-to-face course which uses technology for teaching and learning in an innovative way)

Semester(s) offered in 2010-2011 and number of students enrolled:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEMESTER</th>
<th># STUDENTS</th>
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<td>US10</td>
<td>44</td>
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I. Course Description

In this course students are introduced to the creative process through examination of the relationship between the arts and schools and the role that creativity plays in educational settings, primarily grades K-12. Students will explore how the arts impact learners in meaningful ways as they reflect upon their own creative processes and educational experiences in the arts. To this end students will:

1. develop an understanding of creative expression by
   - identifying characteristics of creative expression.
   - analyzing the works of creative individuals.
   - reflecting on personal creative processes.

2. explore the creative process in schools by
   - examining a historical perspective of arts in schools.
   - reflecting upon the placement and value of arts in schools.
   - discussing the influence of culture on creativity and the arts.

3. discuss the status of arts in education in the United States and beyond by
   - discussing the current state of the arts in the United States.
   - defining and identifying the characteristics of a model arts education program
   - comparing and contrasting arts education in other countries.

Assessment approaches are broad and attempt to reach a variety of learners. Student performance is assessed through readings and responses, profile papers, creative projects, a research project and an opinion essay. These evaluations vary in procedure as some are implemented online, others are more traditional paper writing formats, and still others are projects performed in class or created online with a full community of learners.

The teaching of this course reflects a strong balance and integration between face to face and online instruction. The material presented in class is reinforced by the online work and vice-versa. The course is set up as a 50/50 time share meeting online on M and W and face to face on T and Th. Course topics are introduced both online and in class. Online students read articles, review power point presentations, search websites, view videos, listen to audio, complete assignments using drop boxes, discussion forums, Google docs and wiki pages. In class students engage in small and large group discussion, personal written reflection, and artistic activities.

II. Learning and Interaction Goals of the Blended Course

My goals for instructing a blended course focused on accessibility, accountability, and purpose.

Accessibility
Teaching a class on the creative process is challenging as I wish to honor individual learning styles, as I also honor unique creative styles. A blended course enabled me to offer multiple methods and applications for content delivery and review while also building face to face relationships with and between students. Using the power of technology, students were able to access content using video,
YouTube clips, international lectures, web pages, and PowerPoint presentations. Additionally, students had a course pack with relevant readings. These online methods, in addition to the course pack and classroom interaction, were employed with the express purpose of creating a richer learning environment that would allow access to a broad array of learning styles and ultimately reach a majority of students.

**Accountability**
Making learning visible and reviewable by peers can motivate learners to compare and contrast their own work, thereby raising the standard across the board and developing a greater sense of accountability and a culture of good work. Three online assignments were developed with this in mind. Two assignments asked students to use Google docs to create slides for “display.” The online process of creation was open to all and students could see their peers making choices and editing their work in real time. The second application asked students to make a wiki page based on individual research. Again, students could watch and review each other at the same time they were creating their own project. It was my hope that in making the creative process public students’ accountability would increase. (See examples in the “points of interest” section.)

**Purpose**
I also hoped for a more strongly understood purpose for our classroom activities. Using theatre activities in a classroom of non-theatre majors can sometimes create a culture of “fun and games” without a true understanding of the merit of the work. My desire was that when students were introduced to the material in unique, different approaches online that their engagement in unique, different approaches in the classroom would seem natural and would result in more committed student participation.

One example of a connection between online research and classroom activity centered on the use of images. For the online class students reviewed web sites of youth arts programs, paying particular attention to posted photos of the groups work. Then in the classroom students worked in small groups to recreate these photos through the use of tableaux (frozen picture) thereby introducing and highlighting the work of the youth program to others. In this assignment students were engaged in learning linguistically, kinesthetically, and interpersonally.

