Implementing Open Digital Badges in an Undergraduate Business Communication Course

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What are Digital Badges?

- A digital image file that contains embedded metadata describing information about the **task performed** to earn the badge, **criteria for assessment**, and often **evidence** that was submitted by the learner to earn the badge.

- Workplace training initiatives, continuing learning programs, and MOOCs early adopters of the technology.

- Participation among traditional K-12 and higher-education institutions has gradually increased.

Mozilla Open Digital Badges:

2011

Open-source software to create a web standard which captures & communicates learning.

Badges highly portable and "shareable."

Potential Benefits of Badging in an Academic Context

■ Recognize learning experiences in more detailed ways than traditional methods.

■ Provide students "street cred" with external audiences by helping students to create a professional brand.

■ Highlight "backroom experiences" of classroom learning.

■ Increase student motivation and participation.

Different Types of Badges

- "Local Badges" (Joseph, 2014): Badges that have value only within the learning environment. Quizzes and short-response tasks related to course material.

- "Global Badges" (Joseph, 2014): Badges that have value beyond the learning environment.
  - *Employed as a way of marketing classroom experiences in a real-world context*

The Study

Implementing Digital Badges into English 420 - Business Writing:

(Undergraduate Gen-Ed junior/senior business communications course for business majors)

- 2 course sections: 42 students

- Badges focus on highlighting the connection between course material/assignments and their real-world applications

- Students' grades are not impacted by earning/not earning badges

- Course Instructors: Tiffany Saunders and Patricia Newenhouse

Research Questions:

- What percentage of students will earn which types of badges?

- What percentage of students who earn "competence" badges will pursue "excellence" badges?

- What percentage of students will pursue "extra projects" to earn additional badges?

- What are students' reactions to badges?

Local Badges Available

A Quiz About "Badgi...

An introduction to how badges work and their importance in the workplace.

Understanding Gua...

A quiz to learn about the concept of guanxi

Persuasive Writing T...

This quiz tests your knowledge and understanding of persuasive writing.

Global Badges Available

Competence Badges:

Complete Course Assignment (minimum score of 75%)

Excellence Badges:

Complete Course Assignment (minimum score of 90%)

Business Correspon...

Successful business communication with an international reader.

Business Correspon...

Successful business communication with an international reader.

Global Badges Available, cont.
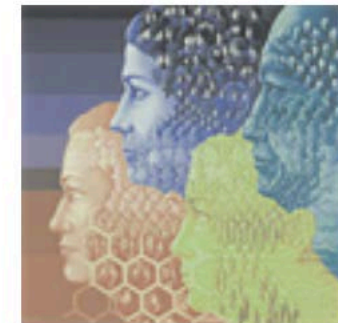
Extra Project Badges:

Video Resume

Create a video resume for potential employers.

***"Dress for Success"...**

Created a training video that explains effective strategies for dressing in a business environment.

****International Com...**

Created a training video that explains the nuances of communicating in an international business

Business Report Writing Skills

⭐ Get started

Successfully created a business report; learned effective report-writing strategies.

✨ Challenges

● Report Writing ⌄

Create an effective recommendation report/feasibility study.

Learning Outcomes

Demonstrated understanding of what makes reports effective (in general).

Understood what makes a particular report effective or ineffective.

Articulated a purpose statement with clarity.

Created a report and included its necessary components.

Engaged in critical analysis.

