Joining the Global Village: Teaching Globalization with Wikipedia

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Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of my experiences with a teaching activity that engages students in publishing in Wikipedia on issues relating to globalization. It begins with a short overview of some of the current debates revolving around teaching globalization, which lay ground for the assignment. I discuss how this teaching tool fits with a number of dimensions related to teaching globalization, particularly with an international service learning approach. Finally, I present assessment data from a series of surveys I conducted from 2008 to 2016 on the effectiveness of the assignment.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching about globalization is nothing new, and neither is the globalization of education. However, faculty who teach about globalization continue to strive to increase internationalization and globalization in their courses. In this article, I will demonstrate how and why a strategy referred to as "teaching with Wikipedia" contributes to students' understanding of globalization. I have been teaching with Wikipedia since its introduction in the mid-2000s and have used this method in numerous undergraduate courses in sociology in the United States and South Korea, including Global Society and Sociology of Globalization. This article outlines the design of a Wikipedia assignment that I have used in teaching globalization. The learning objectives of this assignment include improving student understanding of the course topics (e.g., globalization and social justice), digital literacy, research skills, and collaborative writing skills.

I begin with a short overview of the relevant debates on teaching globalization, which lay groundwork for the introduction of the teaching with Wikipedia activity. Next, I show how this teaching tool fits with a number of dimensions of teaching globalization, particularly with the international service learning approach. Finally, I present and discuss data from a series of surveys I conducted on its effectiveness.

TEACHING GLOBALIZATION

Sleeter (2003) and Sohoni and Petrovic (2010) noted that many teachers are uncertain about how best to discuss globalization and often do so in a haphazard manner. Sleeter (2003) and Hytten and Bettez (2008) emphasize the importance of non-neutral education that not only informs about globalization but also teaches students the value of social justice. Sleeter (2003:9) cautions that "Increasingly, schools are losing a vision of education for public good and shifting toward education for private consumption and the needs of transnational corporations. This means that,

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increasingly, schooling is helping to serve global imperialism." Likewise, Hytten and Bettez (2008) and Sohoni and Petrovic (2010) warn that teaching globalization too often focuses on the economic or political dimensions, which marginalizes discussion of other human needs and social justice topics. Few studies demonstrate how to teach about globalization and its connection to social justice (Gibson 2010).

The service learning paradigm, also referred to as community-based learning (Mooney and Edwards 2001; Parker-Gwin and Mabry 1998), helps to connect globalization to social justice. Service learning activities typically permit students to receive course credit for volunteer work and engage in reflections about that work via papers, presentations, and/or discussions about how their service learning experiences relate to the course material and larger social issues. Ideally, service learning has the potential to move students from identifying concepts, rote memorization, and summaries to higher-order processes of analysis, synthesis, and critique. Plater et al. (2009) extend the service learning literature by describing international service learning. They maintain that international service learning is

> an academic, curriculum-based course or a combination of courses in which students participate in meaningful, sustained community service; engage in regular, structured reflection activities that integrate academic content with real-world practice and that ask students to explore their own values, their sense of social responsibility, and their ability to work collaboratively with individuals and groups from diverse backgrounds; and have multiple opportunities to engage with residents of the host culture outside of an academic setting. (P. 487)

They describe this approach as a means of increasing global awareness and knowledge, deepening cross-cultural understanding and appreciation of diversity, and experiencing the wider world firsthand. Plater and colleagues (2009) note that when integrated into a part of a program that the student engages at a foreign location (often in the context of exchange studies), international service learning is an effective tool that fosters understanding of globalization and global citizenship. This type of service learning fits well with Sleeter's (2003:8) call for alternative teaching activities in which "participants learn to view history as being made not only by the wealthy and powerful, but

also by collective efforts of ordinary people." The following section will outline an activity that answers this call, adding a new global dimension to our existing curricula.

TEACHING WITH WIKIPEDIA

Wikipedia is a nonprofit, open content encyclopedia, available at no charge worldwide, and edited collaboratively by volunteers, and as such it has been classified as a promise-driven social movement (Konieczny 2009). Over the past decade, it has also become a collaborative learning platform for educators who can assign their students to contribute to the project, usually through writing new encyclopedic content on topics related to their courses (Konieczny 2007, 2012; Travis 2013). Variations of those activities can include translations, reviews of existing articles, or visual sociology-inspired activities such as creating and annotating media (e.g., analyzing photographs and creating diagrams and other infographics) (Konieczny 2012, 2016).

