



United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Open Pedagogy Fellowship

Let's Share!: Help the Community Redistribute Computers

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Introduction:

You are a part of a collegewide effort to increase access to education and empower students through "open pedagogy." Open pedagogy is a "free access" educational practice that places you - the student - at the center of your own learning process in a more engaging, collaborative learning environment. The ultimate purpose of this effort is to achieve greater social justice in our community in which the work can be freely shared with the broader community. This is a renewable assignment that is designed to enable you to become an agent of change in your community through the framework of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). For this work, you will integrate the disciplines of Sociolinguistics and Sociology to achieve SDG #10: Reduced Inequalities as a primary focus and SDG #4: Quality Education as a secondary focus.

Many students from low-income families may face technical/technological challenges when they take online courses. In March last year (2020), some colleges, including Montgomery College, resumed courses 100% online after the lockdown. Some students had to find computers hurriedly to complete the semester, and some of them had to use their old phones. The College and County made efforts to provide assistance to share computers with adult students, but the learners who have sought support said there were not enough devices available, or the process of getting a computer was too complicated and difficult to follow.

While most K-12 students were able to loan devices from the district, college and adult students had less support. Students who don't have high-functioning devices or internet services, unlike those who have high-functioning technology at home, may face additional difficulties doing assignments or assessments. This may cause dropping out of the course, anxieties, or unnecessarily low grades. "Higher education shall be equally accessible to all," the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Article 26 says.

Learning Objectives:

Component 1: What are the UN SDGs? What are our SDGs to achieve? (Week 1)

Objectives: Students will be able to

- 1) Interpret the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals by visiting the UN website and prioritize them according to the needs of our community
- 2) Demonstrate their knowledge to locate the technological specifications in their computers with the assistance from an expert.
- 3) Use technology to analyze the data about E-waste, and how fast it is growing and where the E-waste is sent in the world.

Component 2: Create a video or presentation that encourages people and companies to share their computers (WEEK 2 & 3)

Objectives: students will be able to

- 1) Collaboratively brainstorm and outline a series of contents where they talk about
 - a. Easy ways to read technological specifications of a computer and how to ask questions about them in an online course
 - b. How important and smart it is to donate, recycle, and redistribute computers
 - c. The main message of the SDGs they want to achieve, and personal stories related to the goals
 - d. How their talents presented in different (art) forms will help them communicate with the general audience, the college and computer / wifi carrier companies
 - e. How their diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds will enrich the work and what they will do to use their authentic knowledge (i.e. photos of E-waste sent by the U.S in a different country, translated versions of the videos into different languages, charts or graphs that compare the amounts of E-waste in different countries)
- 2) Produce a video/ presentation where there are multiple parts: introductory speech, creative work such as an acted-out scene, illustrations, or photographs that say what people can do to help (re)distribute devices and resources in the community and how they can handle technical / technological difficulties in class.

Component 3: (This will happen in the Spring 2022 semester or when in-person activities are safe) Organize and host a community event where citizens, college students and local branches of computer and Wifi carrier companies

Objectives: Students will be able to

- 1) List contact information they must reach out to coordinate a community event either in a city or the campus

- a. Where the event will occur
 - b. Who will be invited to the event
 - c. What kind of support they will need and who can help them
- 2) Create a graphic organizer that display all the tasks they will do before, during and after the community event
- 3) Send emails or make phone calls to book the venues and invite people from computer/ wifi companies, local colleges and the community
- 4) Create a flyer about the event and release it on/ offline

Purpose/Rationale:

This is a project-based assignment that aims to provide opportunities mainly for adult English language learners to promote accessibility to resources regarding getting computers and information about the UN SDGs, by representing themselves in the community, and by contributing to the community. They will play an active role to help distribute computers and raise awareness of redistributing or donating high-quality devices rather than throwing them away.

This assignment is to decrease inequalities among adult learners who are taking online courses. According to Computer Hope (2020), consumers are recommended to replace their computers every four years. This assignment aims to tackle two problems caused by this trend of buying new computers- 1) help learners decrease the financial burden of buying new computers every four years, and 2) help computer buyers and computer companies to redistribute computers that are perfectly functioning.

(If the circumstances allow in Spring 2022) Students will facilitate a community event where companies promote their new products and take old computers for recycling. This will be a place where people can bring their perfectly good devices for sharing and learn more about how serious E-waste is contaminating the earth. Students will give a presentation or performance (depending on their talents and choice) to make the event more engaging, entertaining and informative.

