Designing Powerful Project Learning Experiences

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Overview of the Session

• Introductions

• What do you want your students to be able to do?

• How will you know?

• What assignments, activities, and feedback will get them there?

• What support is needed? What barriers must be overcome?
Introductions

• Name

• Department/discipline

• Experience/interest in project-based learning
Assertions about Project-Based Learning

- PjBL is about *tying things together*: gen ed + major, curricular + co-curricular, campus + community, local + global

- PjBL results from *authentic* assignments

- PjBL is inherently *interdisciplinary and messy*

- PjBL requires *time on task and support*

- PjBL results in *transferrable* benefits to students

- PjBL is preparation for both a *life of work* and a *fulfilling life*
Brainstorming: Skills and Abilities

• What do you want your students to be able to do as a result of their project work?

• Report out: Which 2-3 skills and abilities are most important to you?

• How many of your skills/abilities are content-based? How many are transferrable to other domains?
Employers Endorse Key Elements Of Liberal Education

% saying colleges should **put more emphasis on** each learning outcome

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Concepts and new developments in science &amp; technology</td>
<td>82%</td>
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<td>Teamwork skills and the ability to collaborate with others in diverse group settings</td>
<td>76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ability to apply knowledge and skills to real-world settings through internships or other hands-on experiences</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<td>The ability to effectively communicate orally and in writing</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<td>Critical thinking and analytical reasoning skills</td>
<td>73%</td>
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<td>Global issues and developments and their implications for the future</td>
<td>72%</td>
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<td>The ability to locate, organize, and evaluate information from multiple sources</td>
<td>70%</td>
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<td>The ability to be innovative and think creatively</td>
<td>70%</td>
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How Will You Know if You’ve Succeeded?

• For your 2-3 skills and abilities:
  – What evidence of student learning will you look for?
  – What evaluation challenges might arise?

• From a programmatic standpoint:
  – What indicators of program success (as opposed to student success) might be important?
  – How crucial will evidence of success be on your campus?
Assignments, Activities, Feedback, Support

• Consider your 2-3 most important skills and abilities, and the evidence you will seek.

• What assignments and activities can help your students develop them?

• What feedback and support will faculty have to provide beyond the usual means?
Making it Work

• What will be the primary challenges and barriers?

• What support mechanisms/resources can help?

• What faculty development is needed?