Experiences and Perspectives of Wikipedia Use in Higher Education

International Seminar

„Wikipedia and University: research and teaching experiences"

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Interconnecting a community project with Higher Education

- Since 2001, Wikipedia has evolved into a general reference website. Wikipedia has also facilitated and contributed to processes of informal and self-contained learning and knowledge construction. Nevertheless, in the university context it was received with scepticism due to perceived conflicts with fundamental scientific standards.

- Wikipedia's quality management approaches comprise a system of discussion pages for encyclopedic entries as well as a multi-stage procedure for evaluating articles. In contrast to academic standards, however, Wikipedia's quality management procedures predominantly apply not until the publication has already taken place.
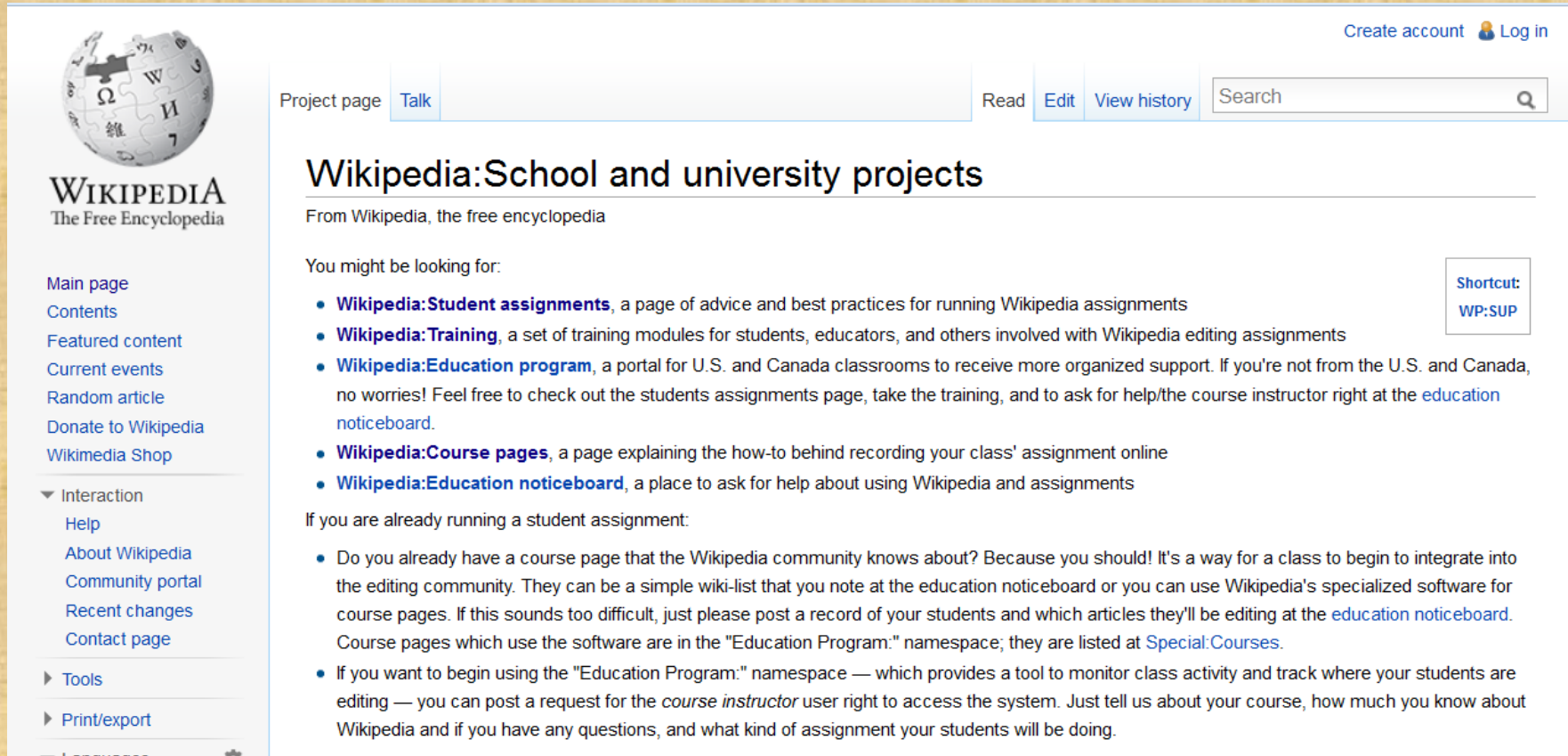
Interconnecting a community project with Higher Education

- With growing use of this Open Educational Resource and Wikimedia launching appropriate initiatives, instructors increasingly apply the online encyclopedia as a tool for teaching.