*(Left) Online image of youth working with the arts organization Phakama.*

*(Right) Students in class creating a tableau based on the work of Phakama.*

I believe the uniqueness and strength of this course stems from a clear connection between student application and the course topic, *The Creative Process*. The use of technology in this case allowed students multiple means to gather research, reflect upon ideas, make individual choices, edit and revise, and share their work publicly.
I feel that a blended course served my students needs well in both process and content. Through multiple instructional approaches to access learning, students were better able to explore their own unique creative processes and by offering a rich online resource the content became alive and engaging. Also, the instruction facilitated academic conversation as students produced content and their peers consumed it. This approach aided in building an effective learning community as students participated in their own and others creative processes.

III. Points of Interest and Innovation
Organizing the online material in a clear, understandable manner was of the utmost importance. I felt if the Angel site was not easily navigated then students would “check out” early. In discussions with Guy Larcom, we worked to create a welcoming front page with general notes on the course and a link to the course calendar and a “begin here” folder which provided more details on the structure of the course. This proved to be very helpful as there were no initial requests for assistance and students were completing their work on time. I did poll students on the first day to see who had taken online courses before. I was surprised when only 2 out of 44 raised their hands. Well, then, as this was my first time too I assured them we would be learning together!

Here I will specifically highlight three assignments that emphasize how effectively students were able to fully engage in the creative process, while maintaining focus on course content.

**Time Line of Creativity** - The assignment states:

*All nations have defined and been defined by the creative contributions of countless individuals. To better expand our view on the creative process and its impact on cultures and society we will exhibit 100 creative individuals covering a century of time. Students will each research two individuals and present their work in a time line format using Google docs.*

Students were assigned two decades and were provided sample slides to better define the assignment. Also, a tutorial on the use of Google docs was made available. This project provided a public forum for the creative process and students work unfolded right in front of each other. An interesting feature of Google docs is that it informs users how many others are working at that same time. This feature furthers a learning community where users review others work while also editing and refining their own work. An additional exciting outcome of this assignment was that the collective work of the students created a cohesive new body of research that could effectively inform others beyond our classroom.

**Link to the completed work:** A Time Line of Creativity (please cut and paste this link into a browser):

https://docs.google.com/a/msu.edu/present/edit?id=0AVV2SOGajCGNZN2emIzdDdfOGc2N3NnZGdo&authkey=CLj0_uEP&hl=en
A Short Look at a Long Past
A second assignment also made use of the Google docs application. This assignment focused on a history of arts education in the United States. By now students had a clearer understanding of the Google docs application and therefore a stronger recognition of how to obtain their desired results. The assignment was successful as all of the content was effectively covered, the presentation was visually interesting and unique, and students successfully facilitated their learning.

Link to the completed work: A Short Look at a Long Past (please cut and paste into a browser):
https://docs.google.com/a/msu.edu/present/edit?id=0AQG5P1bB4I5LZGY3MjNnN3MrMGNqY3ZqMmhk&authkey=Cln0-LYM&hl=en

These assignments did create a couple of challenges. One targeted how users were invited to Google docs. (This is still a challenge and is why you are asked to cut and paste instead of making an easier link.) This kink was ironed out for students, and then a larger problem occurred when a student inadvertently made changes to all of the slides instead of just editing her own. This demanded more creative problem solving skills for myself and Guy, but ultimately things were restored. I find these challenges minimal in comparison to the positive educational results of using the Google docs application.

Final Project: Global Arts - The assignment states:

To culminate the information we have been studying in class and to gain perspective on a larger world view, students will research artists and arts education practices in foreign countries and then compare and contrast their findings with other students. This assignment is three fold with individual research and presentation, group work and presentation, and peer review. Students will create wiki pages to present their work.

To provide technical assistance a wiki page tutorial was offered, accessible through the Angel site, and Guy Larcom visited class to answer questions and trouble shoot with students.

