INCORPORATING A NEW LEARNING TOOL FOR FINAL PROJECTS

Top tips from Kim Davenport, lecturer in Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences, UW Tacoma.

1. **If you’re going to use a new classroom technology, try it out first, see if it fits**

Technologies come and go and that’s true for classroom use, Davenport says, so be open to new tools that can help you meet your teaching and learning goals. Davenport learned about FOLD when she used it to make a submission of her classroom work for a music award. As she tried it, she saw its potential to help students in her own classroom. However, as easy as it is to use, she says faculty should definitely try out any new classroom technology first before asking students to work with it.

2. **Help students understand how to use the classroom technology and how it fits into their learning and creative process**

Davenport spends time with students explaining how they will be using the publishing platform. FOLD helps students put different ideas together and to build on them to present their own creative ideas. “I don’t have to spend too much time telling them how to use it. Yet, it is important to make sure that students understand that this is just one tool for a very specific assignment.” FOLD can help them tell the story of their final product but the creative work comes from them. “I still expect them to participate in the classroom and engage in discussion with other students in multiple ways,” Davenport says.

3. **Make it a requirement for classroom consistency**

At first, Davenport did not require her students to all use FOLD, but consistency in a classroom is important, she says. Now, students know they will be using FOLD to create and present their final project—worth 30 percent of their grade.

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**WHAT IS FOLD?**

**FOLD** is an open publishing platform developed at the MIT Media Lab’s Center for Civic Media in 2015 that lets users link media “cards” to the text of their stories for non-linear storytelling. These cards can include content in just about any digital form, from unique and fresh multimedia content created by the users to existing videos, photos, maps, tweets, audio, etc. Davenport recommends it because her experience over three quarters has been largely positive—students have reacted well to it and have used it in creative ways to support and present their work.

Read more about how Kim Davenport integrated FOLD in her classroom in Finding the meaning behind the music, part of the Innovators Among Us series at uw.edu/trends/innovators.