Instructional Design Project Final Group Paper

Implementing Assessment Survey Project Wiki

Team BCMSquared

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Analysis Phase

Introduction to the Learning Situation

Dr. Susan Kushner Benson is a professor in the Department of Educational Foundations and Leadership at The University of Akron. She teaches graduate-level courses on implementing classroom assessment, research techniques, and educational evaluation. Dr. Kushner Benson is in the process of transitioning a face-to-face course, Implementing Assessment in the Classroom to a 100% online course. This course will become fully online in fall 2013, and Dr. Kushner Benson wants to be prepared with the strategies and technological tools that will help both her students and herself as an instructor succeed in this new learning environment. The task of finding solutions to help solve this learning problem has been given to our instructional design team.

Identification of the Learning Problem

Dr. Kushner Benson, a University of Akron professor, has expressed to the instructional design team her concerns about transitioning a face-to-face class to a fully online classroom environment. Typically she teaches her students “procedural” skills; which include “think-alouds”, cause and effect, hypothesizing, and many others. She feels this is most effective compared to just delivering the content. She wants to create a realistic and effective way of delivering procedural knowledge in an online class which is as successful as it is within her face-to-face classroom setting. She would like to utilize effective online tools that allow for demonstrations, think-aloud opportunities, as well as, talk-through situations. She wants her students to think like an assessment expert and understand that planning for assessment and instruction is a fluid process. In order for Dr. Kushner Benson to effectively implement instruction within a fully online environment, she wants to develop her technology skills, so that
she can become independent in creating unique teaching and learning materials across all of her courses.

One of the modules in the Implementing Assessment in the Classroom course is about using survey methods. During this module, Dr. Kushner Benson models the process of developing and administering a survey for her students. Each week students learn different steps in the process and then apply those steps to develop a questionnaire for the class and collect data. Additionally, students also create their own individual questionnaires for use in their classrooms or work environment using the techniques and skills learned in class.

One of the classroom activities that Dr. Kushner Benson does with her students during the course module on surveys is discuss scenarios in which surveys or questionnaires could be used to collect data. Given these research scenarios, students have to choose a method for administering surveys and, more importantly provide reasons for their decisions. In a face-to-face learning environment, students work together in small groups. In class, Dr. Kushner Benson places more emphasis on the thinking process that each group takes to make their decisions rather than on the actual choice of survey method. She wants her students to demonstrate the thinking and decision-making processes in a dynamic way, just like professionals do in the field.

However, in an online learning environment, it becomes more challenging for students to demonstrate the thinking and decision-making process that takes place during small-group discussions in a dynamic and collaborative way. In a face-to-face setting, students can compare and contrast ideas, build relationships between ideas, demonstrate how new information affected the group’s thinking, and use logic and reasoning skills to reach a valid conclusion about what type of survey method would work best for the given scenario. Students can demonstrate the decision-making process through the use of graphic organizers and flow charts and share these
products with classmates and the instructor in real-time. However, in an online learning environment, students might be accessing the course from different locations at different times, making it more difficult for students to communicate and collaborate with one another. Therefore, it is the task of this instructional design team to find effective technological tools and resources that will help students in Dr. Kushner Benson’s future online courses in classroom assessment demonstrate the critical thinking and collaborative process in a meaningful way that shows how students arrived at their final decision.

One of the other learning tasks that Dr. Kushner Benson asks her students to do during the survey module is write one or two paragraphs about the topic for their module project. She asks students to share their ideas in small groups and obtain feedback from their colleagues. In a face-to-face environment, this task is easy to accomplish. However, in an online setting, students have to use technology to share ideas and receive feedback. Therefore, it is the task of this instructional design team to find an effective tool for students to share their project ideas online and get feedback from their classmates. Students should also be able to use this tool to discuss their progress while completing the project.

The other aspect of this learning problem is that Dr. Kushner Benson has expressed that she is unfamiliar with some of the technological tools that are available. It is possible that our design team could teach her how to use the same technological tools as her students, or we could teach her how to use other technological tools that would primarily benefit herself as an instructor. For Dr. Kushner Benson, it would be beneficial to develop instruction that takes place outside the classroom, so she can develop her skills at using new technology at her own pace and then decide how to best use this technology in her current and future courses. For the team to be able to help her learn about technology, team members would need access to that technology.
Students will utilize an online learning environment to develop and demonstrate knowledge of survey assessments. Students will demonstrate this knowledge of survey assessments by effective online group discussions and collaborative online written assignments. These small group discussions will require students to be flexible with their time, but it also will allow them to offer feedback to their classmates as well as receive feedback in return. Finally, students will also be evaluated on their mastery of course objectives online in the future.