This project allowed students to research, present, and collaborate in new ways. (Another quick show of hands pointed out that only a few students had created wiki pages before this assignment.) In their research students sought beyond quotations from written material into active media sources. Their presentations demanded organizational capabilities beyond words on a page that allowed them to differentiate themselves from others. This was evident in the use of headers, dropped in photos or you tube links, color choices, and placement of items on the page.
Finally students worked together to share, edit, and present collaboratively. Students first created their individual country pages, and then created together an overarching page that compared and contrasted the multiple countries practices. Some groups chose to use links from the group page that lead to their individual country pages. This physical linking was a good example of mental linking that also occurred in their collaboration. Creating group wiki pages proved to be an effective team effort as students had to teach and learn from each other to then present their best group work.

Follow these links to view both individual and group pages. When at the site, you may use the menu bar to the left to review any of the wiki pages.

Links to sample county pages:  
Ghana Student Research Page  
Chile Student Research Page

Links to sample group page:  
Australia-Asia Group Wiki  - Text link: http://iah241e.wikispaces.com/Australia-Asia+Group  
-On this page, follow the links to group members’ individual country research pages.

IV. Accessibility
Although I discuss the topic of accessibility in this class, it is not in terms of students with disabilities or special needs.

V. Evidence of Effectiveness with Students
As I have taught this course before without technology integration I can directly compare points of improved engagement and application using a blended approach. I will share two examples.

Online Homework Assignments
Student performance rose significantly when asked to respond to materials using online drop boxes or discussion forums rather than through in class quizzes or handed in written work. I feel this occurred for a number of reasons that again reflect my goals of accessibility, accountability, and purpose. The organization of having materials in one place and available to students in their own time frame allows for greater convenience and higher completion rates. Also, I found students much more willing to participate in classroom discussion as I had already reviewed their online homework for the lesson. In this way they were more accountable in class for knowing the material and in turn this gave them more purpose when engaging in classroom activities. In prior sections of this course, students might not have prepared the material hoping there would not be a quiz or I would not have the opportunity to review their work beforehand if they were turning in written assignments. In this case, using online technology for homework assignments positively impacted individual learners and the class as a whole.
Final Presentations
For final presentations in previous courses taught without an online component, students would each give a short in class presentation for their final research projects. With a class of 45-50 students maintaining attention from peers could be difficult. It required the presenter to possess a sense of confidence and performance that many students haven’t yet acquired. When using the blended learning model, I changed the final project to creating online wiki pages and this greatly impacted how all students engaged in each other’s research. Instead of sitting passively in class listening to peers report, students, again at their own pace, reviewed the material and accessed more as they might be motivated to do. After the online peer review was completed, we followed up in class with discussions and activities that related to the wiki pages and this was the best way to bring closure to the projects. At this point students were eager to share their own findings, discuss their peers work, and celebrate good work.

Comments from SIRs surveys:
1. How effectively did the writing assigned in this course contribute to your understanding of its content and/or of the arts & humanities?

   I thought the writing assignments helped me understand the objectives in this course. They applied directly to the topics of the class. The papers and the online writing assignments were very helpful. They helped me understand the readings and grasp the “creative process” and the creativity in my own writing.

   Very effectively, all the assignments helped reflect on art and humanities.

   All of the writing in the class directly related to the creation & process of art. We had to explain & demonstrate our understanding of the creative process in the arts.

   The writing assigned was a very effective way to demonstrate our understanding of the content. In the writing we were able to thoroughly explain our thoughts & connections to what was taught, and feedback was always given.
VI. Plans for Sustainability

As this was my first time teaching a course with an online component I am eager to do it again and am excited to be offering a section this coming summer. Sustainment is primarily my responsibility and I am motivated by the good work and positive feedback of the students. On our last face to face class I informally surveyed students for their feedback on the course capturing both the effectiveness as well as opportunities for improvement. Funny the students were most adamant about changing the time online assignments were due. That is an easy fix!

Additionally, for personal development I continue to work with colleagues and take workshops to learn more about online applications for effective teaching. I feel that as long as there is an organizational system in place to support online learning and motivated instructors to engage in the practice, then the opportunity for sustainability exists.

