The 7 Biggest Mistakes the Wikipedia Education Program’s Made — and What We’ve Learned From Them

LiAnna Davis
Wiki Education Foundation
Mistake #1:

Not taking student abilities into account.
Lesson #1:

Investigate student writing skill level prior to working with a new discipline.
Mistake #2:

Allowing instructors to engage only via email/Google Docs.
Lesson #2:

Ensure each instructor has a course page.
**Lesson #2:**

Ensure each instructor has a course page.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary</th>
<th>[collapse]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Institution</td>
<td>Rice University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Term</td>
<td>Spring 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start</td>
<td>6 January 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>29 June 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student count</td>
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<td>Status</td>
<td>Current</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructors</td>
<td>Vignespassy (talk I contribs I sandboxes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Online volunteers</td>
<td>Jami (Wiki Ed) (talk I contribs I sandboxes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus volunteers</td>
<td>JoyceChou (talk I contribs I sandboxes), Twoods158 (talk I contribs I sandboxes)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Articles</th>
<th>Reviewers</th>
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<tr>
<td>Alison.moscoso (talk I contribs I sandboxes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Allisonshields (talk I contribs I sandboxes)</td>
<td>Global perceptions of autism</td>
<td>Add yourself as reviewer</td>
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<td>LWang1991 (talk I contribs I sandboxes)</td>
<td>Preventive healthcare</td>
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<td>Jak8 (talk I contribs I sandboxes)</td>
<td>HIV/AIDS in Malawi</td>
<td>Jpoles1 (talk I contribs)</td>
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<td>Sessama7 (talk I contribs I sandboxes)</td>
<td>Racism in France</td>
<td>Brokeethleen (talk I contribs)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Brodgers15 (talk I contribs)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Dmillar23 (talk I contribs)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Add yourself as reviewer</td>
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Mistake #3:

Working with class of 300+ students.
Lesson #3:

Keep class size under around 30 students.
Mistake #4:

Giving instructor too much deference in assignment design.
Lesson #4:

Ensure the assignment the instructor is giving works for Wikipedia.
Mistake #5:

Asking students to contribute in language they’re not fluent in.
Lesson #5:

Have students translate from language they’re studying to language they’re fluent in.
Lesson #5:
Have students translate from language they’re studying to language they’re fluent in.
Mistake #6:

Students plagiarize. A lot.
Lesson #6:

Stress the importance of original content on Wikipedia and check their work.
Mistake #7: Not planning for problems.
Lesson #7:

Have a plan to deal with exigencies.
Mistakes

1. Not taking student abilities into account.
2. Allowing instructors to engage only via email/Google Docs.
3. Working with class of 300+ students.
4. Giving instructors too much deference in assignment design.
5. Asking students to contribute in language they’re not fluent in.
7. Not planning for problems.
Lessons Learned

1. Investigate student writing skill level.
2. Ensure each instructor has a course page.
3. Keep class size under 30 students.
4. Ensure the assignment works for Wikipedia.
5. Have students translate from language they’re studying to the language they’re fluent in.
6. Stress the importance of original content on Wikipedia and check their work.
7. Have a plan to deal with exigencies.
Your questions!

Or email me: lianna@wikiedfoundation.org