Excerpt:

Art History Wiki

Last January I received an Instructional Technology Grant so I could help the Honors Students develop a Modern Art wiki [wikis.otis.edu/modernart/ no longer available] which would include a timeline for modern art. They would do this work in conjunction with their Modern Art course that semester. The wiki would become part of an ongoing assignment in the Honors course with the ultimate goal of opening it to the public.

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View full blog post [http://otistic.blogspot.com/2007/12/art-history-wiki.html] [TLC Notes blog]

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Art History Wiki

by Parme Giuntini, Director, Art History

Last January I received an Instructional Technology Grant so I could help the Honors Students develop a Modern Art wiki which would include a timeline for modern art. They would do this work in conjunction with their Modern Art course that semester. The wiki would become part of an ongoing assignment in the Honors course with the ultimate goal of opening it to the public.

I had never worked with wikis before and needed to learn how to structure them and post material. I did this in the early spring, practicing in both Wikipedia and eventually developing the format for the Modern Art wiki that my students would use. The TLC has developed more workshops and instructional material in the past year that I wished had been available when I was initially learning about wikis. Since I was learning and teaching at the same time, I don't think that I ended up with as strong background in wiki formatting as I would have liked and I will have to devote more time to that in Spring 2008 when my next Honors class begins work on the wiki. Along with the students, I learned what kinds of modifications I would want to make and that would be the focus of my work on the wiki in 2008. I think that this is probably rather typical of anyone using a new 2.0 technology. Initially, I was content to follow the model; now I want to adjust that model to more specific parameters.

By mid-semester 2007 I had a working wiki format and students were posting material. They developed the timeline working collaboratively on 20 year segments during the first half of the semester and focusing on a particular issue/artist/work during the second half. They presented their final work in the wiki within the class in week 14.

Since the Modern Art classes had shifted from a textbook to readers, the wiki would provide both chronological information and an opportunity for students to participate in identifying, organizing, and developing material, especially the inclusion of historical and popular culture information which is an important feature of their course.

At the close of the course, the students evaluated their work on the wiki. They agreed that creating the timeline was the most valuable part of the assignment although they didn't find the actual work especially interesting since it involved a lot of cutting and pasting from other sources. Although incomplete, it was an important starting point and, since many of the other Foundation students asked for some kind of available chronology, it filled an existing need. Finding information for the timeline meant that they had to research a variety of sources beyond traditional art history resources. Many of them investigated museum and educational sites to see how other online timelines were constructed and, as a result of that, made suggestions that the following year's Honors class could consider. The students found the individual wiki writing assignments to be more interesting since there was more of an opportunity for individual expression.

As a result of their work and suggestions, the wiki assignment will stay in the Honors course although it will not be the only writing assignment. Optimally, the wiki should be opened to the Otis student population but this will entail some regular supervision since students could use this as a source. One option would be to make this a recurring responsibility of the Honors class for the year which would be a interesting opportunity for them to get experience in research and editing. Students from the mainstream Modern Art courses would be encouraged to participate and there is the possibility that such participation could be a course assignment. At this time, however, the syllabus is already finalized so it would not be considered until 2009. It is also possible that the other two Honors instructors would like to include the wiki as part of their class assignments in which case, the students would be including information on literature as well as popular...
culture.

Posted by Sue Maberry at 10:46 AM

Labels: art history, wikis

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