

MAKING GENERAL EDUCATION “WICKED” – INTEGRATING PROJECT-BASED AND ACTIVE LEARNING IN A GENERAL EDUCATION COURSE

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Project based learning has been shown to enhance critical thinking skills, deepen the learning process and engender for students a stronger sense of agency and belonging. These benefits of project-based learning are especially relevant for a General Education survey course with a large concentration of first-generation students. This research presents both qualitative and quantitative data on student learning and outcomes from a piloted revision of Global Perspectives; a required General Education course typically taken by first-year students. Conventionally, Global Perspectives is taught as a lecture-based course where student assessment comes from exam scores and quizzes. The revision to the course shifted pedagogy to the active-learning model that included significantly more group work, peer review of papers and a signature group research project. Although only one semester of data was collected, qualitative and quantitative data suggests that student learning, skills development, and engagement improved considerably compared to the conventional pedagogical model.

