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# Presentation - Getting Their Hands Dirty: Collaborating to Engage Undergraduates in Learning

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# Getting Their Hands Dirty

## Collaborating to Engage Undergraduates in Learning

Hannah Britton, Ph.D., and  
Mandy Swygart-Hobaugh, M.L.S., Ph.D.



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# In this session, we will...

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- ◆ Present our collaboration on assignment design and research instruction, then...
- ◆ You will discuss how you might design/redesign an assignment

# Sound familiar?

I'm sick of reading the same-old tired research papers! How can I get my students more engaged in their learning?



Let's put our heads together and think of some more exciting alternatives...

# Barr & Tagg: "Paradigm Shift in Higher Education..."

**"Providing Instruction"**

**"Producing Learning"**

# Shift could mean...

- ◆ Letting go of traditional “class time”...
- ◆ Taking some risks on what you’re going to get...

## **BUT...**

- ◆ Students are actively engaged and responsible for their learning
- ◆ They experience what real research in the field is, not just reading about it

# Two “mini” original research projects!

## ◆ Gender’s impact in campaign ads

- Critical thinking
- Analytical skills
- Media literacy
- Research methodology

## ◆ Gendered patterns of U.S. legislators

- Critical thinking
- Analytical skills
- Quantitative literacy
- Research methodology

# Getting their hands dirty...

## ◆ Campaign project

- Readings → research ?s and coding scheme
- Getting the data...
- Findings and self-critiques

## ◆ Legislative project

- Readings → research ?s and coding scheme
- Getting the data...
- Findings and self-critiques





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# Potential Worries

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- ◆ More work for me?
  - Preparation yes, grading no
- ◆ Control Freak?
  - Unknown produces learning
- ◆ Layers of Collaboration

# Now, your turn!

- ◆ Break into groups and brainstorm ways to design/redesign an assignment that:
  - Achieves articulated pedagogical aims
  - Engages students' in original analysis, and
  - Involves collaboration between the instructor and another academic member (e.g., a librarian, a writing center professional, another instructor, etc.).

# Resources

- Robert B. Barr and John Tagg, "From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education," *Change*, November/December 1995, 13-25.
- KU Libraries' Subject Specialists:  
<http://www.lib.ku.edu/directory/subjectspecialists.cfm>
- KU Writing Center: <http://www.writing.ku.edu/>
- KU Center for Teaching Excellence:  
<http://www.cte.ku.edu/>

**THANKS FOR ATTENDING!!**