Monthly report for November 2014

1. Highlights

- Joined by volunteer Becky Carmichael, Jami attended the National Women’s Studies Association’s annual conference to recruit instructors to join the Classroom Program. During the 3-day event, they engaged with instructors who teach in Women’s Studies and related departments as potential target group for closing content gaps on Wikipedia. Becky and Jami hosted an exhibitor’s booth as well as two workshops about designing and implementing a Wikipedia assignment, and generated a lot of interest from new instructors who work in a field that is largely underrepresented on Wikipedia.

- Between November 15 and 17, Wiki Education Foundation’s board gathered in San Francisco for their first in-person board meeting. The board adjusted Wiki Ed’s bylaws to the needs of our growing organization, discussed mission and vision, and approved our first annual plan and budget. Senior staff members joined most of the board meeting, reported on the past impact, and outlined plans for the future. Board and senior staff agreed to embark on a 6-month strategy process which will kick off in early 2015.

- The Assignment Design Wizard, which will streamline course planning for instructors, was deployed to a handful of instructors for product testing. The next project, Course Dashboards to reflect student activity for instructors, is now underway.

- With the help of the Wikipedia Medical community, we have completed a subject-specific handout on navigating the specific requirements for medical information on Wikipedia.

2. Programs

2.1. Educational Partnerships

Jami Mathewson and Frank Schulenburg visited Louisiana State University’s campus to support partners at Communication across the Curriculum in co-hosting a series of workshops about teaching with Wikipedia. The aim of this campus partnership is to support the wClassroom Program in expanding to more student editors and more instructors. Wiki Ed staff helped with outreach by presenting to LSU instructors about assignment design, how their students can close content gaps in their field, and an introduction to Wikipedia policies that are important for successful assignments. The sessions gave us the opportunity to connect with new participants, and we’re extremely excited about the potential for growth at LSU. For more information about this visit and the goals of campus partnerships, see our blog post, “Exploring the perks of partnership with Louisiana State University.”

In November, Jami also attended the National Women’s Studies Association’s annual conference to recruit instructors to join the Classroom Program. We targeted the instructors who teach in Women’s Studies and related departments because these courses can help close content gaps on Wikipedia. Jami and volunteer Becky Car-
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michael hosted an exhibitor’s booth for three days as well as two workshops about designing and implementing a Wikipedia assignment, and we generated a lot of interest from new instructors.

2.2. Classrooms Program

The Fall 2014 term is almost over, and about half of our classes have completed their Wikipedia assignment. We are supporting 97 courses, exceeding our goal of 85 for the term, and we have our largest number of student editors to date.

Current status of the Classroom Program (fall term 2014) in numbers, as of November 30:
• 97 Wiki Ed-supported courses have Course Pages (41 or 42% are led by returning instructors)
• 2,604 student editors are enrolled
• 743 students have successfully completed the online training

Student work highlights:
Nine student editors from Joan Strassmann’s Behavioral Ecology course at Washington University in St. Louis had their work appear on Wikipedia’s main page in the Did You Know section:
• Blastophaga pseudes
• Protonectarina
• Belonogaster petiolata
• Metapolybia cingulata
• Polistes japonicus
• Protopolybia chartergoides
• Vespula austriaca
• Parachartergus fraternus
• Ropalidia romandi

We’ve also seen some great work from Avery Dame’s Women, Art, and Culture course at the University of Maryland:
• Lis Rhodes
• Hilary Tham

Amy Hughes’s Theater Course at Brooklyn College also had outstanding work, including articles on:
• Academic Drama
• Shakespeare’s Late Romances

As the term comes to a close, the majority of our students are hard at work finishing up their Wikipedia projects. This month, 66% of students have made edits to the article main space. 1,177 articles have been created and student editors have made contributions to a total of 3,426. We are supporting our largest number of students to date, almost 1,000 more than the Spring 2014 term. Ian and Adam are continuing to provide students with valuable feedback and encouraging students to nominate their work for Did You Know and Good Article status. We are well on our way to our most successful term yet!

2.3. Communications

WikiProject Med Foundation’s Lane Rasberry approached us several months ago about using the discipline-specific brochure Wiki Ed produced on psychology as a basis for a medicine handout as well. We thought this sounded like a great idea, and this month, the Editing Wikipedia articles on Medicine handout was released on Wikimedia Commons. Lane and other medicine editors drafted the content based on our template, and we finalized the design and printing of the brochure. These discipline-specific handouts serve students as a reference for editing Wikipedia in certain subjects, heading off potential mistakes new student editors make when editing in that discipline for the first time. In addition to the medicine and psychology handouts, a sociology handout is drafted and undergoing a community review process in November.
Communications has also been producing materials combining outreach effort and our brand identity, including handouts for use at academic conferences.

This month also saw our second most-read blog post, “Help us close Wikipedia’s gender gap” from November 13. This post, which explored the role of Wiki Ed through the lens of the gender gap, was shared by more than 250 people on Facebook and Twitter.

**Blog posts:**
- Join us for Wikipedia-palooza in Baton Rouge (November 3)
- User testing the Assignment Design Wizard (November 7)
- Help us close Wikipedia’s gender gap (November 13)
- Monthly Report for October 2014 (November 18)
- Don’t cite Wikipedia. Write Wikipedia! (November 22)
- Wikipedia and Education webinar archived online (November 25)

**News coverage:**
- Rose Velazquez, University partnership utilizes Wikipedia in course curriculum, The Daily Reveille (LSU Student Press) (October 7, 2014)

### 2.4. Digital Infrastructure

After completing primary development of the “1.0” version of the Assignment Design Wizard the previous month, in November we rolled the Wizard out for use by instructors preparing for their Spring 2015 courses.

