

Project Name

Collaborative Media Lab Pilot

Principal Investigator Samara Smith

Campus Old Westbury, State University College at

Year of Project 2013

Tier Tier One

Project Team

- Dr. Laura Anker, SUNY Old Westbury
- Dr. Niev Duffy, SUNY Old Westbury
- Maryann Sinclair Slutsky, Long Island Wins

Overview Summary

Development of a collaborative, train-the-trainer model to empower students and faculty with digital literacy skills as life-long media learners and to share media skills with one another, our community partners, and the public.

Outcomes Summary

In addition to project outcomes presentations, the website provides several modules for "how to" edit audio, photos, create a portfolio, and use other multimedia tools for lesson preparation.

<http://www.collaborativemediacenter.org/>

Project Abstract

This proposal seeks to pilot a Collaborative Media Lab (CML) at SUNY Old Westbury, with the mission of creating collaborative spaces and resources to support digital literacy and the use of emerging media tools in teaching, learning and communicating at the College and in the community beyond. The Lab will use a

collaborative, train-the-trainer model to empower students and faculty to become successful, life-long media learners and to share media skills with one another, our community partners, and the public.

Digital literacy is essential for job readiness and democratic civic engagement. The Alliance for Media Literate America links these skills to critical thinking and cultural understanding:

Media literacy empowers people to be both critical thinkers and creative producers of an increasingly wide range of messages using image, language, and sound. It is the skillful application of literacy skills to media and technology messages. As communication technologies transform society, they impact our understanding of ourselves, our communities, and our diverse cultures, making media literacy an essential life skill for the 21st century.ⁱ

Unfortunately, not every student has equal access to the tools necessary to develop this literacy. As the most diverse SUNY College, with a preponderance of SUNY students from populations which typically enjoy low Internet use and limited broadband access, Old Westbury has a unique opportunity to pilot this digital divide initiative. ⁱⁱ Many of our first-generation college and low income students depend primarily on school for digital literacy development.ⁱⁱⁱ In Old Westbury's 2013 Student Opinion Survey, graduating students asked to rate the contribution "they felt their experiences at Old Westbury made to their growth and learning using computer and information technology" reported 2.9 on a five-point scale (1=poor, 5=excellent). This project presents a real opportunity for improvement and an important area of focus across SUNY as we expand online learning.

During this pilot phase the Collaborative Media Lab (CML) will focus on the below following initiatives and will share relevant resources and outcomes publicly and on the SUNY commons; developing a collaborative proposal for expanding the Lab beyond this grant period, based on careful assessment of the 2013-14 pilot phase.

1. Create open educational resources to support moving existing courses online Two courses, AS2020 New Media and AS5725 Senior Media Portfolio, will serve as the bases for CML's first open educational resource (OER) development. Both courses focus on the use of free, cloud-based and open source media tools for creative expression. These tools—blogs, wikis, timelines, slideshows, interactive graphics, presentation tools, photography, audio, video and e-portfolios—can easily be applied across disciplines. The creation and sharing of these online tutorials and lessons will improve the online elements of both courses, while simultaneously providing open tools to support teaching and learning with digital technology across the curriculum.

2. Create a website to encourage and support digital literacy across the curriculum To support digital creation and communication, the Lab will create a website to publicly share resources and projects created during the pilot year. Learning modules—combining original screen-casts, collaboratively edited text manuals and carefully selected existing OER—will be tailored to meet the needs of collaborating students and faculty, and, based on user feedback, improved throughout the pilot phase. Shared online, these open educational resources and supported projects will provide a basic introduction to utilizing digital tools for creative expression and civic communication.

3. Partner with the First-Year Program to integrate digital media into freshmen courses To test these resources, CML will collaborate with the First-Year program to support the creation of digital media projects documenting freshmen community placements. During this pilot phase, at least two sections of CL2000 Community Learning Seminar will be linked to CML in the Spring of 2014. To prepare for this collaboration, instructors will work with Professor Smith to create a digital media production lesson for each CL section. Lab resources will be tailored to these lessons, and tutors will be trained to support the linked projects. Throughout the Spring term, Professor Smith and tutors will provide media workshops, open lab hours and peer-tutoring sessions to support the linked classes. If successful, this collaboration could be expanded, in future years, to every CL section, exposing all First-Year students to digital media tools.

