<u>**Summer Teaching Development Grant 2015**</u>

<u>**Fostering Engagement, Interactivity and Active Learning in High-Enrollment Course:**
FDM 25011-Fashion Branding</u>

<u>**Description of the Project**</u>

The purpose of this project is to develop pedagogy and enhance teaching resources for FDM-25011: Fashion Branding to be implemented in Fall 2015. Fashion Branding is a required course for Fashion Merchandising majors and a pre-requisite to FDM-35011: Fashion Forecasting, also a required course. The course has an approximate enrollment of 175 students each fall and spring semester, with a total enrollment of 350-400 students per academic year. The course is also being considered as a distance learning course in summer to allow students to stay on track with their degree while permitting them to meet their other obligations. This proposal is the first step in the process of enhancing engagement followed by the expansion of offering the course three times per year.

<u>**Goals**</u>

As observed with many high-enrollment courses, low student engagement is often typical. Students lack ownership of their learning as they often can 'hide' in the crowd. Moreover, today's 'net generation' students have short attention spans and prefer to learn from a multitude of information sources using hands-on, inquiry based learning approaches[1].

From my experience of teaching this course in Fall 2014, I observed that students lacked attention during traditional lectures. However, they seemed to be extremely attentive and enjoy learning by watching videos, browsing through brands' websites, and actively following brand content through social media. This indicated an interactive learning strategy may be better suited for this course.

Using my own experiences and after consultation with a faculty member at The Fashion School and another faculty member at the Center for Teaching and Learning at Kent State, a pilot test for implementing an interactive teaching method was run with two lectures in Spring 2015. Lectures were divided into short (10-15 min) sessions featuring videos that illustrated and enhanced the specific course content. In addition, an in-class group activity was created for each mini-session in an effort to further enhance student engagement and critical thinking. From monitoring and reflecting on each mini-session it appeared that this strategy increased student engagement and deepened their learning when compared to traditional lecture.

Therefore, this proposal seeks to broaden the pedagogical approach and improve the instructional materials for FDM 25011 Fashion Branding in an effort to increase engagement, foster an interactive learning environment, increase student learning, and retention. This will be accomplished in the following manner:

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[1] Barnes, Kassandra, Raymond Marateo, and S. Pixy Ferris. "Teaching and learning with the net generation." (2007): 1-8.

- Research indicates that students' attention span, especially that of GenerationY, is low. Instead of extended lectures, students learn better when information is arranged into succinct and discrete topics[2]. *Therefore, in order to effectively communicate the core concepts of the course, as well as retain student attention, each lecture for this course will be examined and divided into appropriate core concepts that can be portioned into 2 or 3 mini learning sessions. Duration of each mini-learning session will be between 10-15 minutes.*
- Research indicates that students prefer interactive environments with use of technology to create personally meaningful learning experiences[3]. *Therefore, course material for each concept will contain traditional lecture as well as video clip/industry example illustrating and extending the concept.*
- There is evidence that the current generation of students have a greater desire for active, engaged learning experiences[4]. Such learning environments help students to ask questions as well as learn from their peers. *Therefore, each concept will be accompanied by in-class group activity (7-8 min each activity)* to foster critical thinking, active participation as well as act as a "change-up" to encourage more student/concept interaction. Students will be asked to complete the activity in groups and report the group findings to the class. Instructor and teaching assistant will act as facilitators for the discussions.
- Today's students are also known to prefer immediate feedback. *Therefore the most cost-effective in class student response system will be identified. It will be used to understand real-time student learning and provide instant feedback. Response system questions will be used at the beginning of every lecture to review learning from previous lectures and at the end of lecture period to assimilate learning from that specific lecture.*
- Finally, the course project, quiz and exam questions will be revised to ensure student assessment of core branding concepts.

To reiterate, the goals of this proposal are to a) identify the appropriate core concepts that should be focused on at different points in the semester, b) identify appropriate industry videos for each concept, c) create in-class activities for each concept, and d) identify the most appropriate and cost effective classroom response system for this process.

Impact

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[2] McClanahan, Elaine B., and Lon L. McClanahan. "Active learning in a non-majors biology class: lessons learned." *College Teaching* 50, no. 3 (2002): 92-96.

[3] Glenn, J. M. 2000. "Teaching the Net Generation". Business Education Forum. 54 (3): 6-14.

[4] Barnes, Kassandra, Raymond Marateo, and S. Pixy Ferris. "Teaching and learning with the net generation." (2007): 1-8.

