

## Project Report for Sra. Lychock's Class Web Site

### Problem:

During the 2004-2005 school year I taught three different Spanish classes (IB, II and III). Normally, I only teach two different levels so this school year was especially challenging organizationally for me. This site was intended to be used as a resource for my students and a way for me to communicate with them once they had left my classroom.

### Background:

In order to help my students (and myself) keep track of assignments, projects, rubrics, worksheets and any other information from their class, I decided to create a web site where each level would have it's own class log (that detailed what we did in class each day as well as homework assignments), a projects page and a link to the class syllabus. I used to use a very big, bulky make up folder to hold this information. I think the students will find it easier to use the daily class log on-line because they can connect from home when absent to check on their work. I also wanted my students to have the opportunity to check on due dates for any papers or projects they may be working on from home. I've noticed that the more opportunities I can give my students to be better organized, the easier it is on both them and me. On the projects page for each class, students were able to look up project requirements as well as any rubrics or grading sheets that went along with those projects.

I initially did not think that this website would take a lot of management after its initial creation. This assumption was completely incorrect. I had to update each class log weekly, the project pages also had to be updated every time a new project was assigned. The upkeep of the site was much more labor intensive than I had predicted.

The users of the web site were not only my students, but many of their parents as well. I handed out the URL for the site at "back to school night" and at parent teacher conferences in both the fall and spring. The parents became avid users of the site, especially the daily class log, because it allowed them to check-up on their child's assignments and projects. It also placed more of the responsibility on the students and took some of it off of me.

The site was used throughout the 2004-2005 school year. Due to its success, I will again use the site next year for my classes also.

The learning objectives for this project were:

- 1) The user will be able to learn background information about the qualifications of their teacher.
- 2) The user will be able to find the district foreign language standards posted on the web site and therefore be aware of what they should be learning in my class.

- 3) The user will be able to access a page specifically designed for their level. On this page they will:
  - a. See a calendar detailing class activities for each day.
  - b. Look up homework assignments for each day.
  - c. Find project/paper descriptions and requirements.
  - d. Find due dates for homework and projects.
  - e. Access a class syllabus with classroom rules and expectations.

## Method

The audience that I designed the website for was made up of two groups of people, my students and their parents. My students will obviously use the website for various reasons, but I want to make sure parents are aware of it as well. That way they will be able to see what we are working on in class, as well as assisting their student with projects and due dates.

I designed the website with my students in mind. The color schemes used on each page are the school colors. I also included a graphic on the top of each page relative to the content involved. The home page graphic is a grizzly-our school's mascot. I placed flag graphics on each of the class pages in accordance with the countries they will be studying to meet the district culture standard throughout the school year. I made the navigation scheme very simple, and made sure that the students were able to navigate from any page to any other page without having to use the back arrow.

I used and updated the website throughout the entire 2004-2005 school year. I found that it was a lot of work to keep the site updated and to keep everything posted for my students. I also had to re-do a lot of older assignments to make them readable on the web.

In order to determine how effective the website was, I had my students complete a survey at the end of the school year as an evaluation tool. The results of that survey are posted underneath the findings section.

## Findings

The following is a summary of the data I received from my student surveys:

The data I received from the survey was very valuable. About 72% of my students have used the site in the last year, mainly to check on assignments and print out rubrics/project descriptions. A lot of them (63%) have used the website to checking on missing assignments from when they were absent. This was especially encouraging to me since I want the web site to take the place of my make-up book that is actually a bigger pain to manage than the web site.

The other encouraging feedback I received was that 100% of the respondents felt that the website was a valuable tool. All of the students also recommended that I keep the website for the next school year. I was pleasantly surprised to see such an encouraging

response from the kids and will now plan on keeping the site going for the next school year.

Another great feature of survey monkey is the ability to solicit open-ended responses. I found out a lot of great information from my kids on what things they liked about the site and what things they thought needed to be changed. Most of them liked the ability to find out what they missed when they were absent on-line. They also liked having notes on-line, project descriptions and rubrics available from home in case they were left at school. The suggestions for improvement were also valuable-the most important one needing to be a shorter domain name since the URL is kind of long. They also suggested linking it to our school site (which it already is) and creating a calendar for tests and project due dates. Another great suggestion was to have pages of links to helpful resources they should use while completing their culture projects.

## Evaluation

Although this site takes a lot of work to keep it up to date and functioning, I believe that my students benefited greatly from the site based on their feedback from the surveys that were administered. I would like to make some changes to the graphics since I now know more about web design and how to use programs like fireworks and flash. I also need to learn how to use a calendar with links on line as well since it was something many of my students said would be helpful.