**Needs Analysis**

This instruction will be based on two primary types of needs: expressed needs and anticipated needs. Dr. Kushner Benson has expressed to our team by e-mail and face-to-face meetings a need to learn about technological tools that will help succeed in teaching a course completely online. She wants to learn ways to use technology to teach students procedural skills, rather than just delivering content. One class that she teaches, Implementing Assessment in the Classroom, will become fully online in fall 2013. She needs to learn these technology skills before this change is implemented, and she wants to have students practice using this technology in her class this semester before the class goes online. Even though the students taking this course face-to-face this semester will be different from the ones that will take the course when it goes online, they are the same type of students. Furthermore, Dr. Kushner Benson wants to see at least some technology put into action now, so she can decide the best ways to use it in her future online course.

When transforming a classroom that has originally been face to face to fully online, there are many needs that need to be addressed. First and foremost, Dr. Kushner-Benson needs to be informed and presented with effective online tools that will meet her classroom needs. After introducing these tools, Dr. Kushner Benson can then research the tools to determine which tools
will be most effective for her instruction and content. It is also imperative that Dr. Kushner Benson is aware of any needs students have in their abilities to use technology or participate in online learning. Possible limitations that students could have regarding access to the Internet and other tools need to be addressed as well.

One project that her students complete is developing and administering a survey that could be used to evaluate instruction or classroom learning. To prepare students for this project, she gives students examples of research scenarios and has students work in small groups to discuss what surveying method would work best for each scenario. In a face-to-face class, Dr. Kushner Benson is able to demonstrate the project by drawing on the board, modeling the decision-making process that takes place while surveys are created, and modifying survey topics through editing. She can have confidence that her students have grasped the assignment based on facial expressions and verbal feedback. She needs to find either an online program or a technological tool that will be as dynamic and powerful as the small-group discussions she has with her students in a face-to-face classroom.

**Learner Analysis**

The first target audience for this project is graduate students in Dr. Kushner Benson’s current classroom assessment implementation course. Students taking this course hold a baccalaureate degree in education or a related field and are likely working in a K-12, higher education, or adult learning environment. Students reflect a wide range of age levels and have diverse work and personal experiences. Students could be in the early or latter stages of their professional careers, and some students may be pursuing a second career in education altogether. It is probable that more females take this course than males and that most, if not all, students speak English as their first language. It is possible, though, to have some students from diverse
ethnic or cultural backgrounds or students who were not born in the United States. Students could be single, married, or have school-age or adult children.

Since students are pursuing graduate degrees, students are motivated to learn and have a positive attitude toward the content of the course. Students want to learn how the course will benefit them in their work environment and help them advance their careers. Students would have average to above-average intelligence and be able to use reasoning and critical thinking skills. Most adult learners are independent and self-directed, but like to work together in small groups to discuss ideas and share experiences. Adult learners want opportunities to solve problems, perform tasks, and apply the content that is being taught in practical ways. Learning must be relevant to real-life, and adult learners need to recognize the advantages or benefits that come with learning something different before accepting it and using it in their personal or professional lives. Also, adult students have diverse learning preferences ranging from visual and auditory to sequential and global.

For the purposes of this project, students could have a range of skills and experiences when it comes to using technology at their workplace or in their personal lives. Some students could be proficient at using computers or mobile devices for navigating the Internet, using Microsoft Office programs, producing web content, and managing files. Other students might feel uncomfortable using computers to complete tasks. Most students would likely fall somewhere in between these two extremes. If the team introduced a website or technology tool to students that would help them complete a learning task, it is possible that none of the students would be familiar with it or have prior knowledge of using it. However, with the increasing use of technology in everyday life and in the classroom, it is likely that most students will at least have some experience using technology either as educators or in their personal lives.
After visiting Dr. Kushner Benson’s class for the first time, the team learned that there were seven students in the class. There were five females and two males. Three students were attending graduate school full-time, while the others were attending part-time. The part-time students worked as classroom teachers or intervention specialists in a PK-12 setting. One of the full-time students worked with adult students. There were two students whose first language was not English. One student was from Africa, while the other was of Asian background.

In order to learn more about students’ current attitudes and experiences with technology, the team posted a survey on their Springboard course page. All of the students who responded thought technology was an “important learning tool” and expressed high levels of competency with using the Internet and computers. All of the students “strongly agreed” to being able to use Word and upload Word documents to a website, and all but one of the students “strongly agreed” to being able to use Microsoft PowerPoint and upload PowerPoint files to a website. When students were asked “I would be able to give feedback about my classmates’ projects online,” all of the students responded “agree” or “strongly agree.” Most students responded that they could figure out most technology problems themselves and could follow directions well when learning about technology. All of the students who responded to the survey felt that they could use a website to get information about the survey project. On the other hand, more than half of the students who responded indicated they had never used a collaborative wiki site before.

The second target audience for this project is Dr. Kushner-Benson herself. She expressed to the team an interest in learning how to use technology in her classes. She wants to be able to use technology independently in the future. She has over 35 years of teaching experience at the collegiate and K-12 levels, has published numerous journal articles about using research to improve education, and has presented numerous papers at professional conferences. She has a
Bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education, a Master’s in Special Education, and a Ph.D. in Measurement and Research.