- An information resource that was initiated as a participatory community project enters genuinely academic spheres and unintentionally influences the teaching and learning practice at universities.

- Research on Wikipedia has focused on aspects such as collaborative processes of knowledge construction and knowledge management, community building, Wikipedia as a lexical semantic resource, or quality management procedures.

Emergence and objective
of Wikipedia-related university courses

- The application of Wikipedia in teaching has partly been self-reported and documented by instructors.

- According to the English-language Wikipedia's "Wikipedia Education Program/Courses" and the "Historical page for school and university projects" (SUP) some **560 Wikipedia projects** have taken place since 2002 (reference date: 11 November 2013).

- E. g. projects at the Ivy League universities Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, Harvard and Yale, and at the MIT

- similar pages in 23 other editions such as Catalan, Czech, German (28 seminars), Greek, Castellano, French, Korean, Russian, etc. which could not be analysed, though.

School and University Projects
and Education program/Courses pages

Create account   Log in

| Project page | Talk | | Read | Edit | View history | Search |

Wikipedia:School and university projects

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

You might be looking for:

Shortcut:
WP:SUP

- **Wikipedia:Student assignments**, a page of advice and best practices for running Wikipedia assignments
- **Wikipedia:Training**, a set of training modules for students, educators, and others involved with Wikipedia editing assignments
- **Wikipedia:Education program**, a portal for U.S. and Canada classrooms to receive more organized support. If you're not from the U.S. and Canada, no worries! Feel free to check out the students assignments page, take the training, and to ask for help/the course instructor right at the education noticeboard.
- **Wikipedia:Course pages**, a page explaining the how-to behind recording your class' assignment online
- **Wikipedia:Education noticeboard**, a place to ask for help about using Wikipedia and assignments

If you are already running a student assignment:

- Do you already have a course page that the Wikipedia community knows about? Because you should! It's a way for a class to begin to integrate into the editing community. They can be a simple wiki-list that you note at the education noticeboard or you can use Wikipedia's specialized software for course pages. If this sounds too difficult, just please post a record of your students and which articles they'll be editing at the education noticeboard. Course pages which use the software are in the "Education Program:" namespace; they are listed at Special:Courses.
- If you want to begin using the "Education Program:" namespace — which provides a tool to monitor class activity and track where your students are editing — you can post a request for the *course instructor* user right to access the system. Just tell us about your course, how much you know about Wikipedia and if you have any questions, and what kind of assignment your students will be doing.

Main page
Contents
Featured content
Current events
Random article
Donate to Wikipedia
Wikimedia Shop

▼ Interaction
  Help
  About Wikipedia
  Community portal
  Recent changes
  Contact page

▶ Tools
▶ Print/export

Sources:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia%3ASchool_and_university_projects
https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia_Education_Program_Summary_Information
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Historical_page_for_school_and_university_projects

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Statistical data on Wikipedia at universities projects: course origins

Philippines

Israel

Czech Republic

Hong Kong

Mexico

Singapore

Canada

Norway

Namibia

Bulgaria

Portugal

South Korea

Spain

Slovenia

New Zealand

Netherlands

Sweden

Argentina

India

Denmark

Italy

Finland

Japan

Germany

Australia

United States of America

Estonia

United Kingdom

Austria

Further countries/Wikipedia language editions with „School and university projects" pages: China, Greece, France, Armenia, Indonesia, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Russia, Slovakia, Thailand, Tajikistan, Turkey.

WMF documents further teaching with Wikipedia approaches worldwide:
http://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Education_Portal/Projects_and_Programs

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Statistical data on Wikipedia at universities projects: course origins

- Wikipedia in teaching projects on the „School and university projects" pages come from 29 different countries.

- 431 documented courses came from the U. S., 56 from Canada, 11 from the UK, 9 from Hong Kong, 6 from Australia and 6 from Germany.