I admit, that because I come from a performing arts background, a very hands on, face to face pedagogical experience I was reluctant to online teaching models, but now I openly advocate for its practice. I feel that for this IAH course in particular, the blended model is an excellent choice for content retention and student engagement. I am looking forward to the next class!
February 9, 2009

To Whom It May Concern,

It is a pleasure to write this letter in support of Assistant Professor Joni Starr’s integrative studies in arts and humanities hybrid course. I would like to take this opportunity to share my experiences of the blended learning model course which highlighted all beneficial aspects of taking a course on campus and online. Students were offered both the scheduling flexibility provided by online learning and the personal interactions provided by face-to-face learning. For example, reading material assigned was accompanied by more in depth forms of learning from videos to discussion forums between classmates and other resources only accessible on the internet. The assignments were then further discussed in person giving students a chance to interact with the professor, answer questions, and contribute opinions.

Aside from Joni’s effective teaching skills, I recommend this class to others because it requires students to be independent learners as well as strongly motivated. One of the assigned group projects gave individuals the advantage of discussing their roles together in class and then using a website, known as Wiki spaces, to independently submit and view the collaborative progression of their group members. Similar online assignments involved the creation of a timeline in which students were assigned a specific decade and each edition to the virtual PowerPoint timeline was accessible to students. While these projects were completed off campus, classroom hours were spent productively on discussions and other planned events.

Projects like the ones discussed are what made this class unique and memorable. As a senior B.S. Economics major I originally added this course to my schedule because of the appealing blended learning model approach. This approach was effective for this class because students had the opportunity to be part of an extended learning environment while developing essential comfort, connection, and creativity within the creative process course. The class provided a good mix of technologies and interactions, meeting my expectations of a socially supported, constructive experience with endless learning possibilities.

Sincerely,

Stefanie Nowak

nowakst1@msu.edu
February 9, 2010

To whom it may concern,

Last summer, in an effort to complete my final requirements as a student at Michigan State University, I enrolled in Joni Starr’s course entitled IAH 271 E Section: 741, Creativity in Arts Education. When I first signed up for the class, I thought it would be an easy finish to a lengthy five-year college experience because of its emphasis on creativity; something I consider a strength of mine. Having finished the course, the analysis of my experience with Professor Starr’s teachings has challenged my knowledge of creativity and heightened my level of interest in the subject, which now, as an actor and entertainer, is my job.

The part of the course I enjoyed the most was the fact that it was a hybrid class. Not only was I getting the in-class experience twice a week, where I had opportunity to converse with people, in groups, and hear their thoughts on the readings and how the literature reminded them of their past experiences with creativity, but I also had the opportunity of watching videos, reading excerpts from books and creating web pages the remaining three days out of the week on the ANGEL page. Being enrolled in the course during the summer semester, the education moved at a very fast pace. In the syllabus it seemed overwhelming with the amount of information we were going to cover over those few weeks, but as it was actually happening, the lectures, readings, videos, papers and projects smoothly complemented each other and continued to keep my easily distracted mind engaged. From writing an analytical paper on the subject of David Bowie’s creative process when writing his music and completing a web page dedicated to the process of arts education throughout Ireland I gained an understanding for the process of creativity and how to put it toward my craft and my daily way of living. Being educated in my own apartment on the ANGEL website, the course went from being a class I needed to finish for my degree and ended up being a hobby I couldn’t wait to get home and explore.

Considering my personal attachment to the subject of the creative process, with my life-long enrollment in acting, singing and dancing classes, I may have a biased opinion toward the enlightenment this course has to offer. Something I greatly appreciated was seeing the creative growth through the students in the course that had rarely any creative experience before they started taking Professor Starr’s class. I have spoken highly of this course to friends that still attend Michigan State University and I hope it is continued for years to come. I have a great love and respect for the process of creativity and I want nothing more than for the education of the creative process to be learned by all.

Thank you,

James R. Broughton II
532 Warren Ave
Flushing, MI 48433
810-444-2890