Since the survey to examine students’ current attitudes and experiences with technology was available on Springboard, the team encouraged Dr. Kushner Benson to also take the survey. From the responses she gave, she indicated that technology was important for learning and that using computers was easy for her. She indicated that she could easily navigate a website and was proficient in using Word and PowerPoint. Even though she indicated she had not used a wiki site before, she indicated that she could follow directions well when learning about new technology and could figure out most technology problems on her own. She “strongly agreed” that she could find help if needed.

**Analysis of Learning Problem**

One of the instructional challenges that Dr. Kushner Benson shared with us was being able to demonstrate critical thinking and decision-making skills in a fully online class, like she currently does in a face-to-face class. She wanted us to explore technological tools that could help her draw and write to mimic what she can do on a chalkboard. One team member explored some iPad applications; such as Educreations Interactive Whiteboard, Show Me Interactive Whiteboard, and GroupBoard, that could solve this instructional problem. Dr. Kushner Benson could draw and write using these applications and save these files to her personal iPad, just like a classroom teacher can do with whiteboard files. She could also record over these drawings (if they were showing on a computer screen) and eventually post these files to Springboard. Even though Dr. Kushner Benson has an iPad, only one team member has one. Therefore, it would be difficult for everyone to participate and be involved with learning about this technology. In addition, it would be challenging to implement any kind of instructional activity involving iPads
if all of her students did not have access to one. We also looked at several web drawing tools that Dr. Kushner Benson could use, but with each website we looked at, trying to draw with just a mouse was difficult to read. As a result of these challenges, we decided as a team to focus our efforts solely on finding a way for her students to share their project work online and provide feedback in a small group online setting, as well as create materials that would help students learn about creating surveys to help complete their projects.

Design Phase

Content Analysis

The needs analysis provided the necessary information regarding the prior knowledge of the target audience. Through this analysis we realized we needed a lot of guidance and “how-to” directions to help guide Dr. Kushner Benson into the right direction when starting her class online. Dr. Kushner Benson would like to know more about finding resources relevant to her specific field of study, as well as designing and implementing a class Wikispace that can be used in future courses. She hopes by implementing this wiki she can continue to have an interactive classroom, as she did when it was face-to-face.

The learning theory to this approach would be one of introductory learning. Most students being new to Wikispaces would be given a detailed instruction for first time use. As well, most tasks would be for first time users giving them a chance to use Wikispaces effectively. Therefore, when designing how to successfully implement a Wikispace, we focused our attention on communication, organization, and implementation. We wanted each student to have their own page where they could post their work, hold discussions with other students, and read about ways to improve their work, manage their wiki, and have research tools at their fingertips. The
students need to have mastered how to navigate the Wikispaces and completely understand all of the aspects in designing and managing their page. They will be asked a wide range of questions about their use of this site through an online survey that they will need to complete. This survey will give us feedback on how thorough the Wikispaces is designed and how we can make it better. We understand that these teachers and students are lifelong learners, and their technology usage will constantly evolve, but our goal is to get them started and understand how effective wikis can be. This may encourage these teachers and students to not only use a wiki in college, but also use them to differentiate and enhance their own lessons within their classrooms.

In addition to the goal for implementing a Wikispaces, our team decided to take it a step further and create individual pages for each of Dr. Kushner Benson’s current students. This would allow them to post work, discuss with peers, and find helpful information that may be needed for their surveys. We felt she could use this as a trial run to see what is going to work and where changes will need to be made. We included a survey on the Wikispaces that each student was asked to take in order to help Dr. Kushner Benson with her decision making on the Wikispaces itself. This survey gives the students a chance to evaluate the wiki, give suggestions, describe the advantages and disadvantages of the wikis’ navigation, and their overall experience. Our overall goal was to create an effective and interactive Wikispaces that could continuously be used in Dr. Kushner Benson’s future courses. We ultimately wanted to help make the transition from face-to-face to online as smooth as possible, while maintaining the classroom dynamics that Dr. Kushner Benson felt to be important.

To get a feel for the students in Dr. Kushner Benson’s class, Nick visited the Monday evening class to observe and get a feel for the actual survey project wiki that we planned to implement. He was able to speak with the students to see where they stood with technology and
determine where we needed to start in creating an interactive experience from start to finish. We only planned to create and develop the Wiki, but we would like for the information to be well organized in an easy to find manner, so students or Dr. Kushner Benson can easily make changes and add to it as the school year progresses and new resources are found.

**Site Navigation**

When designing our Wikispace we wanted to keep it as simple and as easy to navigate as possible. We knew that our site users could possibly be students that have never used a Wiki before or those that are advanced at using them. Keeping this in mind we decided to add tabs along the right side of the wiki to assist in easy navigation for all types of users. These tabs remain on each page that is visited, so students can easily click back and forth between all pages.

We also created detailed directions along with videos that walk the students step by step through certain processes. These processes consist of how to edit their wiki, how to embed videos, how to upload their files, and how to use the discussion page. We also included a Wiki practice page in which the students can test out the tools to help make creating and implementing their own page much easier. Our team felt this step was very important because if the students can’t manage a wiki or navigate it efficiently, chances are they will get frustrated, waste valuable time, and their survey project will not turn out as successful as it could be.

