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The Wiki Educator's Survival Kit:
Some Tried and Tested Teaching
Experiences from Bulgaria

User: Spiritia

(Mom also knows me as Vassia)

Wikimedians of Bulgaria User Group

Background

- Bulgaria has university WEP since 2007/2008.
 - Create & Edit articles, free photos, learn about F/LOSS
- **So far:** 5 universities, more than 600 students in various specialties: Arts and culture, Political sciences, IT, Intellectual property, Mass communications and PR...
- "Wikipedia and Wiki Technologies (WWT)" – Plovdiv University since 2011/2012 – I started the first University course in Bulgaria, dedicated to Wikipedia, wikis and free culture as a **core subject** of study. 200 students, 7 semesters
- Small wiki community > Large WEP expertise per capita
- Read more: [\[\[Outreach: Education/Countries/Bulgaria\]\]](#)

Some (sore) findings about students

- Students often tend to be comfortably numb.
- So, dear teachers, forget about the high hopes...



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299985503_640.jpg](http://b.vimeocdn.com/ts/299/985/299985503_640.jpg)

- WEP is not a viable way to recruit new volunteers to the Wikimedia projects...
- ... but about adding value to the students.

Some (sore) findings about students

- Free culture is totally unknown, even in specialties, where this is supposed to be an everyday topic of discussion!
- Basic skills are also missing: Referencing, No copyvio, ...
- Need of **constant experimenting** with different approaches to
 - attract attention,
 - generate interest/desire,
 - trigger action.

More (sore) findings about teachers

- Not every teacher is a WEP teacher.
 - Readiness to accept their new role of facilitators, rather than the "source of all knowledge".
 - WEP needs relatively independent decision making.
- Enthusiasm about starting a WEP is not enough.
 - Never start in the last moment, without preparation.
 - Research the teacher's motivation to start a WEP.
 - WEP requires going out of your "comfort zone".

Design the course

- Carefully consider all course parameters:
[[Outreach: Education/Countries/Bulgaria/Expertise]]
- Teach the teacher about the wiki specifics.
- (Try to) engage the teacher in doing the same assignments together with the students.
- Experiment and be prepared with many "Plan B"-s.
- Offer students a variety of stimuli.
- Have a clear distribution of commitments.
- Ask for feedback and help in improving the course.

Some tried and tested teaching experiences

Also check: [[outreach: Education/Countries/
Bulgaria/WWT/Teaching experience]]

Survival Manual for my students

- Available in English from Outreach
<https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:WWT-survival-manual.pdf>
- I **WARN** them ...
 - What to expect from the course (and from me)
 - How to (and how not to) approach the course
 - To respect deadlines and requirements
 - That evaluation is mainly **efforts** oriented
 - Of the first most useful links for them to know
- ... and I try to make them 😊ugh
 - Sense of humor is vital to survive in Wikipedia

Survival Manual for my students

And don't forget to have fun

Respecting requirements and

deadlines should not stop you

having fun as well

Not many of your teachers would

give you a joke (yes, a *fake*) as a

learning resource.

Or would invite you after the classes

to drink beer together and continue

discussing Wikipedia and wikis in

an interesting company.

Not being obligatory, your presence

at classes is strictly advisable.

And guarantees for four enjoyable

hours in the end of the week. ☺

First steps

Sign up in Wikipedia:
<http://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Special:Userlogin/signup>
 Course coordination page in Wikipedia:
<http://bg.wikipedia.org/wiki/Y:NYT>

Sign up in Moodle:
 Account creation in Moodle:
<https://focus.uni-plovdiv.net/>
 Course coordination page in Moodle:
<http://students.uni-plovdiv.bg/moodle/course/view.php?id=58>
 password: wikipass

Mailing list:
wwt-2012-2013-b@wikimedia.bg
 My email:
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WIKIPEDIA AND WIKI TECHNOLOGIES

Winter trimester 2012/2013

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Short Survival Manual

Vassia Atanassova

Think creatively,
 think critically.

Respecting requirements and
 deadlines, however, shall not stop
 you thinking out of the box.

If you have ideas how this course

can become (even *more*) more useful

and pleasant, please share them with

me. Sharing is the essence of wiki

philosophy and the basis of this

course.

Also, think critically. Including
 self-critically. Always try first to find
 the answers by yourselves.
 Be demanding of yourselves.
 Only this will entitle you to be
 demanding of the others.

Respect deadlines and
 requirements

Talking about time, it is precious for
 all of us. Not just you.

When you are given assignments with
 deadlines and requirements, this is not

a fancy. Your self-preparation and

timely execution of the assignments

will determine your personal progress

in this course.

And not only that.

The University is most probably your
 last chance to learn to respect the
 deadlines and requirements set. Your
 future employers and clients will
 expect you to do so from your very
 first working day.

Don't be misled ☺

Whatever you have heard about this
 course from your colleagues who have
 already passed it, it most probably will
 not be true for you.

Every time, the course follows in a
 different way, depending on the
 audience itself. This is especially true
 for the examination and evaluation.

Don't be misled that you can get an
 "easy" mark. Even students who have
 got the lowest mark (which here is
 "Good" 4) were required to exert the
 respective efforts and deserve it. Do
 not rely on getting a passing grade out
 of pity. There is no such practice in
 this course.

... Or whether anything
 motivates you

Chances are that your basic motivation
 to enroll the course is the good mark.

Or maybe you only motivation.

There's nothing wrong with this.