## Reflection

The only real hardship I had while designing my sight was getting my images to post. I had the image setting to a site folder rather than a documents folder in Dream Weaver, which made them unreadable on the web. My instructor, Dave Young, pointed out this problem and demonstrated how to fix the problem in the html code.

There were many highlights throughout the project-the most important being the completion of my first web site. I am learning how to use Dream Weaver more effectively, and now feel relatively comfortable with the basics of the software. I look forward to learning more about Fireworks in order to incorporate better graphics to the site in the future.

Updating and improving the graphics is only the start of changes that I would like to eventually make in the future. I would also like to add a resources page for each class as well. I would also like to set up some sort of posting schedule for myself in order to cut down on the amount of time I spend updating the site while I am away from school. Since this was the first web site I had designed and implemented, I am very pleased with the results of the project.

## ILT Competencies Met

### **Reflective Practice**

#### **1. Take a systems view**

Understand the context of your work

- \* Understand systemic relationships
- \* Be aware of values, barriers and leverage points, and anticipated changes

*-I have met these competencies by designing a class site with the context of my classes in mind. I gave my students additional opportunities and resources through the use of the website. I have also put a lot of thought into the changes that I will have to make to the site in future months.*

#### **2. Use cycles of reasoning as tools for problem solving (with documentation for accountability and shared reasoning)**

For my class web site, I conducted a survey on-line with all of my classes at the end of the 2005 school year. In the survey, I asked for feedback on what had been most useful and what needed to be changed. The survey was done on-line using Survey Monkey. Based on this information, I will continue to have a class web site in the following school year with a few changes. For example, based on the feedback from my students, I will include a calendar and all worksheets and notes will also be posted on the class web page.

**Promote collaboration, partnerships, and relationships for full inclusion** with stakeholders, clients, subject matter experts, team members, etc.

#### \* **Be a lifelong learner and professional**

\* Be active in the profession and contribute to the community of practice

\* Have a plan for career development and continued professional learning

\* Be open to new tools, technologies, and theories, and determine their best uses in your practice

*-The main goal of my website is to provide collaboration between my students, their parents and myself. I feel that the web site will provide another important avenue of communication between us all. This was completely new to me in that I had never designed a website previously, and was a huge learning stretch for me to employ this new technology specifically for my classroom. I have also used the opinions and help of various cohort members to assist me in the*

*design of the site. I have looked at a number of their sites and provided feedback to them as well.*

**6. Conduct a learning or performance instructional analysis**

*My classroom web site was created to help my students in a number of different ways. The most important aspect of the site that helps to meet this competency is the learning aides that are posted on the site for my students. Many of my kids needed additional help or resources when they had been absent. Upon analyzing this learning problem, I decided to include both a daily class log and a project page for each class to function as a learning aide for my students.*

**7. Apply various theories/strategies and current research, and consider local needs and constraints to design and activities and experiences for learning**

*After winter break, I was concerned that not as many students were using the web site as a resource, especially for getting their make-up work. In order to get students to use my classroom web site, I would regularly post extra credit questions on each classes home page to encourage them to visit the site and use the resources available there. This sort of strategy is in alignment with Behaviorist theory.*

**8. Design learning and performance products and resources that reflect an understanding of the diversity of learners and groups of learners.**

*My classroom web site helps to accommodate those students who are absent or need extra help through the use of the projects page and the daily class log.*

**9. Develop products and resources to support learning and performance (with documentation)**

*-My classroom site served as a valuable resource to support both students and parents. They used the website as a resource to remind the of due dates, improve their projects and papers by supplying the descriptions/rubrics for them online, and it helped their parents to be aware of what their child was learning and studying in my classroom. I did a formal evaluation of this resource by using a survey. The survey may be viewed at*

*<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=151721009612>.*

*The results of the survey (the documentation) are viewable in the findings section of this report.*

**15. Employing effective strategies (e.g., team leadership, collaboration, accountability), manage one or more of the following endeavors:**

- \* Instructional-design project
- \* Other development projects (information, Web, etc.)
- \* Facilities such as lab, library, or classroom
- \* Classroom and students
- \* Resources such as software collections, hardware, etc.
- \* Personnel
- \* Information resources

*-I chose to create a class site in order to increase both collaboration and accountability of my students in my classroom. By providing them with this website, they had access to information that they need without having to have the printed-paper I handed out to them in class. My students' parents used the website to collaborate with both their student and myself about what we are doing in class. I increased student accountability by providing them with their make-up work on line, as well as the due dates and any project requirements they may need. I have found over my teaching career that the more opportunities students have to access to assignment information, the more likely they are to complete assignments on time. I also hoped to increase their performance on assignments and projects by providing the grading procedures and requirements to them on the web. I also had to manage this website throughout the entire school year. Documentation of that management can be seen in each of my classes Daily Class Log links on the web site.*