According to Konieczny (2007), "Wikipedia's exercises have the additional advantage of falling in the narrow definition of service learning" (p. 27). Editing Wikipedia meets several of the criteria required for service learning outlined by Mooney and Edwards (2001) and Plater et al. (2009): Students acquire and apply skills (research, writing, and collaboration), render a service to the worldwide community through integrating research into the site's content, engage in repeated interactions with members of the international Wikipedia community, reflect on their activities through discussions and reflective papers, and receive curricular credit for their activities. Navigating back to the global sociology curriculum, Sohoni and Petrovic (2010) argue that the main obstacle to globalizing curriculum is students' lack of exposure to and knowledge of global contexts, something that can be challenged by new technologies that provide opportunities to participate in transnational communities—communities like Wikipedia.

Wikipedia and its use as a teaching aid are struggling to gain universal acceptance in academia due to several factors (Konieczny 2016), including misconceptions about the utility, quality, and accuracy of Wikipedia as well as its nonprofit status. However, Wikipedia can be considered a social movement–like vehicle for transmission of social justice values (Konieczny 2009; Reagle 2010; Twyman, Keegan, and Shaw 2016).

Despite these concerns, thousands of academics have introduced to their curricula assignments

involving students editing Wikipedia. Sigalov and Nachmias (2016) noted that as of April 2016, 938 educational institutions (56 percent in higher education) from 91 countries, in 539 different cities, have taken part in educational cooperation with Wikipedia. They find that 300 volunteers, 4,600 educators, and 47,000 students created 150,000 new articles and improved 40,000 articles in 50 languages. Farzan and Kraut (2013), reporting on a project overseen by the Association for Psychological Science (APS), analyzed the efforts of 640 students who edited Wikipedia articles on scientific topics in 36 university courses and found that the "students substantially improved the scientific content of over 800 articles, at a level of quality indistinguishable from content written by PhD experts" (p. 783). Recognizing that Wikipedia has become an important public resource for knowledge, and hence its potential for popularizing science and general education, contributing to Wikipedia has been recommended by a number of professional associations in academia, including the Association for Psychological Science and the American Sociological Association (Wright 2011, 2012). However, Sigalov and Nachmias (2016:3) note that "even a decade after [the first] accounts of the use [of wikis and Wikipedia in academia] . . . Wikipedia is still mainly used to consume knowledge, less so as a pedagogical tool for the creation of knowledge" and that "academia has only started exploring the potential of implementing Wikipedia into the curriculum."

The underutilization of this resource occurs despite the overwhelmingly positive overall current consensus in literature on this emerging teaching activity, as summarized in my previous work (Konieczny 2016). Expected beneficial learning outcomes in the context of educational assignments on Wikipedia include: the development of digital and informational literacies, increased student motivation and empowerment, increased familiarity with the wiki software, concept exploration and understanding, learning of research methodology, developing scientific communication and collaboration skills, and improving critical thinking, language, and writing skills (Davis 2012; Fessakis and Zoumpatianou 2012; Konieczny 2016; Okoli et al. 2012).

BEST PRACTICES: THE WIKIPEDIA ARTICLE ASSIGNMENT FOR GLOBALIZATION COURSES

The Wikipedia assignment is a modification of a common writing assignment. According to the faculty instructional booklet provided by the Wikimedia Foundation (Davis 2012):

> In the "Write an article" assignment, you ask your students to expand an existing article or create a new article on a course-related topic. Using reliable sources, students document information about the topic. Often, instructors feature this assignment in conjunction with a longer analytical paper offline; students' Wikipedia articles form the literature review sections of their papers.

