

Preliminary Thoughts, Practical Examples of Extending Online Courses beyond Traditional Online Course Models

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I thought I would share some active projects at Empire State College and some in partnership with other colleges that push beyond the traditional designs of online learning courses. These design ideas promote a model which goes beyond course improvement, but instead also promotes learning well beyond the particular course or program.

- **Adaptive Learning:** The Gates Foundation has been funding partnerships between higher education institutions and companies that are developing adaptive learning platforms or publishers who are developing content with faculty that is adaptive. We have been working with a company (Cogbooks) with Introduction to Psychology. The design of the studies allows for students to progress at their own pace, and for faculty to have better data on their use of materials. A dozen other schools working with other areas, including introductory math and science. <http://edgrowthadvisors.com/research/>
- **Citizen Science:** The online environment is particularly promising for promoting citizen science through assignments and beyond. These web sites offer several examples. Empire State College has a Beetle Project and a Squirrel Project, that particularly demonstrates Citizen Science integrated into courses. SUNY Plattsburgh has a project using smartphones to document roadkill and conduct projects in studies. http://japanesebeetles.esc.edu/japanese_beetles, <http://citizenscience.esc.edu/atesc/>, <http://citizenscience.esc.edu/other-projects-and-resources/>
- <http://www.plattsburgh.edu/about/profiles/faculty/garneau.php>
- **Mapblogging in GeoScience** courses in the major, but also beyond to promote learning across the curriculum. Courses or in other courses to promote visual presentation and understanding of data, and other tools. Included in 25 courses, including all foreign languages, cultural studies, caribbean studies and GPS and the new geography and. <http://commons.esc.edu/smatresources/gps-and-the-new-geography/>

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- **Science Field Work for Blended Studies:** Students study predominantly online, but then come together for individualized field studies with faculty cross disciplinary teams.

- **Encouraging minority community college students in research:** Comprehensive Colleges work with community college students and community college faculty for a summer research institute combine with online communities. In extension now to online environments. SUNY Purchase/SUNY Empire State College. Portfolios are used for students to codify active learning skills.
- **Portfolios and newer media approaches for codifying learning related to Experiential Learning Projects:** Faculty at Empire State College have been working with a Global Qualifications Framework with a Lumina Foundation grant which helps students and faculty to document experiential learning projects. <http://www.esc.edu/degree-planning-academic-review/prior-learning-assessment/student-guide/global-learning-qualifications-framework/>. Michigan State University is working with digital storytelling projects to document internships, field experiences, service learning and other experiential learning projects.

I share these to spark discussion of realistic ways faculty work to solve teaching and learning challenges.