Product Manager Sage Ross focused this month on user testing to ensure a smooth user experience, on refining the content of the wizard, and on integrating it into the training and onboarding process for new instructors. We also conducted an additional development sprint late in November to add several new features to the wizard: several different types of Wikipedia assignments are now supported, and assignment timelines will adapt to match the dates of each course. These new features are currently available for testing at [http://wizard-testing.wikiedu.org](http://wizard-testing.wikiedu.org), and they will be rolled out to the production version of the wizard in early December. You can check out our code — freely licensed, of course — at [GitHub](https://github.com).

This month we’ve also been preparing for our next wikiedu.org development project: course dashboards. The dashboard system, which will be ready in time for using during the Spring 2015, is intended to make it easier to keep track of what is going on in a single course, as well as across all of the courses Wiki Ed is supporting.

For an individual course, the dashboard will show which articles the student editors are working on, how many page views their work has received, which editors have completed the student training, and more. Across all courses, the dashboard will provide aggregate statistics on the impact our program participants are having, and help us find classes that are exceptionally productive or that may need extra help.

### 2.5 Research and development

**Outreach to high-achieving students**

In the month of November we started planning the outreach to high-achieving students pilot. The goal of this project, which will be kicked off in spring term 2015, is to get university students to improve Wikipedia content as an extracurricular activity.

After getting oriented, Samantha started to establish a program plan, a roles and responsibilities matrix and a high-level timeline for the pilot. She also embarked on developing selection criteria for which universities and which type of existing student groups to target.
3. Finance and Administration / Fundraising

3.1. Finance and Administration
New carpets have been installed in the Wiki Ed offices, adding a professional environment. The hardwood floors of the office had been protected by the Presidio Trust, which had, for some time, limited our options for placing chairs. The new carpets (a gray-blue) work to protect these historic hardwood floors and also damp sound throughout the office.

The revised budget, which includes additional funding received after creation of our original budget, was approved at the November board meeting. The revised budget was also adjusted to reflect a 12-month period instead of the 18-month period in the original budget. The plan amounts for the monthly and year-to-date comparisons reflected the approved revised budget.

- **Month of November** expenses are $139,066 versus the plan of $200,801. The primary cause of the variance for the month is due to the timing of the receipt of, and payment of, invoices. This timing issue accounts for approximately $45k of the variance. While another $10–15k is attributed to expenses that have been delayed to future dates – primarily fundraising events and trips.
• **YTD expenses** are $570,671 versus plan of $725,161. Much like the variance for the monthly expenses, much of the variance for the year-to-date is due to timing. Vacancies in staff and the timing of getting staff on-board account for approximately $40k. In addition, the delay in getting everything setup in our offices continues to create a variance (approx. $23k) as we slowly get all the things needed to run efficiently.

### 3.2. Fundraising and Partnerships

During the months of October and November, we focused fundraising efforts on identifying new prospects for the organization for short- and long-term funding needs. We did an in depth assessment of needs and priorities, defined these as funding opportunities, and initiated development of short-form funding proposals that represent these needs/priorities as funding.

We began and will continue outreach to top prospects — primarily foundations — that will receive these proposals (each according to their interests). We received a major donor (who wishes to remain anonymous) at the Wiki Education Foundation office, and the team presented a comprehensive update on our work, focusing on the programmatic and operational areas supported by a grant from this donor.
Between November 15 and 17, Wiki Education Foundation’s board gathered in San Francisco for their first in-person board meeting.

During two full days of meetings, the board adjusted Wiki Ed’s bylaws to the needs of our growing organization, discussed mission and vision, and approved our first annual plan and budget.

Senior staff members joined most of the board meeting, reporting on the past impact and plans for the future. Board and senior staff also agreed to embark on a 6-month strategy process which will kick off in early 2015. The board meeting was a great opportunity to get to know each other and create a shared vision for the future of the organization.
5. Office of the ED

Current priorities:
• Planning a 6-month strategy process to kick off in early 2015
• Getting our pilot project with high-achieving students off the ground
• Overseeing the planning for our academic conference and Wiki Conference USA next year

November started with Frank joining Jami on her visit to LSU in Baton Rouge. As the Communication across the Curriculum staff at LSU will play a major role in our expansion plans for the upcoming spring term, Jami and Frank discussed partnership opportunities. Frank also met with a number of faculty members as well as with staff from LSU’s Natural History Museum to explore ways we might work together in the future.

November was largely dominated by the in-person board meeting held in San Francisco (see above under “Board”). As a result, the board approved the annual plan and budget for our ongoing fiscal year, which makes this document the first official annual plan and budget for our organization.

Frank also started onboarding Samantha Erickson this month, who joined our organization as manager for our outreach to high-achieving students pilot. Samantha’s work is happening in the context of Wiki Education Foundation exploring new ways of encouraging students to improve Wikipedia’s content. Our existing classroom program is already a highly impactful way of filling content gaps. We believe there are more ways of bringing universities and Wikipedia together. Our pilot with high achieving students is a first step in this direction.

6. Visitors

Pavel Richter, Wikimedia Deutschland
Tobias (Benutzer:Church of emacs), German Wikipedia
Diana Strassmann, Wiki Education Foundation board member