This type of assignment can pose a challenge for instructors and students unfamiliar with the Wikipedia setting. Zheng, Niiya, and Warschauer (2015) observed that adapting a writing assignment to Wikipedia context requires meticulous planning because "Wikipedia is a world in itself, with its own culture, language and codes of conduct" (Sigalov and Nachmias 2016:3). Students and instructors need to understand the basics of this environment. Over my decade plus–long engagement with the educational projects on Wikipedia, I identified several challenges. For example, some students' assignments were deleted before the assessment could take place (usually due to copyright violations). Instructors who misunderstand the context of Wikipedia might assign students tasks of creating unencyclopedic content, such as essays, original research, or topics lacking notability that likewise will get deleted. Because of these challenges, the Wikimedia Foundation created the Wiki Education Foundation. It has developed free software, online instructional videos, and printable brochures, which are accessible through resources at the Wikipedia Education Program page. I developed best practices based on my study of those documents (some of which, like the recommended syllabi, are based on my earlier work) as well my experiences with and the emerging academic literature on teaching with Wikipedia. See Appendix for hyperlinks to Wikipedia resources mentioned in text.

First, students need a reminder that "copy-paste" (which constitutes plagiarism) is not allowed in the assignments. Wikipedia, through the combination of automated tools and volunteer check, will detect any copy-paste within hours. Making the students understand that it is not only the instructor but dozens of volunteers who will be reviewing their articles has quite a motivating effect. Assigning students to read the Wikipedia guide on avoiding copyright violations and showing them the real-time reporting of copyright problems has drastically reduced the number of plagiarism

problems in my classes (see also Sigalov and Nachmias 2016).

Second, Wikipedia is an encyclopedia, which means that student articles written for it should have encyclopedic tone and otherwise follow Wikipedia's Manual of Style. Students cannot use an essay style ("In my opinion . . . ," etc.). The encyclopedic tone also requires that articles are neutral, namely, represent all sides, avoid being partisan, and do not read like an advertisement. The Wikipedia's Manual of Style subpage "Words to Watch" is a particularly useful student reading for any writing course.

Third, students should learn not to be partisans of their causes and present topics fairly and without bias. The instructor should teach students about biases, which affect most of the media we consume and create. One of the advice pages on Wikipedia particularly relevant in this context is titled "Wikipedia Is Not Here to Tell the World about Your Noble Cause."

Fourth, instructors should discuss notability with their students before they complete this assignment. According to the relevant Wikipedia guideline page,

> Wikipedia articles cover notable topics—those that have gained sufficiently significant attention by the world at large and over a period of time, and are not outside the scope of Wikipedia. We consider evidence from reliable independent sources to gauge this attention. The notability guideline does not determine the content of articles, but only whether the topic should have its own article.

In the context of globalizing the curriculum, faculty can discuss notable topics related to social justice. Likewise, students should be reminded that their articles need to be relevant to readers worldwide. They cannot limit themselves solely to their national (American, etc.) contexts. Whatever the course and the students' focus, many topics lend themselves to having sections on different cultures and countries and can be illustrated with examples from around the world. Wikipedia's Manual of Style defines a related problem as articles that have limited geographical scope—ones that "currently deal only or mainly with matters in certain countries. Often, these articles may reflect perspective of one or more developed countries, instead of a global perspective." Rewriting such articles for the global audience offers ample opportunity for discussing globalization in practice.

Fifth, students will be required to summarize already published research, not create their own. Any topic related to globalization that has been covered in an academic publication or a journalistic account is likely to be accepted. Reimers and Neovesky (2016) caution here that if left completely on their own, students may feel overwhelmed by the number of topics; hence, I recommend assigning students a list of preapproved of topics. Despite Wikipedia being the world's largest encyclopedia, numerous topics related to globalization are still underdeveloped or missing. Wikipedia volunteers who participate in WikiProject Globalization ("dedicated to improving Wikipedia's coverage of Globalization in its multiple dimensions and the organization of information and articles on this topic") created a list of requested globalization articles. Another list of over 200 short and low-quality globalization-related articles is also available, and over 500 articles listed within scope of globalization WikiProject need cleanup, with issues such as insufficient references, obsolete information, conflict of interest, neutrality disputes, or simply "expert attention needed," to name just a few error codes.

Sixth, after small groups of students select a topic in the first weeks of class, the instructor should have a series of deadlines for the Wikipedia project. I require them to first submit an outline of their project with a table of contents and a list of sources within a month or so; this is also a time to teach students about topics such as reliability of sources (I assign students to read a Wikipedia policy titled "Identifying Reliable Sources"). To avoid deletion of incomplete and early drafts, students should also be advised to work on their article in private draft-space (known on Wikipedia as a user's sandbox) instead of the public space of Wikipedia. In the second half of the semester, I require students to have the first draft of the article finished, upon which I have each group review and publicly comment on drafts from other groups. Following their changes from peer feedback, I provide students with my own reviews, and finally, I encourage them to seek reviews from the Wikipedia community through Wikipedia's own peer review system.