Learners are expected to gain and promote their authentic knowledge (about the place they live and the local policies) and skills (writing emails or making phone calls, creating contents such as videos, charts or presentation slides). They will be able to assess their own learning needs and reach out to seek support using community resources.

Colleges will continue to expand online course options for students, but we are not sure how they will help fulfill the needs of learners who cannot afford to buy computers. In addition, not every instructor clearly indicates the technological specifications or platforms they are going to use for class activities in their syllabi. Not every instructor has gained the knowledge on how to communicate with students about technological requirements, and some students can't thoroughly follow what they say about technological specifications. Lack of knowledge on their own devices or how to talk/ ask about them will negatively influence the quality of education.

Instead of asking for donations, students will use their talents and knowledge to encourage the entire community and local branches of computer and internet carrier companies to share computers and resources for everyone. A class where students collaboratively gain authentic knowledge to solve real-life challenges using their talents and skills will provide high-quality education where students have ownership in learning and actively seek support for it using resources in the community.

Instructions:

Component 1: What are the UN SDGs? What are our SDGs to achieve? (Week 1)

Students form groups upon their interests (assignments per group are shown below). Members of each group collaborate to become “experts” of the topic they chose. Students learn about the UN SDGs and this assignment at their own pace.

Group 1: Visit the UN website and learn about the 15 sustainable goals. Discuss why the UN established these goals and what students can learn by knowing about the goals. Discuss SDG #10, 4, 11 and 12. Create slide pages on Google or PowerPoint and present their work.

Group 2: Contact and invite a guest speaker who can teach students how to check the technological specifications and what kind of features an online course will likely require. The goal of this group is to help classmates practice finding the right place in their computers to find information about their devices. They will also facilitate a session where students write a sample email to their instructors to ask what technological specifications or platforms they need for each class.

Group 3: List local branches of computer and WiFi carrier companies. Find how many of these companies are redistributing perfectly working devices in the community by contacting the managers via email. Practice how to write an email with a clear request in a professional manner.

Group 4: Research about E-waste: How many devices, accessories and wires are land-filled in the US and in the world, and in what areas is E-waste is land-filled, and what scientists predict about long-term damages by E-waste.

Component 2: Create a video or presentation that encourages people and companies to share their computers (WEEK 2 & 3)

Learners will create a presentation or video collaboratively for the general public to discuss why and how to share computers, how to decrease E-waste, or how to read technological specifications of their computers. This part will be heavily learner-centered, and students can decide if they want to work collaboratively or individually to produce different portions of the video/ presentation, what format of the final product will be, and they will be encouraged to use their talents (visual

arts, translation into their native languages, rhetorical skills, or acting out) for each of the portions.

Example assignments:

Group 1: Create an infographic about the 17 UN SDGs and why it is important for college students to learn about these.

Group 2: Produce a video that explains how to read technological specifications in a computer and how to ask questions about them for their classes.

Group 3: Create a video about how and where they can share or recycle their computers or phones in the community.

Group 4: Create presentation slides with photos of E-waste from the U.S. in a different country, personal stories about taking an online course before fully knowing about their devices, or a visual that displays data on redistribution of computers in the U.S or in the world.

Component 3: (This will happen in the Spring 2022 semester or when in-person activities are safe) Organize and host a community event where citizens, college students and local branches of computer and Wifi carrier companies

I plan to post students' work on a website (that is open to general viewers, such as the program website at the college or Google) and continue this project in Spring 2022. New students will watch / read all the posts and either continue to create contents on the SDGs. Or, if circumstances allow, they will coordinate a community event.

Example assignments (if an in-person community event can safely be facilitated)

Group 1: List contact information they must reach out to coordinate a community event either in a city or the campus

- Where the event will occur
- Who will be invited to the event
- What kind of support they will need and who can help them

Group 2: Create a graphic organizer that display all the tasks they will do before, during and after the community event

Group 3: Send emails or make phone calls to book the venues and invite people from computer/ wifi companies, local colleges and the community

Group 4: Create a flyer about the event and release it on/ offline

Format Requirements:

E-mails: the school domain, 1-2 paragraphs

Poster or infographic: free online platforms (such as piktochart or Google Docs)

Video: MP4, Youtube, Vimeo or ScreenCastify, less than 10 minutes

Personal stories: Google Docs or MS Word, one page / writer

Presentation: Google Slides or MS Powerpoint

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