**Site Navigations**

When using the Wikispace website, the use of several fonts and sizes are very limited. You are given the option of using headings 1-6. Heading one is used for titles, and heading 6 is used for smaller fonts. We decided to use heading 1 for our main titles, heading 2 for subtitles, and headings 3 and 4 for our directions and information.
On our homepage we decided to go with a burgundy color for our main title as well as Dr. Kushner-Benson’s information. We felt this would help to make it stand out. All regular fonts we kept black. We included the survey on our homepage, so we changed this font to red, so it would stand out to the students. Our hope was to have students log on, see the bright red, and remember that they needed to participate and take the survey. All documents and resources are in blue since they are hyperlinked to their own pages.

On our calendar page we kept most of the font black. We decided to change the actual dates to a blue to help make them stand out. Since the dates have important deadlines and information we wanted students to be able to quickly locate the date and read the information. On the student page, each student is highlighted blue because it is linked to their specific site. On the project resources page, we decided to make all of the resource titles burgundy. All other fonts are black.

The how-to page consists of several videos that have demonstrations. We have the directions for using the videos in red. All the videos have a play button that students just have to push, and the PDF files have a download button that is blue that students can push to view. We kept the background white and decided to add a picture of a laptop and iPhone on the homepage. We did not want to add too much to our site because we did not want to make it confusing or cluttered.

**Formats/Media**

We decided to use PDF files as the general format of written documents since most computers can easily open them. We also used a few PowerPoint presentations, in order to give the students a visual of how to complete the task. This means users will need to have access to some form of Microsoft Office to open and view these presentations. We have several YouTube
videos uploaded to our site as well. To view a YouTube video on a personal computer, users will be required to have Adobe Flash Player plug in installed on their browser. Most computers already have this downloaded, so users will need to check their system before starting the downloading process.

Development Phase

Media Selection Rationale

For the development phase, we discussed various forms of media. As a group we decided on implementing Wikispaces into this project because we felt it would be the easiest to teach since we were all very familiar with it. It is also very simple and user friendly; this helped us to finalize our decision. After speaking with Dr. K-B’s class we felt confident that this was the proper tool to utilize, since many students seemed to be familiar with Wikis. We also felt that this tool would be more beneficial for learning compared to simply recording discussions and listening to the professor teach the entire time. We included step by step directions, as well as interactive videos, to help the students get started with creating their own Wiki page. Students did not have to create an entirely new page, but simply edit their own assigned page in the wiki.

Issues of Message Design

In developing the wiki, the goal was to make it as organized as possible. One way that this goal was accomplished was by providing descriptions of the main pages within the wiki directly on the home page. This allowed users of the wiki to decide which pages to look at first, depending on their interests and learning needs. Students could decide whether to upload parts of their projects, look at the PowerPoint presentations and other useful resources if they needed help developing their projects, or view the how-to videos or direction sheets if they needed help using the wiki. In order to help users of the wiki understand the content, another way that we
made the wiki organized was by posting the requirements for the survey project directly on the wiki home page. Students would not have to search through all the pages to find this important information. In addition, we provided descriptions of all the materials on the Project Resources page, so students could choose which materials to read depending on their individual needs at different steps in the project. Furthermore, we used the same color and size for all the headings on a particular page. This would help users of the site locate important information and make each page in the wiki more appealing.

**Informational Resources**

We were given two chapters from two books that Dr. Kushner Benson wanted us to outline and post to the Wiki. We took the important information (i.e. lists, diagrams, steps in a process) and created three PowerPoint presentations, so the students had access to information at their fingertips. These tools greatly benefitted the students because the information was easy to access and the main points were easy to find. Students would be able to use them as a reference once they begin their survey project. First, the Introduction to Surveys presentation covered the four characteristics of survey research and the two main types of surveys. Second, Designing Survey Instruments described the three major steps to designing questionnaires and interviews. Third, Steps in a Research Questionnaire described in detail the eight major steps in constructing and administering a research questionnaire. For students’ convenience, these presentations were provided as both PowerPoint shows and PDF files. In addition to the PowerPoint presentations from these two chapters, we created several quick reference guides as PDF files. These guides helped students plan a survey research project, as well as conduct questionnaires and interviews. In addition, we also used the website Quizlet to create virtual note cards with examples of good and bad survey questions. These note cards were embedded on the Project Resources page.
Since Nick attended her class, he was also able to add Dr. Kushner Benson’s key tips for writing good survey questions and designing effective questionnaires. These PowerPoint presentations and PDF files broke down the steps for the project, and these tools made completing the project simpler and easier for the students in Dr. Kushner Benson’s class.

