

EPEARL TO SHINE AT CONGRESS 2010

Montreal high school students and CSLP investigating human rights

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For the 2010 Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, Montreal high school students will be enlightening delegates with multimedia presentations tackling human rights issues using software created here at Concordia.

Students from Westmount High School, Royal West Academy and Vincent Massey Collegiate will use the Concordia-created web-based electronic portfolio software ePEARL to document a topic of interest to them and present their work in a multimedia format; for example, interviewing a war veteran and creating a podcast and/or slideshow.



▲ CSLP's Anne Wade and Richard Schmid.

Developed by the Centre for the Study of Learning and Performance (CSLP), the ePEARL software is designed to help elementary and secondary students organize their own work, set goals and share their work with their classmates, parents and teachers within an electronic portfolio environment. (See [Journal, April 2, 2009.](#))

Each school has one class of roughly 30 students participating. Still early in the organization process, students will likely work in groups and, altogether, an estimated 30 projects will then be displayed at Congress 2010, here at Concordia from May 28 to June 4. CSLP Manager Anne Wade and educational technology graduate student Rachel Scherzer are currently helping teachers with the software, and will continue through to this spring's event.

"In this case, students will be able to explain what they've done and why to Congress delegates, who will be able to sit down one-on-one with a student to experience their project and learn about human rights through a unique perspective," says Wade.

Organizers hope to make it part of Human Rights Day, the multi-faceted showcase of events and research scheduled for day one of the eight day event.

CSLP Director Phil Abrami is very encouraged by the opportunity to showcase ePEARL, "the state-of-the-art application of technology for learning, integrated into a modern curriculum."

A partnership with the English Montreal School Board and the non-profit organization, LEARN, Wade explains the project is especially timely as teachers of a new course, Contemporary World, combining history, geography and citizenship, will be incorporating the creation of the projects into their curriculum.

"It'll be more than just something to glance at as people walk by. It's an engaging destination to see a real example of knowledge mobilization," says Education Professor and Chair Richard Schmid, also involved in the project.

"The hope is that at the end of this exercise, these students will have produced dramatic presentations that link perfectly to the Connected Understanding theme of the conference," says Schmid. "There will be text, videos, stories... all from a point of view that stretches well beyond the university walls."

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1455 De Maisonneuve Blvd. W., GM-606, Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8, Canada

Telephone: +1.514.848.2424, ext. 4183

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Page Title: ePearl to shine at Congress 2010 - Concordia University - Montreal, Quebec, Canada

Page URL: http://cjournal.concordia.ca/archives/20100114/eppearl_to_shine_at_congress_...p

Date Printed: Fri January 15, 2010