Digital Wisdom for Work

SPU SERVE Grant Final Report

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The purpose of our proposal, "Digital Wisdom for Work," was to pilot an intensive 1-credit, two-day class that would help undergraduate students reflect on vocation, career goals, and technological skills. (The course syllabus is included as Appendix A). The course structure, content, and activities successfully enabled students to:

- articulate a personal mission statement;
- identify a professional or career trajectory consistent with one's mission statement.
- articulate current competencies and identify technological competencies needed for professional or career development.
- prepare a plan for next steps in one's development.

While the number of students who successfully completed the course was rather small—enrollment fell from seven to three, due to scheduling conflicts and illness—each student seemed to represent a type of student who would benefit from a class such as this:

- One student, a junior social sciences major, is unclear of what will follow college. She found the course readings and discussion about vocation—especially Doug Koskela's concept of missional call—both comforting and constructive, and she began to observe patterns in her life revealing who she is and what might mean for future careers. These personal insights led her to explore many of the career resources we introduced in class, including establishing a digital identity.
- The second student, a second-year business major, is specifically interested in a technological career but was able to think more broadly about the personal and theological dimensions of her understanding of vocation. She also learned more about technology and discovered resources for helping her learn more specialized skills she knew she needed to master.
- The third student, a first-year humanities student who has a clear sense of the work she would like to do, was able to broaden her sense of vocation to include more than a career. She was able to think about next steps to help her move toward her goal and learned

about the role that new digital technologies will have on the future of her competitive profession of interest.

In all three cases, we saw students articulate how they would transfer knowledge and skills from their academic work into their considerations of call and career, as well as incorporate new knowledge and professional development resources (such and Lynda.com) into their vocational planning and preparation. The progression and refinement of thinking was evident in the differences between early reflective essays, completed before class, and the final mission statements and plans that were completed after the class met. All the students agreed that the class was extremely helpful for preparing for the transition from life in college to life after college.

We call the conceptual and practical framework we used for linking call, career, and digital competencies "digital wisdom." Defined as the wise use of technology to become wiser, digital wisdom includes:

- Attention: Reflection on identity, intention, and integration of digital technologies.
- Acquisition and Analysis: The seeking, selection, and synthesis of information.
- Action: The ethics and values of community, citizenship, and creation.

Attention, shaped by vocational reflection, establishes focus and filters for subsequent acquisition and analysis of knowledge, which is followed by action.

The greatest challenges we faced involved promoting and maintaining enrollment in the class. The first issue is perhaps largely related to the fact that this class was not tied a major. The second issue related to the narrow window for participation. The first issue might be addressed by better promotion and cross-listing the course with related disciplinary courses. The second issue could be addressed by providing alternate ways through the course: i.e., as a self-study module with instructional consultations for credit, as a self-study badge, or as a stand-alone resource for individual use. We spoke with students who were unable to take the course but expressed interest in all these options. We think that, with adjustments responsive to these challenges, a second iteration of this course is worth pursuing.

Appendix A: Syllabus

Seattle Pacific University
GS2950: Digital Wisdom for Work
Winter Quarter 2015

Friday, January 30, 6-9 p.m.
Saturday, January 31, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.

Library Classroom, Ames Library Main Floor

Instructors

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Description

This 1-credit class will help students assess and enhance their digital readiness for work. In addition to focusing on digital literacy and technological skills for professional development, this class will provide an opportunity for students to reflect on the relationship between vocation, technology, and career preparation.

The overarching goal of this course is to prepare students to use digital technologies wisely to become wiser. The concepts and competencies associated with this course's approach to "digital wisdom" include:

- Attention: Reflection on identity, intention, and integration of digital technologies.
- Acquisition and Analysis: The seeking, selection, and synthesis of information.
- Action: The ethics and values of community, citizenship, and creation.

Course Objectives

- Articulate a personal mission statement.
- Identify a professional or career trajectory consistent with one's mission statement.

- Articulate current competencies and identify technological competencies needed for professional or career development.
- Prepare a plan for next steps in one's development.