In addition to the instructional resources that we provided, we also created how-to videos to help students use the wiki. It would have been easy to search for videos on sites like YouTube or TeacherTube, but we decided to make our own short video clips. We knew exactly what we wanted students to do using the wiki, so we didn’t want students to watch long videos and get extra information they might not need. Frank used Jing to make five short video clips that we posted on the Wiki How-To Guide page: 1) how to edit and save a page, 2) how to change text color or size, 3) how to upload a Word document or PDF file, 4) how to undo something, and 5) how to embed videos. Dr. Kushner Benson’s current students were not asked to embed videos, but we made this video clip in case she wanted her students to be able to do that in the future. We also made direction sheets matching each of the video clips that students could download. Utilizing videos made the experience more meaningful and user friendly. Our idea was to help first-time users feel more confident in their exploration and use of the Wikispace.

**Functional Website**

The URL of the wiki is http://implementingassessment.wikispaces.com.

There are just two external links in the wiki. One external link is to Springboard, while the other link is to The University of Akron home page. All of the other links are to documents, files, and other pages that are contained within the wiki; therefore, those links should be active and working. There should be no issues with navigating the wiki and opening any of the files, PowerPoint presentations, or other resources on it.
Assessment Plan

The survey attached to the Wikispace will be provided for the current students in Dr. Kushner Benson’s graduate class and will be used to gain feedback for the wiki. Each student will be asked to fill it out and respond to the best of their knowledge. Dr. Kushner Benson will also be asked to complete the online survey. We also plan to print out a hard copy to give to the students in case they are unable to complete the online survey. Our group will use this feedback to further our development of the Wikispace, and Dr. Kushner Benson can use this feedback to decide how to use the wiki in the future. This feedback will outline the pros and cons of the Wikispace and what needs to be changed and/or fixed to better suit the purpose of this project.

Implementation Phase

Implementation of Project with Target Audience

On Wednesday, November 14, Nick (a graduate assistant) met with Dr. Kushner Benson to introduce the Wiki to her and demonstrate its functions and features. The home page, student pages, PowerPoint presentations and reference guides, and how-to videos had been created and posted to the wiki. The only part of the wiki that was not yet finished was the “Discussion Area” page. During this meeting, Dr. Kushner Benson had the opportunity to navigate the pages within the Wiki, practice making comments on a student’s project page (as though she was providing feedback about parts of the survey project the student had posted), view some of the PowerPoint presentations about survey research we had created, and watch one of the videos we had made showing how to edit a page, upload files, and embed videos. This team member was able to guide her as she explored and practiced using the Wiki, and Dr. Kushner Benson also provided some initial feedback about the Wiki.
On Monday, November 19, the Implementing Assessment Wiki site was made available to the students in Dr. Kushner Benson’s class. Since Nick works as a graduate assistant, he posted a news item to the class Springboard page that gave students a link to the Wiki site and informed students that the wiki was available for them to check out. Students were encouraged to explore the Wiki, view the project resources that were available on the site, watch the tutorial clips, practice uploading files to their individual survey project pages, and practice using the discussion area page (which was finished after the meeting with Dr. Kushner Benson). Students were asked to “attempt to use different parts of the Wiki to see how well they might work for you and future students.” Students were also asked to check their University of Akron e-mail and find the message that read “You have been invited to join the Implementing Assessment Wiki.” Students were asked in the news item to open up the message and accept the invitation to join the Wiki. In addition to the link to the Wiki in the News Item, there was also a link to the Wiki provided in the “Content” section on the class Springboard page. In addition to using Springboard, Nick also notified by e-mail that the wiki was available for them to explore. He also provided his e-mail address if students had questions about the Wiki during the implementation period.

Students were also informed that a Wiki Evaluation Survey would be posted to the Wiki site on Wednesday, November 21, and students were asked to complete the survey by Sunday, December 2. Frank signed up for a 14-day free trial to Survey Gizmo, an online survey software tool, in order for us to create this survey. He created a username and password and sent them to all team members via e-mail, so that everyone was to access the website as the survey was being designed and to get the results once Dr. Kushner Benson and her students had submitted their responses. Once the Wiki Evaluation Survey was designed, it was posted as a link on the Wiki
on November 21. Nick notified students by updating the news item on their Springboard course page. Dr. Kushner Benson was also asked by e-mail to complete the survey at her convenience. During the implementation period, team members should log into the Survey Gizmo website to track how many participants had completed the survey and view the anonymous responses.

**Description of Implementation Timeline**

Timeline outlining the implementation of this instructional design project:

November 5 – Nick visited Dr. Kushner Benson’s class to learn more about her students, her teaching style, and the components of the survey project.

November 12 – Nick visited Dr. Kushner Benson’s class and observed students working on their survey projects in small groups and sharing feedback.

November 14 – Nick met with Dr. Kushner Benson to introduce the Wiki to her and give her a chance to practice using it and provide initial reactions and feedback.

November 19 – Link to the Wiki was made available to students on Springboard course home page and also under the Content page. Students were also notified by e-mail.

November 21 – The Wiki Evaluation Survey was added to the Wiki, and students were notified by e-mail and on the Springboard course page.

