Fostering Global Focus via Project-Based Learning: the TEDxLSU experiential learning case study

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Communication across the Curriculum
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It’s not just about offering the pieces, it’s about integration of the pieces

- Faculty development; SI, workshops, learning communities
- C-I courses: in the disciplines
- CxC studios: space, technology, services, staff, peer mentors
- Student workshops: customized, in-class, out-of-class
- Experiential learning communities: TEDxLSU
- Skills assessment & recognition: DC
- Interdisciplinary & cross-constituency collaborations: 3D, WP, grants, TEDxLSU, DC
writing
visual
four modes
speaking
technological
How did we stumble into this, and what are ted talks, what is tedx programming?

We’ve had programs in the past leveraging classic rhetorical strategies (rhetorical triangle, for example) and bridging classes from different programs to create a space for students to transfer their obvious and less obvious skills - we’d been operating for a few years with a digital media festival that wasn’t garnering the learning experiences we’d hope for, and we were looking for something new that upped the stakes, forced students to think about connections between their courses, the “real world” and with others in field they hadn’t previously considered. We stumbled into an opportunity with TEDx, and we took it.

Check out www.tedxlsu.com to learn more.
TEDxLSU: powered by CxC

**Students:** C-I experiential learning community

**Employers, donors, partners:** Mentoring opp

**Faculty, students & alumni:** Communication platform

TED brand as a vehicle for engagement; many of us watch/know TED Talks but how can we leverage this platform for engaged student learning

- Experiential C-I learning opp for students
  - guided experience, comm training, reflection activities, team dynamics & interpersonal comm coaching--leveraging the four modes of communication
  - fostering intellectual, creative, personal, and professional growth
  - leveraging the modes in the structuring of the team (groups/team communication/interaction)

- Mentoring opp for industry
  - student learning, networking, internships, jobs

- Communication platform for students, faculty, and alumni
  - research and ideas
  - speaker coaching

- Engagement opp for prospective donors and partners
  - unique creative & intellectual experience

ATD article: [https://wac.colostate.edu/atd/hip/burdetteetal2016.cfm](https://wac.colostate.edu/atd/hip/burdetteetal2016.cfm)
TEAM DELIVERABLES

Promotional Messaging

Experience Development

Relationship Cultivation

These deliverables focus BEYOND the classroom - all incorporate students, campus members and the broader Baton Rouge community.
March 3, 2018 Season Team
13 speakers
900-1000 attendees
35 Student Team Members
8 Community Mentors
4 Curators

Speakers are students, university faculty/faculty and members of the broader community
Attendees: ditto
Community Mentors are based in Baton Rouge but work globally or have a civic engagement/community-based element built into their programming.
Curators are current or former CxC staff members
Common Intellectual Experiences
Collaborative Projects
Global Learning
Community-Based Learning
Internships
Interdisciplinary Student-Faculty Learning Community

HIPS check
Since 2014, LSU CxC has identified multiple positive competency outcomes for students involved on the Creative Team, including awareness of international scientific and cultural considerations, increased communication skills, critical inquiry and information literacy. During the 16-17 year we began to realize that students were motivated to join TEDx because they were looking for “like-minded” people focusing on issues beyond campus, especially those that made them feel more connected to the rest of the world. With that in mind...
Global Self-Awareness

Cultural Diversity

Personal and Social Responsibility

Understanding Global Systems

Global Learning VALUE Rubrics

As we continued to develop the comm team we began to notice comments from students to the effect of - “I want to find like-minded people” and “I want to understand what’s out there after college, get some real experience”, we began to notice how these conversations are either explicitly tied to (international students LOVE to sign up for TEDxLSU) or have the potential to foster global awareness and social responsibility.

So we’ve begun to get more deliberate about how the Global Learning VALUE rubric can be used alongside our previous forms of assessment (pre and post assessments via confidential and open surveys, focus groups, reflective artefact creation)
After this, will students...

...have a more nuanced understanding of globalization and their place in the world?

...feel a stronger sense of responsibility and agency - at the local and global levels - to contribute positively to socio-cultural and environmental progress?

...understand and articulate how their academic training plays a role in the world beyond campus?

The last question in particular is something we’ve been assessing for a few years now (and the answer is yes, but not in all the ways we hope yet), but we are excited to analyze how responses change in correlation to a more deliberate focus on global engagement and social responsibility.
Topics are global-local
Process of developing talks focus on nuances of global communication and linguistic semantics often taken for granted.
Learning through talk development

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Process of developing talks focus on nuances of global communication and linguistic semantics often taken for granted.
Learning through Mentorship

Our mentors work directly with our students, offering 1-1 mentoring on deliverables and workshops open to all student team members.
Learning with globally-minded mentors that foster local awareness of globalization and responsibility - our students connected with former speakers and current community partners to support a large-scale MLK weeks of service program that emerged after the August 2016 floods in LA. This included promotional messaging and actually showing up for cleanup to “live the TED brand” and cultivate positive relationships, extending the goals of the main event.
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<td>Student-Generated</td>
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<td>Ongoing</td>
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Check out this Behind the Scenes Video, created by Ian (LSU junior):
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ETq3Q08qN0o&t=24s

Asking students at various points to reflect on their own skills and progress
Asking students to create artefacts related to behind the scenes of TEDxLSU
Fostering ongoing conversation spaces and mentoring for temperature checks in the process.
Pre- and Post-assessments administered by CxC staff

Assessment Levels

CxC staff administer more formal traditional assessments in the form of pre and post surveys and focus groups.
A vital assessment component here is the mentors’ assessment of the products the students created - if the products weren’t good enough as assessed by the community mentor - the professional in the actual field - they weren’t used for promotional or event experiences. There were no grades. The stakes were high enough for the students to think beyond grades and focus on their learning and their execution.
In keeping with the spirit of experiential learning approaches*, these assessments combined learning assessment techniques with the emphasis on collaboration and nonheirarchical approaches to reflection, synthesis and analysis. While TEDx programming was our opportunity to stretch ourselves and our commitment to communication-intensive learning beyond our earlier experiments in digital media festivals - and to create opportunities for a BROAD range of communication skills development - we know these opportunities exist for any higher education program - if we look to the community, allow for vulnerable approaches to learning, and embrace what is messy and operates outside the perimeters of academia. We can apply the rubrics to the learning, but the project - in it’s entire, messy complexity with multiple players and a public, community-driven outcome, helps us bridge the perceived disconnect between classroom and life after college.

*Experiential Learning approaches adapted from Guss, Gillis and Russell, 2012 Adventure Therapy.
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