The peer reviews I have incorporated into this assignment come in two forms: First, students are expected to provide peer feedback to other students; second, some groups can receive feedback from other Wikipedia volunteers if they wish their article to achieve special recognition within the project. However, some students ignore or only

superficially address non-instructor review (Crowe, Silva, and Ceresola 2015). Further, a major problem with reviews solicited from Wikipedia volunteers is that there is a long backlog of requests for review, and it can take several weeks for a volunteer to become interested in the student paper. Therefore, I recommend that a review request to the Wikipedia community is posted as soon as possible and early in the semester and advertised within the community early enough (e.g., on the talk page of the Globalization WikiProject) for students to benefit from it—and that responding to such a review should be a part of the students' final grade.

Seventh, dedicate at least one lecture to a computer lab session on learning the basics of Wikipedia. In a second computer lab lecture, in addition to instructions on advanced editing (e.g., uploading images), students can present their edits to the class. At that time, faculty can reiterate guidelines about copyrights and plagiarism (see Konieczny 2016; Reimers and Neovesky 2016; Sigalov and Nachmias 2016). Within these lectures, I require students to participate in class discussions about their experiences with Wikipedia, collaboration, and the assignment and their understanding of globalization.

Finally, I recommend that both instructors and students should complete the one hour–long online interactive training offered to new editors on Wikipedia. If questions arise, in addition to a help desk forum, Wikipedia also provides a dedicated space for instructors to ask questions on its "Education Noticeboard."

ASSESSMENT METHODS

To assess this assignment, I collected data through two sets of surveys. The first wave of surveys was distributed in 2010 and concerned students in my Global Societies course from the period 2008 to 2010 at a major American university. The Wikipedia article assignment consisted of a group project, in which students were required to write or expand one or more Wikipedia articles on a topic related to sociology of globalization. All 135 students who took part in those courses received a survey in 2010 in which they assessed the viability of wikis in general and Wikipedia in particular. The second wave of surveys was sent in 2016 to 58 students of four Sociology of Globalization classes at a major Korean university from 2013 to 2016. The first survey at the American university aimed to collect data on the general effectiveness of the teaching with Wikipedia approach, while the second survey

at the Korean university aimed to gather data on the tool effectiveness in increasing students' understanding of globalization and social justice topics and examine student attitudes about the importance of community service and personal social responsibility.

In the surveys, I used Likert-scale measures and open-ended questions to enable both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The Likert scale measures are shown in Table 1. I coded the student feedback to open-ended questions for words that occurred commonly in the evaluations, then clustered them into categories. The major limitation affecting this study is the self-selection bias and low response rates: The students who answered appeared to be more motivated and engaged and/or enjoyed the course more than others. Some students identified articles they worked on, allowing me to identify them or their group. I could see that the few students who failed or received a near-fail grade in my courses did not respond to the survey. The response rate for the first survey was 32 percent (N = 43). The response ratio for the second survey was 26 percent (N = 15). The key results are summarized in Table 1.

As suggested by Sweet and Cardwell (2016), both the student products and student impressions were analyzed in assessing the assignment effectiveness. Students' articles were evaluated according to meeting deadlines for outlines, reviews, and submitting final Wikipedia article, and the article's quality was assessed through compatibility with Wikipedia's B-class and Good Article requirements: quality of sources, quality of writing, comprehensiveness, and neutrality. Korean students had noticeably more difficulty with the quality of writing requirement compared to the English segment.

In terms of content generation, students' articles produced in my courses resulted in the creation and expansion of approximately 100 articles on globalization. Less than 5 percent of that content was rejected by the Wikipedia community, which occurred due to plagiarized content. The remaining content was published publicly without any problem and has remained on the site. About two dozen articles were recognized by the Wikipedia community for their quality, passing the project internal peer reviews to qualify for Wikipedia's "Good Article" status, "Did You Know" section, or both. See Table 2 for the list of globalization-related topics created or expanded by my students that have the highest number of page views in each year.

Most of the insights regarding students' learning experiences stemmed from the qualitative

Table 1. Survey Results.