November 26 – Nick briefly visited Dr. Kushner Benson’s class to remind them about checking out the Wiki and completing the Wiki Evaluation Survey.

November 28 – Nick met with one student in Dr. Kushner Benson’s class on campus to discuss what he liked/disliked about the wiki and what changes he would suggest be made if the Wiki was used in the future.

December 2 – This was the original deadline given for students to complete and submit the Wiki Evaluation Survey. This deadline was later extended to December 4.
Description of Implementation Process

Our implementation process gave Dr. Kushner Benson and her students an entire two-week period to go to the Wiki, explore its functions and features, and evaluate its effectiveness as a tool for online learning. Since this two-week period included Thanksgiving, we were aware that most students might not get a chance to look at the Wiki and complete the survey until the week after the holiday break. However, we wanted to ensure that the Wiki and the survey were available for everyone before Thanksgiving in case students wanted to view it over the break. Our original plan was to have one or two team members attend Dr. Kushner Benson’s class on the evening of Monday, November 19 to introduce the Wiki to her students. Students were asked to bring their own laptops to class, and laptops could be checked out from Bierce Library if more were needed. Students would have been able to practice using the Wiki in class and ask questions. Unfortunately, due to unforeseen circumstances, no team members were able to attend this class meeting. Therefore, we used e-mail and Springboard to inform students that the Wiki was available.

One of the challenges we faced was that students in this class were not accustomed to logging into their Springboard course page on a regular basis. Students had already visited the Springboard page to read or download the two chapters that Dr. Kushner Benson posted to help students complete their survey projects. Dr. Kushner Benson also sometimes gives students handouts during class but does not post them to Springboard. Students would only have to log into their Springboard course page if they needed an extra copy of the syllabus or requirements for assignments. For these reasons, we also chose e-mail to communicate with her students. One of the other challenges we faced was that students had already completed several parts of their survey projects by the time the Wiki was available for them to use. Students also had other
major assignments to complete for the class by the end of the semester, so their time to explore and practice using the Wiki was limited. It would also take students extra time to go back and upload parts of the project that were already completed and type comments about their classmates’ work. Students had already discussed the project in class and worked in small groups to provide suggestions and feedback about the project to their peers. All of this would be extra work on the students’ parts and would not take place in real-time. Therefore, students were only asked to explore the Wiki and evaluate if it would have be a successful instructional tool if it had been available when they began working on their survey projects. Students were encouraged and welcome to upload files, add comments, watch the videos, and try out anything else within the Wiki. In the Wiki Evaluation Survey, we included response options for some questions that let students indicate that they did not attempt to try out different parts of the Wiki if they did not have time.

Since students were not required to upload their work to the Wiki or post comments about the project within the Wiki, there was no tangible or visible way to us to see that students were actually taking time to explore the Wiki. The only way to know that students had even looked at the Wiki was to long into Survey Gizmo and see if students had submitted their responses to the evaluation survey. The first student submitted their responses on November 21, the same night the survey was posted in the Wiki. However, we did not receive another set of survey responses until November 27. In addition, none of the students e-mailed the team with any questions about the Wiki. As a result, the only other option was to keep waiting for survey responses gain the opinions of the students.

One unexpected event that took place during the implementation phase was that the free trial we had for Survey Gizmo expired before we could gather and analyze the final survey
results. One team member had to call the customer service support desk for Survey Gizmo in order to get the free trial extended for another week. Once the free trial was extended, we could download a report that outlined the survey results and post it to the team Wiki site with the rest of our project work.

Overall, our implementation plan had effective ways to communicate information about the Wiki, our instructional product. We had excellent relationships between the instructional design team, subject matter expert, and the students. By visiting their class and advertising the Wiki on Springboard, we developed good links between everyone involved in the project. Next, we created a very supportive environment for learning and respected students’ ideas and the ideas of our subject matter expert. Finally, we utilized several technical resources to implement our instructional product, including the university’s learning management system, online survey creation tools, and e-mail support if needed.

**Recommendations for Changes**

One change that we could have made during the implementation process was to present the Wiki to a larger group of students beyond Dr. Kushner Benson’s class. Even though it might have been easier to work with a group of seven students, we could have presented the Wiki to other students in the Assessment and Evaluation program or perhaps students in other graduate programs to gain a better understanding of whether or not this Wiki was an effective tool. Other instructors in the Assessment and Evaluation program might have been able to send a link to the Wiki to their students via e-mail or post the link on their Springboard course pages. Even though students in other classes might not be familiar with the survey project that students in Dr. Kushner Benson’s class had to complete, students in other classes would still be able to evaluate the overall quality and effectiveness of the Wiki and the instructional materials contained within
it. Students in other classes might also be able to provide a fair and impartial perspective about the Wiki. Perhaps the Wiki could be introduced to a group of undergraduate students who might not be as familiar with Wikis as graduate students who might be working as classroom teachers. If the Wiki was implemented in the future, we recommend that it should be presented to a larger group of students who should be given the chance to practice using the functions and features within the Wiki and examine its instructional content and resources.

