Collaboration, International Exchange, and Global Visions of Equality: Wikipedia in the Asian Studies Classroom

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University of Victoria, July 2025

Context

Scholars and librarians in Asian Studies have a tradition of close partnership in teaching. They embrace the social responsibility of providing less biased and high-quality information about Asian cultures to enhance international relations.

The Teaching Toolkit

Teaching to Impact: A Toolkit for Embedding Wikipedia Assignments in Asian Studies Curriculum

aims to provide practice-based teaching support content to instructors and librarians who are interested in embedding Wikipedia assignments in their Asian Studies courses.
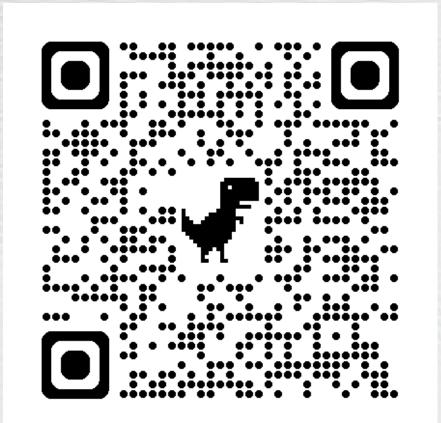
Acknowledgement

Teaching and Research

In the fall of 2022, Dr. Angie Chau taught the 12-week course PAAS 302. Asian Studies Librarian Ying Liu and the Research Assistant Tatiana Popova collaborated with Dr. Chau to design and integrate Wikipedia assignments and relevant support into the course. Data were collected from the final Wikipedia group presentations and a 90-minute focus group interview with three students at the following winter term. The research team used Taguette to de-identify and analyze the data to understand the students' learning experiences from the course. The toolkit was compiled in 2023 and updated in 2025.

Rather than reinventing curriculum material, instructors are welcome to adopt and adapt the toolkit content in their own teaching.

Challenges Observed

- Anxiety associated with publishing online and communicating with external reviewers
- Various technical capabilities in writing and editing Wiki entries
- Negotiation between personal interests and course relevance in choosing wiki topics
- Challenges in evaluating and citing academic and non-academic sources
- The need of clear assessment rubric and the opportunities for students to reflect and demonstrate their individual work
- Scholarly communication *vs.* writing for the public

The Toolkit includes

- How to align Wikipedia editing content with your other course activities
- Action plan by weeks
- Challenges and possible solutions
- Assessment
- Survey, librarian presentation slides, lesson plans for Wikipedia editing and selected resources

What did the students tell us?

Students expressed a preference for the Wikipedia editing assignment over a traditional academic paper. They appreciated the less stringent academic requirements, the freedom to choose topics and use diverse sources, peer collaboration, and learn-by-doing in active writing. The assignment made them reflect on key information literacy issues such as political censorship, open access, their own information seeking behaviour, and information sources.

Bibliography

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