Questions	For 2008–2010 (US) N = 43	For 2013–2016 (Korea). N = 15
1.1. Learning how to edit a wiki is easy.	3.1	N/A
1.2. Compared to a normal writing assignment, the wiki assignment was more useful, teaching me valuable skills.	3.3	4.3
1.3. In the future I will keep editing Wikipedia.	2.8	3.1
1.4. The Wikipedia assignment helped me to understand globalization better.	N/A	4.3
1.5. The Wikipedia article(s) I contributed to are useful to people all over the world.	4	4.4
1.6. I am proud of having written/improved Wikipedia articles.	N/A	4.6
1.7. Writing/improving Wikipedia articles makes me feel empowered.	N/A	4.5

Note: Likert scale averages reported (1 = strongly disagree; 5 = strongly agree).

comments. Several categories emerged from the content analysis of the student feedback and are analyzed in detail in the following.

DISCUSSION

The first time that I assigned the Wikipedia article assignment, students were using two wikis: Wikipedia and the Blackboard/Courseweb wiki. The Blackbard/Courseweb wiki was used to develop articles before moving them to Wikipedia and for discussions. About 60 percent of the students found editing Wikipedia to be significantly easier than Courseweb. When asked about their favorite tool used, nearly 50 percent had no preference while the other half of those who completed the survey chose Wikipedia. No student respondent chose the Blackboard/Courseweb wiki. The students were asked to explain why the Courseweb wiki was less useful. Common problems mentioned were slower speed (58 percent), less intuitive/user-friendly (41 percent), and unstable/prone to errors and breaking down (23 percent). After receiving this feedback, I stopped using Blackboard/Courseweb wiki in subsequent courses and focused solely on the Wikipedia/MediaWiki platform for the assignment.

The students were asked "Would you recommend this assignment to other students?," to which 93 percent of students in the sample responded that they would. They were also asked "If you took a course like that again, would you prefer more or less Wikipedia assignments?" A third opted for more, 60 percent for about the same, and only 7 percent for fewer Wikipedia assignments.

The main criticism the assignment received from the students was that it was something they have not done before. About a quarter of the students describe the assignment as difficult. The following quotes are representative of this critical sentiment: "Although it was nice to do something useful I must selfishly admit that simply writing a paper is much easier" and "It's a valuable experience, and a good final project, but also a difficult project because of the new writing style and amount of research involved." Nonetheless, most of the students could complete the assignment successfully; therefore, I believe the difficulty of learning wiki software is like the difficulty of learning other new tools that students are expected to learn in some sociology classes (e.g., SPSS).

Most of the students strongly agreed that this Wikipedia assignment teaches them valuable skills (see Table 1, Item 1.2). When asked about what skills they have acquired through completion of the assignment, three main areas emerged: digital literacy/wiki-skills (26 percent), collaborative skills (19 percent), and research skills (33 percent), matching with the intended learning objectives of this assignment. Students who described improving research skills said, for example, "It helps enhancing my ability to find more accurate, professional, reliable information." These types of comments demonstrate that Wikipedia assignments are increasing student understanding of the reliability of sources, including the limits of Wikipedia's own

Table 2. Impact of Selected Articles.

Articles		Impact Metrics			Quality Metrics	
Title	Date of Publication	Page Views Total	Daily Views (average)	Wikipedia Assessment Classes Improved[a]	Words Added	References Added
Pax_Mongolica	2009	165,000	255	4	2,450	21
First World	2009	571,000	883	4	3,800	37
Great Divergence	2010	195,000	300	3	3,000	15
Economic GLOBALIZATION	2010	285,000	443	3	1,800	24
Webtoon	2013	202,000	312	2	800	8
Tai Ke	2014	1,150	2	2	1,100	3
시리아 내전의 난민 (Refugees of the Syrian Civil War)	2015	42,000	65	3	5,100	80
Student movements in Korea	2016	4,300	7	3	1,700	17

[a]Number of classes improved based on internal Wikipedia quality metric at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_assessment. For example, article improved from class 1 (stub) to class 4 (B) is recorded as three classes improved.

reliability. The assignment required the students to go beyond Wikipedia and learn how to find and reuse quality sources (see also Sigalov and Nachmias 2016).