- 45 further projects took place in another 23 countries.

Statistical data on Wikipedia at universities projects

Increase in projects using Wikipedia in teaching
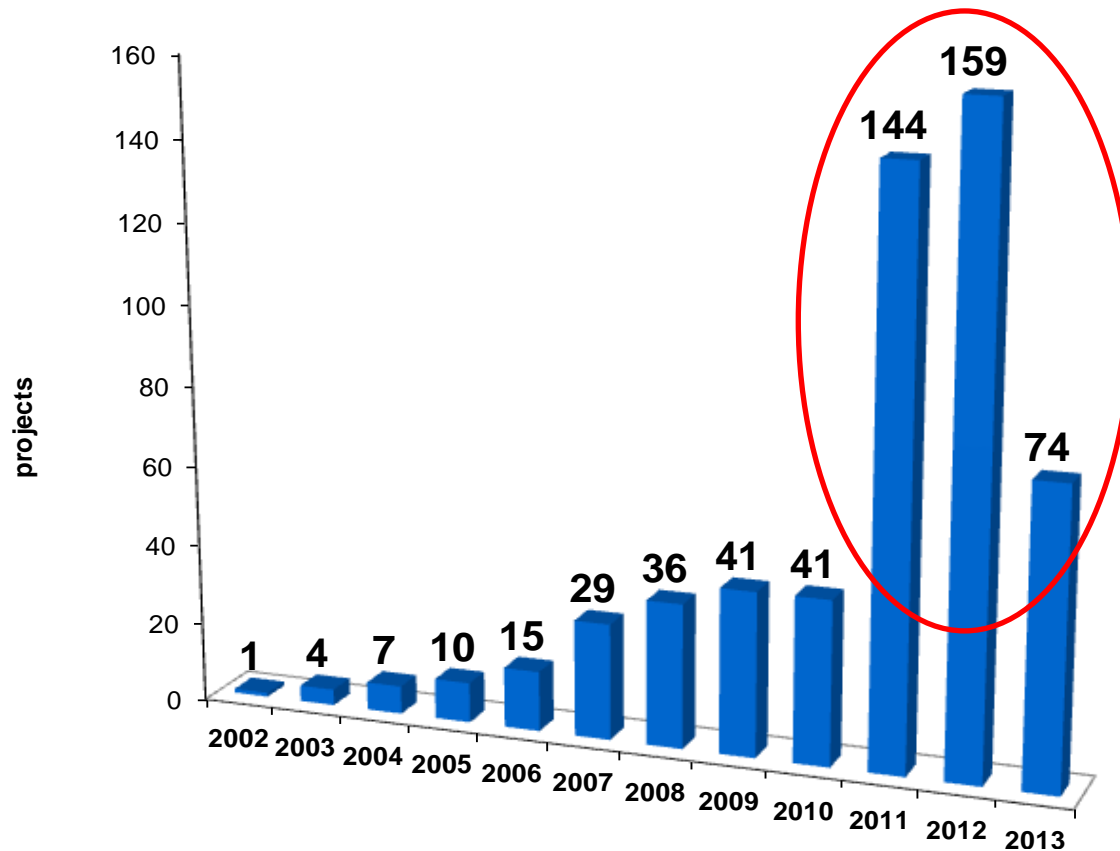
Source: English Wikipedia edition's "Historical page for school and university projects" and "Wiki-pedia Edu-cation Pro-gram/Cour-ses" page (reference date: 11 Nov. 2013)

Wikipedia Education Program statistics. Participating countries

Countries	Year of first participation	Number of unversities per term	Students with user accounts	Total of courses	Articles created/edited
United States	2010	46	4865	271	4683
Brazil	2011	4	216	7	20
Canada	2011	8	966	27	1055
India	2011	3	665	24	1576
Egypt	2012	4	457	51	246
Algeria	2013	1	38	1	0
Jordan	2013	0	33	22	0

Source: https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia_Education_Program_Summary_Information