One other change that we could have made during implementation was making the Wiki and the evaluation survey available at the same time. The evaluation survey was added to the Wiki two days after the Wiki was made available to the students. If a student wanted to evaluate the Wiki the day after it was available (to perhaps get it done before Thanksgiving in our case), that student would not have been able to do so. In the future, we recommend that both the Wiki and the survey be implemented together to prevent this possible scenario. We also recommend that instructors or students using a free trial of any kind of online survey software tool know the exact date the trial period expires to prevent the situation that we experienced. In our case, we realized the problem less than twelve hours after it expired and promptly called the website to remedy the situation. Fortunately, none of the students or Dr. Kushner Benson informed us that they were unable to access the survey during this time. However, the situation could have still been prevented by being more observant about the dates of the free trial.

Evaluation Phase

Implementation of Evaluation Plan

During their meeting on November 14, Dr. Kushner Benson suggested to Nick that we should conduct one-on-one field testing with students to evaluate the Wiki. She suggested that
we should create a script for students to follow that had different tasks for students to complete using the Wiki. While watching the students use the Wiki, we could record how well students were able to complete the tasks and have a better sense of the strengths and weaknesses of the Wiki. Using information from these observations, we could make changes that would improve the Wiki for Dr. Kushner Benson’s future online course. Dr. Kushner Benson sent out an e-mail to students on November 14, asking when they would be available to participate in a formative evaluation of the Wiki. Nick shared the idea with other team members. However, due to time constraints and varying availability among team members, we felt that scheduling one-on-one, face-to-face meetings with students would be too challenging. In the end, only one student replied to Dr. Kushner Benson’s e-mail request, expressing an interest to meet to evaluate the Wiki. This was the same student that Nick met with on campus on November 28.

The main item used in the evaluation phase was an online survey. The purpose of the survey was to gauge responses from the students and Dr. Kushner Benson who had taken time to explore the Wiki as though they were using it as part of their class work. The questions ranged from ease of use, quality of resources, what was most helpful, and what they did not like about the Wiki. The survey was created using the online website Survey Gizmo and provided online to students and Dr. Kushner Benson as a link within the Wiki. Students had at least two weeks to submit their responses.

**Collection of Formative Evaluation Data**

This part of the discussion centers on the responses we received from the participants. Five out of six students responded to the survey, along with Dr. Kushner Benson. The first questions garnered around what the students felt was most helpful or what they liked about the Wiki. According to the six responses we received, students responded that having a calendar,
ease of use with the Wiki, uploading work for peer review, and finding the Wiki not too overwhelming topped the list of things they liked. In contrast, the items that two participants thought need the most improvement in the wiki were the how-to videos and that some of the pages had too much information.

There was a series of questions where students were asked about their specific use of the Wiki site. A majority of the students were able to access the link to the Wiki from the Springboard page, find the email invitation to the Wiki page, and create a new Wikispace account. Out of the six responses, four said they were successful in creating a new account, while two said they were not. However, since the Wiki was made public, students could access the site as a guest without creating an account. This means that the students had a general understanding of how to access the Wiki site.

Of the six responses we received, all were able to find the Project Resources page. This helped because it showed the main purpose for the Wiki was recognized. This showed that the Wiki was successful in so much as to have its primary use was utilized. Students were able to complete the objective of using the wiki to get information to complete their projects.

On the question of ability to use the Wiki to communicate with the professor, all of the students responded either “strongly agree” or “agree.” Dr. Kushner Benson’s e-mail address was provided on both the home page and a second page within the Wiki. From the survey results, it can be concluded that the Wiki would be an easily accessible communication tool, fulfilling the desire that Dr. Kushner Benson had to maintain communication among fellow students online.

The next set of survey questions revolved around utilizing different aspects of the pages. For each question about half of the participants looked at the pages, but did not attempt to edit the pages or view the files and resources on those pages. The other half of the participants
agreed or strongly agreed that the pages in the Wiki were useful, including the PowerPoint presentations, instructional videos, and adding documents and discussions to the Wiki pages. These showed that even though all the pages might not be useful to all students, the pages that the participants did take the time to explore were helpful and easy to work with.

During the November 14 meeting, Dr. Kushner Benson expressed what she felt were the strengths and weaknesses of the survey project Wiki. First of all, she really liked how students would be able to upload the different parts of their project and get feedback from their peers. She also thought the ability for her to add her own comments about her students’ work and provide specific feedback about a particular component of the project was a very effective tool. Second, she really liked the PowerPoint presentations we created and the use of lists, graphic organizers and flow charts to make content information more manageable for students. Third, she liked the direction sheets that would help the students use the Wiki. On the other hand, she felt that one weakness was the how-to videos that we created. She thought they were hard to see, even in full screen mode. In an e-mail she sent us regarding the Wiki she states, “The strongest point of the Wiki is the ability for classmates to provide feedback in an organized and systematic fashion. Because I have not used Wikis in the past, learning about this technology application was very valuable for me. Although I appreciated seeing all of the possibilities offered by a Wiki, some of the options duplicate Springboard options. I will only use the Wiki options that extend upon what Springboard offers."