When asked to select adjectives describing the assignment, the most common descriptor chosen by 73 percent of students was *useful*. Only one student indicated that the assignment was "useless." Fifty-three percent chose *educational*, 40 percent chose *empowering and inspirational*, and 20 percent chose *motivational*. A third of the students described it as *fun*. These descriptors are consistent with previous research indicating that most people contributing to Wikipedia find it an enjoyable activity (Nov 2007). Students appreciated that their work was seen by the wider public and that they are creating useful digital artifacts (see Sigalov and Nachmias 2016). The following student quote is representative of the praise the Wikipedia assignment received in that regard: "Unlike essays, Wikipedia allows your work to be public and be useful in a practical way. It generates more meaning behind grades." About half the students mentioned a sense of pride, empowerment, or enjoyment from creating Wikipedia articles about globalization, with about a quarter emphasizing that they appreciate that their assignment is useful for the general public as a volunteer activity (see also Items 1.5, 1.6, and 1.7 in Table 1). These comments demonstrate that this assignment was

able to meet a challenging learning objective set for the course: empowering students with a realization that they have sufficient skills and knowledge to become part of a global social movement.

As can be seen from Table 2, the impact of individual articles varies depending on their topic and language, but it is quite possible for students to create or improve an article that will have hundreds of thousands of views over the course of several years. Showing those statistics in class further helps to empower the students with the feeling that they too can contribute to changing the world through editing a global source of knowledge, and obtaining a readership of millions is a welcome feat for any class. The assignment allows students to improve the public understanding of globalization and sociology and makes them aware of this fact.

Although current literature (Konieczny 2016; Sigalov and Nachmias 2016) suggests that most students like this type of assignment, I suspect that about as many appreciate it as would prefer a different, easier one given the low response rate of the surveys. The few students who disliked the assignment noted that it was more difficult than writing a regular paper in a text editor would be. Those who liked it commented that their project resulted in an above-average group paper that motivated them to go beyond what they would normally do as it would be seen and appreciated by others in the global community. These comments suggest that

this assignment works best as a tool for increasing engagement of already motivated students but is no panacea for those who just want to pass with the least amount of work.

Students in the second survey were asked to comment whether and how this assignment helps them understand globalization better. All but one agreed the assignment is useful for understanding globalization, with most students agreeing strongly (see Table 1, Item 1.4). In terms of how the assignment helps students to understand globalization, half of the students who responded to the survey mentioned that this assignment takes place in the "virtual global village." These students described writing for Wikipedia as writing about "global issues" for the "global citizens" and "creating a global database of knowledge." They noted that Wikipedia gives the ability to communicate with people from all over the world. For some students, it was their first time to communicate with foreigners or even read foreign media and for most, the first time to produce media for a global audience. A quarter of the students emphasized that the process of integrating their article with Wikipedia gave them better understanding of the relation between local and global dimensions and globalization. They commented on how they could situate their articles on (as examples) "Korean participation in UN peacekeeping" and "History of tourism in Korea" in a global context using wiki-hyperlinks.

In a related question, I asked students about their thoughts on what, if any, benefits there are from contributing to a nonprofit project like Wikipedia compared to a for-profit project. A fifth stated that knowledge on Wikipedia is more neutral, giving everyone an equal voice because it is created by volunteers instead of paid professionals who may have ulterior motives or otherwise be constrained in their freedom of expression. Thirteen percent observed the public benefits of the Wikipedia project being available with no charge and under a free license.

In a final set of questions, students were asked how to improve the assignment. About a quarter suggested increasing the number of discussions, both within class as well as on Wikipedia, including with other volunteers. Mooney and Edwards (2001:186) noted that "Optimally, subsequent dialogues would include individuals representing both the organizational host of the service-learning placement and the beneficiary constituency from the community." Students in my classes have a tendency not to seek such communications on their own and fail to notice they have received messages on their talk pages. In my recent classes, I attempted to address that by having students learn how to send messages on Wikipedia, notice message notifications, and participate in community discussions through micro-assignments such as "ask a question on Wikipedia help forum" and "provide an answer to someone else asking a question on said help forum."