Statistical data on Wikipedia at universities projects: subjects

Subjects/disciplines of the seminars
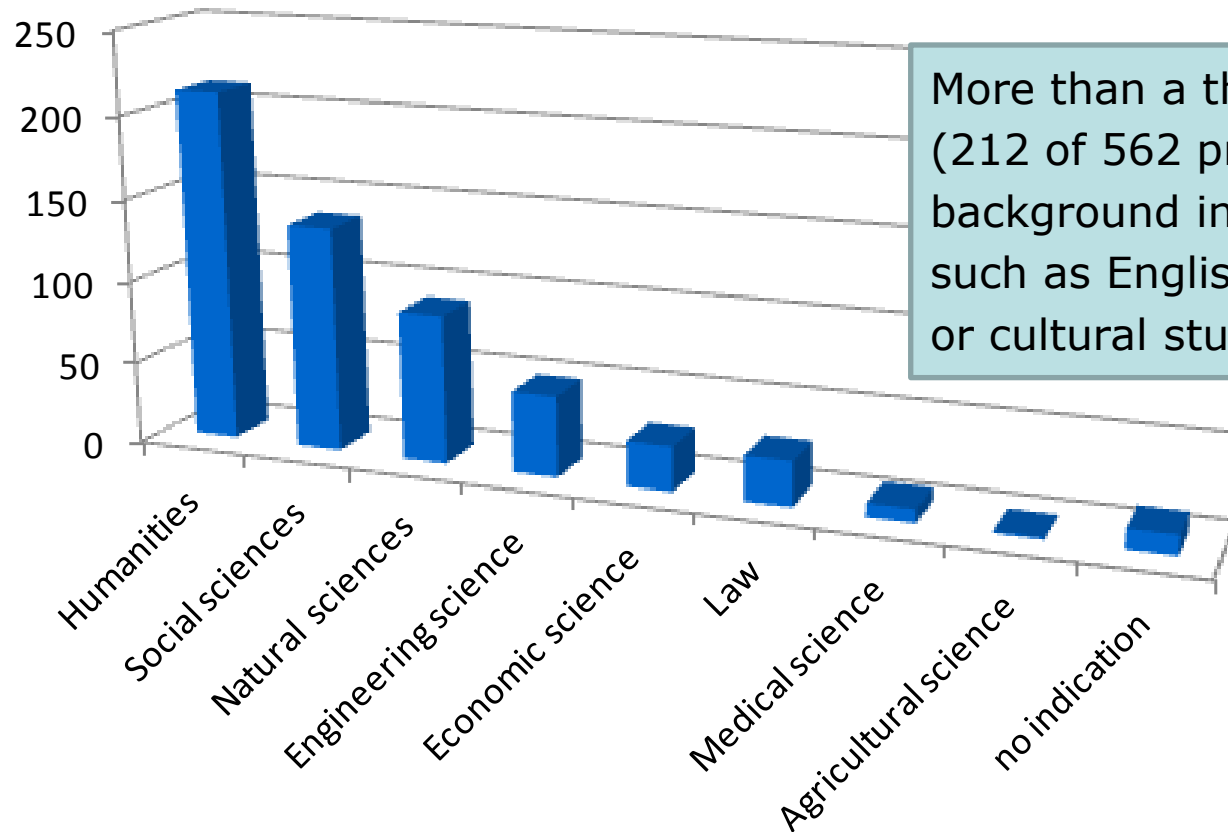
More than a third of the projects (212 of 562 projects) had a background in the humanities such as English writing, history, or cultural studies classes.

Source: English Wikipedia edition's "Historical page for school and university projects" and "Wikipedia Education Program/Courses" page (reference date: 11 Nov. 2013)

Exemplary university courses with Wikipedia use

Source: 243 projects from en.wikipedia's "Historical page for school and university projects" (reference date: 11 Nov. 2013)

Graduate Level Chemistry

Justice and Social Conflict

Critical Approaches to Wikipedia, Information, and the Collaborative Construction of Knowledge

Minor Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery and Hand Surgery

Poetry and Disability

Science Communication for Life Sciences

The Rhetoric of Digital and Interactive Media Environments

Murder, Madness and Mayhem

Attitudes and Social Cognition

Musculoskeletal Injuries

Being Christian in the Roman Empire

Constitutional and Administrative Law

Traumatic Memories and Repression

Surface Chemistry of Materials

Urban Planning in Australia

Basic Ornithology

Gender in Asia

Peaceful Settlement of Disputes in International Law

Introduction to Abnormal Psychology

Piracy in the Atlantic

Statistical data on Wikipedia at universities projects: assignment forms

The nature of course work with Wikipedia

Source: 243 projects from en.wikipedia's "Historical page for school and university projects" (reference date: 11 Nov. 2013)