Issuer:
Passport by Purdue

Organization:
Purdue University

Created by:
Mark Mabrito, Jul 12 2016

Interactivity Type
active

Educational Use
classroom project

Time Required
10-15 hours

Intended User Role
learning communication skills, report writing skills

Learning Outcomes

Demonstrated understanding of what makes reports effective (in

Criteria	Average 100 points	Exceptional 200 points
Content	Social media plan is required length with a good sense of detail; well- developed, although could use some additional support; relevant use of examples and justification for the approach; clear sense of audience; plan is effective and reflects an understanding of many principles of leveraging social media for an external client.	Social media plan is required length with an exceptional sense of detail; well-developed throughout; exceptional use of examples and justification for the approach; clear sense of audience; plan is effective and reflects a wide-ranging understanding of many principles of leveraging social media for an external client.
Appendix	Appendix is effective with some original examples of social media use. Displays an adequate understanding of how to create content for various social media outlets.	Appendix is strong with many effective and original examples of social media use. Displays a professional understanding of how to create content for various social media outlets, with many well- crafted examples.
Organization	Organization controlled but limited; some problems with paragraphing or sequencing, limited purpose statement or conclusion; limited use of topic sentences.	Organization fully appropriate and effective for topic; very strong purpose statement & conclusion; paragraphs have effective topic sentences.
Critical Thinking	Ideas are supported with occasional citations or relevant facts; some individual, original ideas are expressed	Arguments are supported with cited references or relevant facts; strong use of originality is shown throughout the message
Discourse Control	Generally adequately connected; presentation of ideas generally clear and coherent; cohesive devices (key words, pronouns, references, transitions, etc.) could be used more often, more effectively, or more accurately.	Full control (logical coherence) and excellent use of cohesive devices (key words, pronouns, references, transitions, etc.); presentation of ideas extremely clear and coherent.
Sentence Structure	Generally, an effective use of sentence patterns demonstrated; may have	Full range of sentence patterns effectively used; error-free sentence-level grammar;

Preliminary Data

- What percentage of students earned which types of badges?

- What percentage of students who earned "competence" badges pursued "excellence" badges?

- What percentage of students pursued "extra projects" to earn additional badges?

	% of students
Local Badges (n=7)	
1-2	57%
3-5	40%
6-7	0%
Global Badges	
Competence (n=4)	
1	4%
2	16%
3	38%
4	38%
Excellence (n=4)	
1	7%
2	0%
3	0%
4	0%
Extra Project Badges (n=3)	
1	2%
2	0%
3	0%

What are students' reactions to badges?

Overall perception of the value of the badges

I am interested in trying to earn digital badges.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Agree	13.79%	4
Agree	24.14%	7
Neither agree nor disagree	27.59%	8
Disagree	20.69%	6
Strongly disagree	13.79%	4
Total	100%	29

I have a sense of accomplishment by earning the digital badges.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Agree	6.90%	2
Agree	31.03%	9
Neither agree nor disagree	41.38%	12
Disagree	6.90%	2
Strongly disagree	13.79%	4
Total	100%	29

What are students' reactions to badges?

Overall perception of the value of the badges

Unedited Student Comments

- I like the idea of offering badges and I think they should be available in more classes.

- You get to see a physical reward for what you do.

What are students' reactions to badges?

Significance of badges outside the classroom

I will share my digital badges with future employers.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Agree	13.79%	4
Agree	24.14%	7
Neither agree nor disagree	37.93%	11
Disagree	10.34%	3
Strongly disagree	13.79%	4
Total	100%	29

Digital badges will help to highlight my professional accomplishments achieved in this class.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly Agree	17.24%	5
Agree	34.48%	10
Neither agree nor disagree	34.48%	10
Disagree	6.90%	2
Strongly disagree	6.90%	2
Total	100%	29

What are students' reactions to badges?

Significance of badges outside the classroom

Unedited Student Comments

- Sense of accomplishment and also distinguishes you from the crowd. I think they are fundamental when trying to get a job.

- Gives employers a better insight of the prospects' accomplishments.

What are students' reactions to badges?

Students' perceptions of the negatives and positives of the badging experience

Unedited Student Comments

- They could be used to help showcase what we have learned in class.

- It encourages students to do well. It's an incentive to do your classwork, and doing well at it.

- If you do not earn one that you have applied for, it can be discouraging.

- They sometimes can be difficult to earn on top of the required school work.

Summary

What badging may potentially achieve:

- Provide a common ground between academic achievements and real-world expectations.

- Make features/benefits of our curriculum more visible in real-world settings.

- Provide students with a system for highly-portable, easily-shareable documented achievements.

- Help students understand and achieve a personal brand for future employment.

Questions?