Succinct course lectures combined with videos, in-class activities and instant feedback using in-class student response system will provide an engaging and interactive learning environment for students. Short lectures will provide the core knowledge, and supplementary videos with class-activities will encourage an environment where students can think critically as well as participate in personally meaningful learning experiences. The result of this robust learning environment will support the philosophy of Kent State University Undergraduate Education by providing "*knowledge* that is the foundation of informed judgment." Such learning based on "critical and creative thought and collaborative problem-solving" will provide students with '*insight*' into the subject matter; foster '*engagement' with the course content*, as well as teach group collaboration, reasoning and judgment to prepare them to be '*responsible* and productive citizens'.

Activities and Timeline

Week	Date	Activities
1	6/8/15	Revise course objective and course outline for the restructured course; Develop revised course syllabus
2	6/15/15	Identify sources of open-source supplementary teaching materials (e.g.: Videos, case studies) Identify cost-effective option(s) for in-class student response systems
3	6/22/15	**What is a brand?** • Identify key concepts, • Develop lecture materials including identifying videos to complement each concept, • Develop in-class activities, • Create questions for in-class student response system, • Revise existing chapter quiz to evaluate student learning of core concepts
4	6/29/15	**Brand Vision** • Identify key concepts, • Develop lecture materials including identifying videos to complement each concept, • Develop in-class activities, • Create questions for in-class student response system • Revise existing chapter quiz to evaluate student learning of core concepts
5	7/6/15	**Brand Positioning** • Identify key concepts, • Develop lecture materials including identifying videos to complement each concept, • Develop in-class activities, • Create questions for in-class student response system, • Revise existing chapter quiz to evaluate student learning of core concepts
6	7/13/15	**Brand Identity** • Identify key concepts,

		• Develop lecture materials including identifying videos to complement each concept, • Develop in-class activities, • Create questions for in-class student response system, • Revise existing chapter quiz to evaluate student learning of core concepts
7	7/20/15	**Brand Communication** • Identify key concepts, • Develop lecture materials including identifying videos to complement each concept, • Develop in-class activities, • Create questions for in-class student response system, • Revise existing chapter quiz to evaluate student learning of core concepts
8	7/27/15	**Brand Launching and Evaluation** • Identify key concepts, • Develop lecture materials including identifying videos to complement each concept, • Develop in-class activities, • Create questions for in-class student response system, • Revise existing chapter quiz to evaluate student learning of core concepts
9	8/3/15	Revise course project to require application of core concepts learned throughout the course.
10	8/10/15	Upload all necessary course materials (Lecture notes, In-Class Activity assignments, Quizzes) to Blackboard in preparation for Fall 2015

Communication Plan

The results of the project will be shared through two major avenues:

1. Results will be shared formally through participation at the University Teaching Council annual conference in Fall 2015. A conference proceeding will be submitted to the Pedagogy track for International Textile and Apparel Association Annual Conference (November, 2016) or the Annual American Collegiate Retailing Association Conference (January 2016), with development of a manuscript suitable for the *International Journal of Fashion Design, Technology and Education*. This dissemination will add to our knowledge of best practices in incorporating participatory active learning techniques and fostering critical thinking amongst students, expanding application to the high enrollment environment.

2. The results of the experience will be disseminated informally with faculty at The Fashion School through personal interaction, at the Fall 2015 faculty meeting and through conversations with colleagues across the College of Arts and the University (through participation in Faculty Club and College of the Arts Mixer). Increasing engagement in high-enrollment courses is a challenge in The Fashion School (1700+ majors) and other departments at Kent State University. Fashion

Branding can serve as an example of how active student learning can be achieved, even in the large format.

Evaluation Plan

Research has indicated that in order to reduce student passivity, 'change ups' are essential, especially with the increasingly smaller [5]attention span of '(Inter)Net Generation' [6]. Therefore, breaking each 50-minute class into two/three short 10 minute concepts interspersed with in-class activities increases student involvement through active learning, thus countering passivity. The success of these course enhancements will be evaluated in the following manner:

1. Peer-evaluation will be conducted for the Fall 2015 course in which at least one tenured faculty of The Fashion School and one outside the department but within Kent State University will be invited to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching strategies as well as student engagement in class.
2. Students will be asked to fill an additional set of questions (in additional to SEI administered evaluation) at the end of Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 semesters. These questions will address student interest, engagement and learning associated with the new course structure.

3. Test scores will be compared from the traditional course (Fall 2014, Spring 2015) with the redesigned course (Fall 2015, Spring 2016) with at least 50% of the exam questions from the traditional course used in the redesigned course for comparison.

4. Attendance rates will be evaluated for any significant change and DFW rates will be compared to monitor improvement.

Professional Background

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[5] Middendorf, Joan, and Alan Kalish. "The "change-up" in lectures." In *Natl. Teach. Learn. Forum*, vol. 5, no. 2, pp. 1-5. 1996.

[6] Barnes, Kassandra, Raymond Marateo, and S. Pixy Ferris. "Teaching and learning with the net generation." (2007): 1-8.