Among numerous further tasks: creating article-related photos, animations and video sequences

Chart y-axis: 0, 50, 100, 150, 200, 250

Categories:
- Editing of existing or creating new entries
- Nominating articles for "Good Article" or "Featured Article" status
- Work in other language editions
- Participation in a "WikiProject" or a portal on a specific issue
- Wikipedia as a Web 2.0 application and a community

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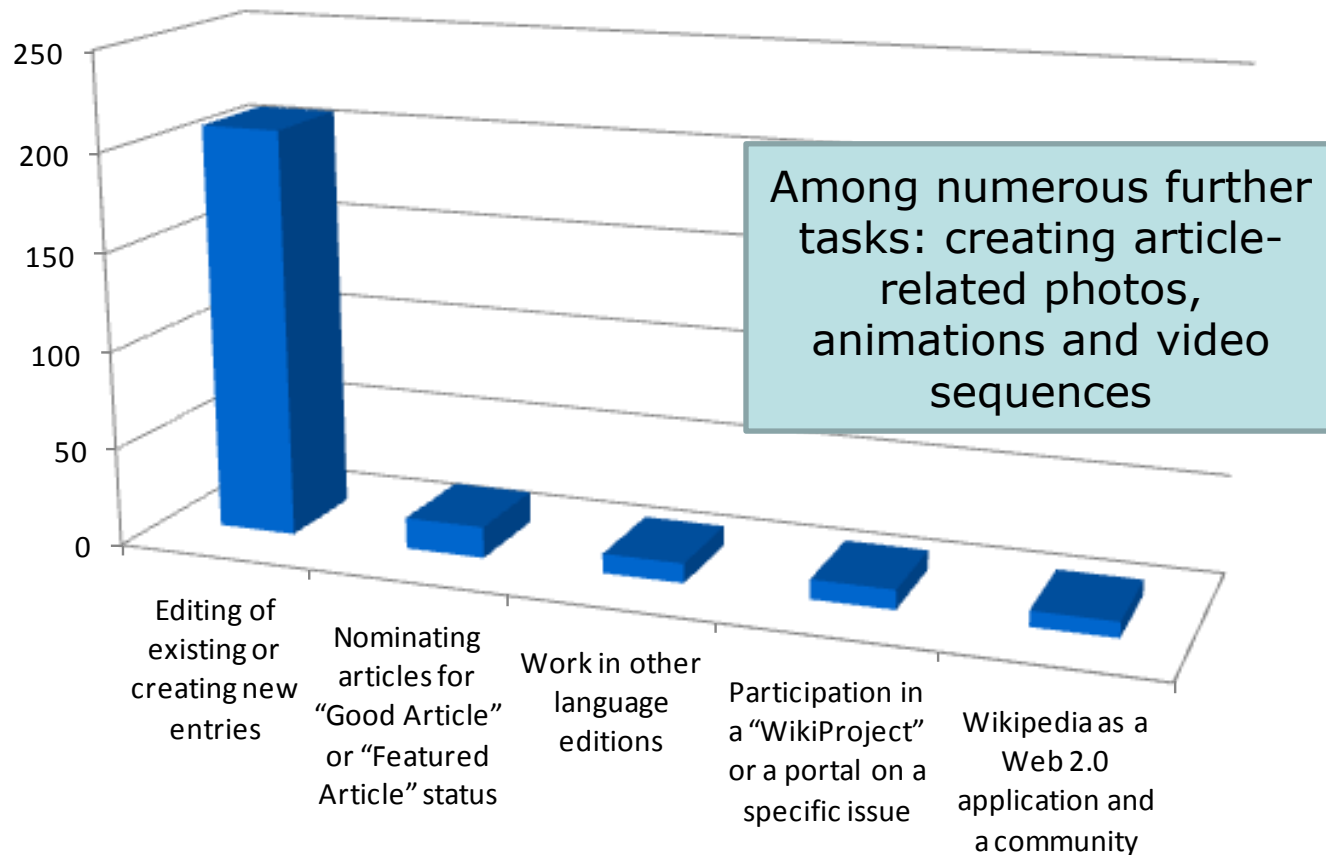
Typical assignments in Wikipedia-related university courses

Each student chooses a neuro topic of his or her choice that is a stub or non-existent, and becomes an expert in that topic across the semester. To do that, students read papers and books, interview other experts, and practice Wikipedia mechanics. These seniors have **contributed hundreds of neuro-related articles** to Wikipedia.