The team also received direct feedback from one of the full-time graduate students in the class. Nick met up with him on campus. He said that he enjoys small group discussions, so he liked the idea that he could post comments and discuss projects with his classmates. In addition, he liked that the survey project directions were posted right on the home page. Overall, he felt
that the Wiki was well-organized and easy to use. He said that he did not attempt to practice adding comments to any of the pages, look at the presentations, or watch the videos. However, he felt that he would have tried to use the Wiki if it had been available from the beginning of the project. Even though the class met face-to-face, he indicated that he “still felt disconnected” because the class only met once a week. He said that he “likes to stay connected to professors and students” and enjoys online learning, so the Wiki would help him accomplish this goal. Furthermore, he felt that Dr. Kushner Benson needs to add more PowerPoint presentations in her class, like the ones that were posted on the Wiki. Overall, he had a positive impression of the Wiki and felt that it would work in Dr. Kushner Benson’s future online course.

**Assessment and Interpretation of Formative Evaluation Data**

Many participants agreed that the Wiki would have been more helpful if it had been used at the beginning of the semester. Yet, they felt there was still education to gain from this tool. Additionally, the participants’ feelings about the overall layout and effectiveness of a Wikispace ranged from good to excellent. Not only did the participants feel that the design of a Wikispace was useful, they also thought that Wikispaces were a good collaboration and educational tool. The students liked the way the Wiki was set up because it was easy to use and straightforward.

One interesting, but important, note from the evaluation survey results was that most participants preferred using a Springboard discussion board over using the Wiki site to discuss their projects. This could possibly be explained because students had a lot of prior experience using Springboard and were more comfortable with it. For some participants, this was the first time they had been introduced to a Wiki site, so there would be a normal learning curve for this new online learning format. At the same time, the Wiki discussion board is a bit more complicated to use compared to Springboard. Even though half of the participants thought that
the directions that were provided for posting comments to the discussion page were useful, the participants were still loyal to the Springboard discussion boards.

In the future, Dr. Kushner Benson could use this Wiki as a complement to the course page she develops in Springboard, similar to our instructional design class. First, she could use the Wiki page for students to share their work and give feedback about their projects. She would also be able to contribute to these discussions. Second, she could keep the individual student pages, either using our template as is or making changes for future classes. In addition, she could also expand the use of the Wiki to include other assignments or projects that her students complete throughout the semester. She could either add other projects to the existing Wiki, or perhaps create additional Wikis for each project. Instead of having the PowerPoint presentations and the other reference materials about surveys on the Wiki, she could easily post these items on the Springboard course page. She could keep the Calendar page on the Wiki, in addition to having the same information in Springboard.

Using the qualitative feedback that she provided, there are two things that Dr. Kushner Benson would probably not use in the Wiki. First, she would probably not use the videos that gave students instructions for doing tasks on a Wiki page. Perhaps she could still use the directions that we created. Second, she would probably choose not to use the Discussion Area page, since it duplicates the functions and features of the discussion boards within Springboard. The Wiki promotes student learning, communication between peers and the instructor, and the ability to easily upload and read documents. One of the goals from the beginning of the project was to create a format in which student interaction and discussion would work well, as well as find a technological tool that Dr. Kushner Benson could be educated about using. This goal was clearly met and could be adapted in the future. The Wikispace format is an area of technology
that Dr. Kushner Benson can choose to expand upon when the Implementing Assessment class goes fully online, or perhaps integrate it into her existing classes.

**Recommendations for Changes**

If Dr. Kushner Benson wants to use this in her future online class, we recommend that students try out different features of the Wiki (i.e. creating pages, adding comments, editing text, uploading files, embedding videos) before next fall. This would allow her students to become familiar with the Wiki and use it easily. She could have the students in her spring semester Implementing Assessment in the Classroom course evaluate the Wiki. Nick would be able to help her arrange one-on-one meetings with students to practice using the Wiki, as well as any other instructional materials that are created for her online course.

One other change that could be made that would aid in the evaluation of the Wiki site would be to have students create their own pages within the wiki. Blank student pages could be provided, and students would have to choose a page and name it. If Dr. Kushner Benson wants to use a similar template to the student pages we created, she could post blank pages using titles like “Student One,” “Student Two,” etc. and then have her students change the names to reflect their own names. For this project, we did not want students to have any difficulties creating their own pages and, therefore, might not explore the wiki. We also had an idea for what we wanted the student pages to look like, so we decided to design the student pages ourselves.

Overall, the Implementing Assessment survey project wiki that we created to solve this learning problem was well-received by students and Dr. Kushner Benson. Even though we were unable to solve her original design problem, we were able to introduce a new learning resource that will help her maintain some of the qualities of a face-to-face class, but also introduce the technology that will help everyone be successful in an online learning environment next fall.