4. Offer peer-tutoring to support digital literacy across the curriculum To support students and faculty with minimal digital experience or limited broadband access, CML will hold open lab hours for students and faculty in linked courses. These tutoring sessions will encourage guided, independent use of the Lab's online resources, empowering students to become independent digital learners. For students and faculty who prefer to work remotely, CML will also offer virtual office-hours, and asynchronous online support.

5. Encourage community-engaged and research-based media projects The Lab will serve advanced media students and the College's community partners by maintaining an Idea Database, a collection of topics and resources for student media projects. Community partners and faculty will be invited to submit ideas—and related support materials—to encourage community-engaged and issue-based student media. For example, Niev Duffy, director of Old Westbury's Center for Social Policy and Community Engagement (C-SPACE), will be invited to provide data related to her research on access to affordable healthcare on Long Island; and community partner Long Island Wins will be invited to contribute ideas for projects related to immigration issues on Long Island. Advanced media students will then be invited to utilize the Lab's Idea Database when planning projects, with some classes, such as AS4852 Documentary Production, offering CML-linked projects as one option for class assignments. All work developed from the Idea Database will be archived and released under a Creative Commons license. To encourage the completion and sharing of high quality work, student partners will be provided Lab support, including access to HD video cameras and digital media computer labs, throughout production. C-SPACE will encourage student involvement by offering annual monetary awards for high-quality projects picked for distribution on the Center's website.

6. Investigate potential future collaborations with capping courses across the curriculum Near the end of this pilot phase, interested faculty will be invited to explore linking capping courses to CML by developing a digital media project for the following academic year. These proposed collaborations will be included in proposals to expand the Lab beyond the pilot year. Potential collaborations might include: Dr. Cale's ED5940/60 student teachers utilizing CML resources to create e-portfolios to support and evidence their first experiences in the classroom; or Dr. Archer's AS5000 Slave Narratives students creating short documentary films based on primary historical research.

If funded the Collaborative Media Lab at Old Westbury had the potential to:

- Support collaborations across departments and with community partnerships
- Create a physical and virtual community to strengthen campus life and support digital work
- Help students struggling with digital literacy to improve academic success and retention
- Encourage the use of free and open digital tools for innovative teaching and learning
- Support successful expansion of online, hybrid and blended teaching and learning
- Provide a framework and platform for digital skill sharing across the disciplines
- Encourage the use of digital communication for creative expression and civic engagement
- Provide test cases and assessment data for expansion and replication of the model

i. What is Digital Literacy? AMLA's Short Answer and a Longer Thought, Alliance for a Media Literate America, 2001. Retrieved February 15, 2013 from

<http://www.medialit.org/reading-room/what-media-literacy-amlas-short-answer-and-longer-thought>.

ii. Old Westbury's student body is 31% Black and 20% Hispanic with 22% of our first-to-college graduates enrolled in the Educational Opportunity Program. According to the Pew Digital Differences 2012 report only 49% of African Americans and 51% of Hispanics report having broadband access at home.

iii. Only 67% of adults in the lowest income bracket (household income under \$30,000/year) and 51% of adults with no high school diploma use the Internet, according to the Pew Internet and American Life Project. Internet use grows with household income and education attainment, with 98% of the adults in the highest bracket and 95% with a college degree reporting Internet use.

Reports and Resources

- [CIT 2014 presentation](#)
- [Project website](#)
- [Collaborative Media Center Earns SUNY Grant for Innovative Instruction](#)
- [SUNY Old Westbury gets \\$10K for media center](#)
- [Mid-project report](#)
- [Project outcomes report](#)

Connected Learning Models

- Collaborative Learning Technologies

Faculty Development

- Faculty Digital Literacy

Instructional Design

- Hybrid/Flipped/Blended Learning