Sophomore Chemistry students are **working in groups to create wikipedia articles** to increase accessibility of chemical information to the general public.

Students will **analyze three Wikipedia articles**, the Smithsonian's public database (SIRIS), and information on local public sculpture published by Indiana's Save Outdoor Sculpture (SOS) project.

Groups of undergraduate students from course on Memory are required to **create a course-relevant entry or improve one** in need of substantial improvement.

Second Year students from Universitat Jaume I will **translate selected articles from the English to the Spanish Wikipedia** language version in teams. The texts selected are pre-assessed for lexicon and terminology difficult.

Students approach Wikipedia from media studies and rhetorical perspectives. Includes **assessment of** popular arguments of credibility, authorship, expertise, and the **site's role as information source**, as well as critical discussion of collaborative knowledge produc-tion, the codification of knowledge, the ency-clopedia genre, access and the digital divide etc.

Two groups of Medical English are working on various projects in Wikipedia including **adding photos, translation of articles**, contacting other medical people and more.

Objectives, feedback, documentation and analysis in Wikipedia-related courses

- to develop the students' writing skills (expository writing)
- to increase the students' media and information fluency
- to foster critical thinking, communication and research skills (finding/summarizing appropriate sources for course topic)
- initiate students to collaboration/communities of practice
- motivational aspects (coll. writing, online publication)
- to experience feedback from someone else than the instructor (fellow students, "Online Ambassadors")

- feedback process: instructors review article revisions
- Students document the article changes and experiences of having their articles edited in a course-accompanying report.
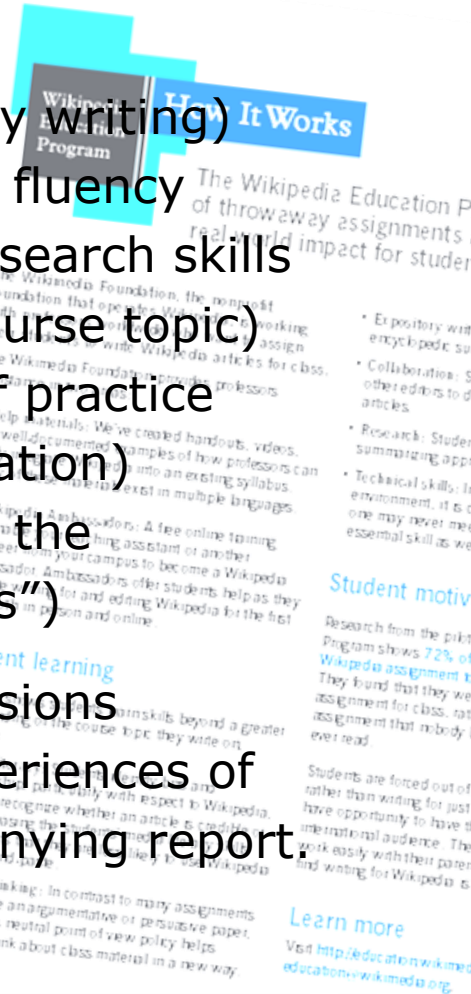
Suporting educators:
The Wikipedia Education Program

- In 2010, WMF responded to this development by launching the "Wikipedia Education Program". WMF wants to support underdeveloped language editions and subject fields and carries out requirements analyses.

- In each country, "Wikipedia Ambassadors" assist professors. More than 4,500 students have participated in this around the world, adding the equivalent of 20,000 printed pages of content to more than 6,000 Wikipedia articles.

- WMF offers support materials for teaching, including a sample syllabus, sample assignments, screencast videos, and handouts for students. Campus Ambassadors work in the classroom to teach students how to edit Wikipedia.