Simply do your best not to let me

know. ☺

And I mean it: *do your best*. If you

are not a born Wikipedia or this

course doesn't excite you to achieve

more than what is minimally required

to pass it, then you will need at least to

put some efforts to deserve your good

mark.

And I will try to convince you that you

haven't wasted your time.

Find what motivates you...

Some people (in *anonymous* surveys)
 have shared that they find the course
 useful, easy and pleasant.

Probably, the reason is that they
 approach the topic motivated by
 the idea of volunteering, by their
 interest to get to know Wikipedia
 as a global internet and social
 phenomenon, as an online
 community of thousands of people,
 or one of the most large-scale
 projects under free license.

If this is what motivates you, then
 you probably don't need to read the
 rest of this *Short Survival Manual*. ☺

Questionnaire before and after

- Before

It's anonymous, so try to be honest! :)

- Your motivation to enroll the course? (TRY to be honest)
- Previous experience in/with Wikipedia / wikis?
- What do your other teachers think about WP?

- After

- What was the most useful thing you learnt?
- Any chance you become a long-term Wikipedian?
- How to improve the course next time?

Walk in the teacher's shoes!

- I ask them to volunteer to present a topic from the curriculum as if they were teachers.
 - Example: "Explain the Creative Commons Licenses"
 - Tip 1: Concrete topic, requiring students to work with objective facts rather than subjective opinions
 - Tip 2: Don't humiliate with difficult questions!!!
- I always give a present in the end...
 - ... but never announce it in advance :)



Walk in the teacher's shoes!

My concept of a present is a good book :)

- Chris Anderson,
"Free: The Future of a Radical Price"
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Free:_The_Future_of_a_Radical_Price
- Nicholas Carr,
"The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains"
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Shallows
- Don Tapscott, Anthony D Williams,
"Wikinomics: How Mass Collaboration Changes Everything"
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikinomics>

In each of these books, Wikipedia, wikis,
or free software are discussed :-)

Appreciation and feedback

Елжбета Биенковска [edit source]

Привет, Стилиана, първо, надявам се да нямаш нищо против шоколадовите торти, защото получаваш едно парче за

"I HOPE THAT YOU LIKE CHOCOLATE CAKES, BECAUSE YOU GET ONE FOR YOUR FIRST CONTRIBUTIONS"



Второ, малко провапоръжи как да подобриш текста:

- На български имената на месеците не се пишат с главна буква (на английски - да, на български - не).
- Пишем интервали между годината и "г.". Нещо повече, по-често ще видиш изписано пълното "година", вместо "г." или "год."

Частично за професионалното развитие вероятно може да бъде разширена. В момента са маркирани с по едно

изречение само постовете, които е заемала, но липсва информация за дейността на Биенковска на всеки от тези постове. Би добавило контекст и полезност, ако се включи информация кого наследява тя (всички от първите постове, които наследява нея - особено на последния й пост, след като тя влиза в Комисията. Бидейки по-малко е рядко не е само единична част от политиката, към която Биенковска принадлежи - тази информация отчетливо липсва! Вероятно не е трудно да се намери информация за политиката, които е прокарвала, както и за предизлагаемо успешните - резултати от тези политики, благодарение на които тя е растяла в йерархията. Вероятно няма да е трудно да се открият и критики на дейността й; никой не е безгрешен.

Изречението "неофициално?" е необходимо да се включи в текста, защото е важно да се знае, че това е неофициално, а не само неофициално.

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Надявам се, всички тези забележки няма да те обезсърчат, а само повече ще те амбицират да подобриш статията. :) Поздрави, Спири ... - - - - - 19:54, 16 ноември 2014 (UTC)

7 (SEVEN) RECOMMENDATIONS HOW TO IMPROVE THE ARTICLE

The Herd vs. The Lone Wolves

- Prof. Peter Nonacs, UCLA: "Cheating to Learn" ([link](#))
- Students are given the possibility to:
 - take a test in a group (Herd)
 - or individually (Lone Wolves)
- The trick: Every "sheep" in the Herd **must** give identical answers with the rest people in the Herd:
 - and either make it well together
 - or fail it together :-)
- What do you think: Who performed better?

Personal portfolio

- I encourage my students to prepare a personal portfolio summarizing everything they have done in my course:
 - what they have read and learnt,
 - written and edited on Wikipedia,
 - discussed at class and onwiki,
 - produced as freely licensed multimedia on Commons,
 - anything they are proud of (and qualifies for a mark)
- Format: WP (sub)page, presentation, on paper...
- Making a personal portfolio is useful skill in general.

New idea: Wiki Dojo ...

10x Lord Bumbury /
Nikola Kalchev

- Nerds only.
- Step 0: Google "Coding Dojo" and imagine it for editing WP.
- Step 1: Get n people together in a room (ideally, $n \geq 7$). Determine one Wiki page for creation or editing.
- Step 2: Appoint one 'pilot' and one 'co-pilot'. The 'pilot' controls the keyboard, and the 'co-pilot' gives ideas. The rest $n - 2$ people watch the two and learn from their experience.
- Step 3: After ~ 7 minutes the 'pilot' leaves, the 'co-pilot' becomes 'pilot', and a viewer becomes 'co-pilot'.
- Step 4: Repeat Step 3 until everyone has been 'pilot' at least once.
- Expected result: knowledge / skills sharing + balanced article

patience
Thanks for your ~~attention!~~

User: Spiritia

(sometimes known as Vassia Atanassova)

A **BIG THANK YOU** to the Wikimedia Foundation
for making it happen :)

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