Required Texts

Douglas M. Koskela, *Calling and Clarity* (Eerdmans, forthcoming 2015), Introduction and Chapter One: "What is My Life About? The Concept of Missional Calling" (accessible through Blackboard)

William C. Placher, *Callings* (Eerdmans, 2005), Introduction (accessible through Blackboard)

Diogenes Allen, *Spiritual Theology: The Theology of Yesterday for Spiritual Help Today* (Cowley, 1997), Chapter Eight: "The Book of Nature" (accessible through Blackboard)

Dorothy L. Sayers, *Why Work?* (Trinity Forum, 2011) with a foreword by David W. Miller (available at the University Bookstore)

Assignments

Pre-class assignments (30%)

1. Digital literacy assessment: During the first week of classes we will distribute a digital knowledge and skills survey. No preparation is needed—we just need to get a sense of what you already know and may need to know. Due Monday, January 12.
2. Reflective essay on vocational and career trajectories: Write a 2 page reflective essay on your current career ambitions and/or interests, your strengths, and your sense of "vocation." Your essay should include your own definition of vocation based on the readings or some other source. You may think of this as a rough draft, which will be the basis for a your personal mission statement. Due Monday, January 26. We will discuss these when we meet on Friday.
3. Read and reflect on required texts: To prepare for the two-day class meetings, read the required texts and write a one-page summary of each. At least two-thirds of what you write should focus on summarizing ideas or arguments. You may use the reaming part of your page to critique and/or formulate questions about the text. These are due Wednesday, January 28. We will discuss these when we meet on Friday.

Class participation (40%)

This course is designed to be highly participatory. Attendance on both class days is mandatory to receive a passing grade. Successful participation depends on completion of pre-class assignments.

Post-class assignment (30%)

Personal mission statement and action plan: Create a personal statement related to your "missional calling." In addition to a few-sentence summary of this call, describe how you have come to discern this sense of vocation. Also describe how your mission statement might inform your career interests and plan. Finally, considering the role of technology, identify at least three things that you will do to help you achieve or identify your next steps. Draft due Tuesday, February 17. Final version due Monday, March 2.

Schedule

Monday, January 12: Digital Literacy Assessment due

Week of January 19: Optional pre-class meeting to discuss assignments (to be scheduled)

Monday, January 26: Reflective essay on vocational and career trajectories due

Wednesday, January 28: Reading reflections due

Friday, 6-9 p.m.: Day 1 of class – dinner provided!

6:00-6:30 p.m.	Dinner and introductions
6:30-7:30 p.m.	Discussion: Theological reflection on vocation and technology
7:30-7:45 p.m.	Break
7:45- 9:00 p.m.	Discussion: Constructing vocational and career narratives

Saturday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.: Day 2 of class

9:00-10:00 a.m.	Discussion: Technologies past, future, and present
10:00-10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15-11:30 a.m.	Discussion: Digital identity formation and digital citizenship
11:30-12:30 p.m.	Lunch on your own or with each other
12:30-2:00 p.m.	Tech boot camp exercises
2:00-2:30 p.m.	Break
2:30-4:00 p.m.	Discussion: Next steps for further development

Tuesday, February 17: Draft of personal mission statement and action plan due

Monday, March 2: Final draft of personal mission statement and action plan due

Class and University Policies

1. **Quality of work**: Work is expected to be well thought out and executed. Work that is late, sloppy, or incomplete will receive a lower grade.
2. **Syllabus revisions**: Minor changes may be made to this syllabus throughout the course.
3. **Academic integrity**: Expectations regarding academic integrity are described in the University Catalog. Your work should be your own. Both students and the professor in each class have an obligation to report and prevent cheating, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct.
4. **Appeals**: You may appeal a grade, but be aware that reevaluated work may not necessary receive a higher grade. If you wish to appeal a grade, you must do so within five calendar days after receiving it.
5. **Emergency procedures**: Please familiarize yourself with the university's emergency procedures, which are posted on the wall of the classroom. Please call 206 281-2800 if there is inclement weather or another emergency situation that may require campus closure.
6. **Disability accommodations**: If you have a specific disability that qualifies you for academic accommodations, please contact Disability Support Services in the Center for Learning to make your accommodations request. Once your eligibility has been determined, Disability Support Services will send a Disability Verification Letter to your professors indicating what accommodations have been approved.