Initial quality problems with courses…

Occasional courses with complications (before/after 2010):

- "Global Economics" class from a university in Huntington, WV, caused extensive dispute (2008). Of some 70 new articles, only seven survived in anything like their original form. About half of the articles were swiftly deleted, others were merged since community guidelines had not sufficiently been considered.

- "Information Competence", Polyt. of Namibia, Wind-hoek (2010/12): "This project is temporarily suspen-ded. The reason is that we could not manage the fast growth of this course, and the implications this had for the (…) community. The evaluation of the 2012 student work is still backlogged, you can help us (…)"

… and sub-programs

- Plagiarism problem with large Indian program (2011): Accordingly, WMF decided to carefully monitor progress and impact of programs and to update the "guidance we offer students during the online training with a new video [that] explains what plagiarism is, why it's bad for W., and what happens when editors get caught plagiarizing."

- In the U.S./Canada program a student retention rate of 4 per cent was achieved. WMF learned to focus on professor retention since acquiring professors as long-term users of Wikipedia as a teaching tool guaranteed scalability and lets Wikipedia editions continuously grow.

Readjustments of the programs

- Strong ties to local community are established for new programs. They start smaller with better Ambassador-to-student-ratio in order not to overwhelm local WPns.

- involvement of academic program advisors

- A professor orientation course is mandatory focusing on copyright violations and plagiarism.

- In the Arabian program, WMF made good experiences with translation assignments. Some initiatives of local chapters restrict themselves to one subject area.
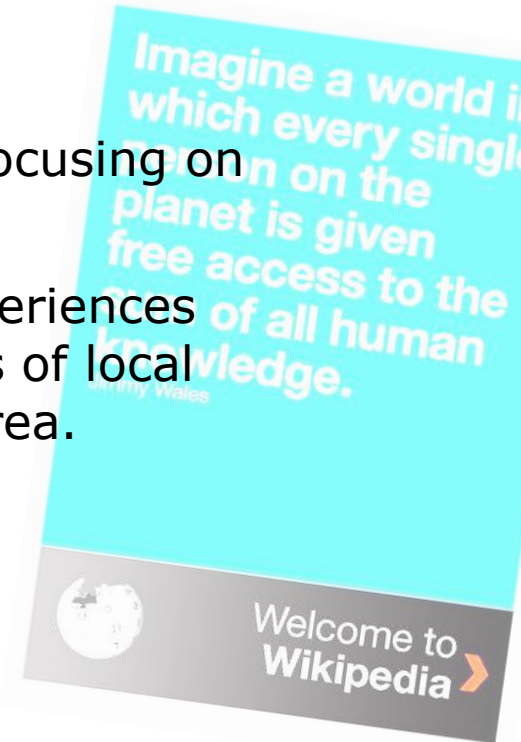
Wikipedia Education Program and Wiki Education Foundation

- In Nov. 2013, the Wikipedia Education Program in the U. S. and Canada moves to being directed by a new nonprofit (Wiki Education Foundation) run by volunteer academics.

- WMF provides a 150.000 US $ starting grant in 2013/14.

- The Wiki Education Foundation supports innovative uses of Wikipedia and related projects in communities of teaching, learning, and inquiry in the United States and Canada.

- WMF aims to improve the breadth, and quality of content; enhance student information fluency; increase the number and diversity of contributors to the free knowledge move-ment by engaging educators, researchers, and students.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Wiki_Education_Foundation

Continuing challenges for teaching with Wikipedia

- Wikipedia is a „convenient forum for giving and receiving feedback from classmates, which can dramatically improve the quality of student writing" (a teaching ass.).

- Apart from the strong dedication of students dealing with a real world situation, Wikipedia use provides diverse other benefits.

- Even though we lack reliable statistics for early years, the WMF initiatives seem to have strongly fostered Wikipedia use at universities in some regions since 2010.

- Some problems for educators remain despite WMF support materials:
  - increased workload of instructors
  - Students produce inappropriate texts that have to be revised.
  - developing grading criteria

- Challenges for future courses/progr.:
  - program scale: 100s of HEI
  - effectively addressing underrepresented language editions, subjects, and editor groups?
  - professor retention, engage and stabilize local volunteer work
  - differentiation of didactic designs

Thank you for your attention!

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http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikipedia_Education_Program_booth_at_National_Communication_Association_2012.JPG
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