Introducing students to editing Wikipedia does not seem, however, to be a major factor in them becoming future editors. Lampe et al. (2012) found that about 4 percent of students continue making edits to Wikipedia once the class is finished, with my experiences being a match—on average only one student per year would continue making occasional edits to Wikipedia (even worse than the lukewarm results indicated by students in responses to Item 1.3 in Table 1 would suggest). Whether this represents the Wikipedia's assignment failure to instill a desire to volunteer in general, or just on Wikipedia in particular, or is just an expected outcome that most individuals will be too busy/disinterested in their lives to take part in any volunteering activities regardless of circumstances is something that social movements scholars may find worthwhile to follow up in future research.

CONCLUSION

There are repeated calls from sociology faculty for assignments that introduce students to nuanced dimensions of global social justice and engage students with the social construction of knowledge involving collective efforts of ordinary citizens. The Wikipedia writing assignment is a helpful addition to our teaching repertoire, answering the need for a new, global-minded assignment. It can supplement or even replace a traditional writing activity for many courses, increasing students' motivation and creating lasting digital artifacts that benefit the general public. Quantitative and qualitative assessment data presented here also indicate that specific learning objectives set for this assignment are met: Students increase their skills related to collaborative writing, research skills, and digital literacies and learn about wiki software, a useful practical skill to supplement their curricula.

The teaching with Wikipedia strategy takes the service learning paradigm to twenty-first–century cyberspace and does so in a way that numerous individuals around the world, including students, have taken to calling empowering. It does not require any significant changes to existing course curricula—any sociology course that has writing

elements can be easily adapted to incorporate this activity, with the resulting increase in students' motivation and learning outcomes and global public benefits due to the service learning dimension (students creating publicly accessible, high-visibility, quality content).

The assignment allows us to immerse students in a global environment, where they can participate hands-on in the creation of a globally accessible, free-of-charge encyclopedia. It allows them to experience a dimension of globalization that is not available in a traditional writing assignment: direct participation in a global volunteer community. Wikipedia, which is being collaboratively written by and for the global citizens, can be a useful addition to activities aimed at helping students understand globalization's multicultural context. Through hyperlinks and style ensuring the articles' relevance for global population, the assignment makes global and transnational concerns more evident to students. The fact that students can directly take part in shaping Wikipedia articles—as a form of knowledge and discourse—empowers them and allows them to see their abilities to potentially change the public's understanding of sociology and in particular, globalization. The assignment can also enhance their understanding of aspects of social justice such as benefits of volunteering for nonprofits and social movements. Finally, in line with the American Sociological Association's call for sociologists to work with Wikipedia, this assignment offers a way we can help fulfill the goal of improving the publicly available and easily accessible information on sociological topics on the freely accessible portal that is well known worldwide, consistently appearing in top results of most search engine queries, instead of wasting our efforts creating content destined to be hidden on some well-intended but effectively obscure, closed-access or monetized website.

APPENDIX
USEFUL WIKIPEDIA RESOURCES FOR INSTRUCTORS AND STUDENTS

General Links

Wiki Education Foundation: https://wikiedu.org/
Wikipedia Education Program: https://outreach.wikimedia.org/wiki/Education
Up-to-date sample of instructions I provide to students, together with deadlines and final article

evaluation guidelines: https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Education_Program:Hanyang_University
Wikipedia's Help Forum: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Help_desk
Wikipedia's Education Noticeboard: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WP:EDUN
Wikipedia's training pages: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Training/For_educators and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Training/For_students

Manual of Style and Policy Links

Wikipedia's Manual of Style: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WP:MOS
Wikipedia's Words to Watch: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WP:WTW
Wikipedia's guide on avoiding copyright violations: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WPCOPYPASTE
Wikipedia's guideline on neutrality: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WP:NPOV
Wikipedia's guideline on notability: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WP:N
Wikipedia's guideline on (no) original research: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WP:NOR
Wikipedia page on what constitutes a reliable source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WP:RS

Resources for Potential Lists of Topics to which Students Can Contribute

List of articles requested at WikiProject Globalization: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:WikiProject_Globalization/Requested_articles
List of low-quality globalization-related articles: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Version_1.0_Editorial_Team/Globalization_articles_by_quality_statistics
List of articles with limited geographical scope: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Category:Articles_with_limited_geographic_scope
List of globalization articles with identified problems: https://tools.wmflabs.org/bambots/cwb/alpha/Globalization.html

Other

Wikipedia's peer review system: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WP:PR
Real-time list of and reporting of copyright problems on Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Copyright_problems

EDITOR'S NOTE

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