

A Living Laboratory: Activity Template

We are creating a cross-disciplinary collection of teaching activities that use the best practice approaches fostered in the “Living Lab”: adoption of City Tech’s General Education Student Learning Outcomes, George Kuh’s High Impact Educational Practices, place-based learning, open digital pedagogy (the Open Lab), and formal assessment methods.

Share your best practices with your colleagues! Use this form to record a favorite activity; an activity can be as small as an in-class exercise or as large as a semester-long project. Your description can be short or extensive – take as much space as you need.

Activity Title:	Impact of Building Codes non-compliances on the Fire Safety of Underrepresented Populations in Urban Centers (NYC)
Your Name:	Ynes Leon, RA, Adjunct Associate Professor
Department:	Architectural Technology
Course:	ARCH 3662- Municipal Agencies and the Formal Approval Process
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Activity Description:

Provide a brief description of the activity.

This project will examine 5 deadly fires that occurred in New York City in the 20th Century. Students will be Organized into 5 teams for this assignment and I will provide the teams with the list of the fire that they will be working on. All students in each team need to participate and will present a portion of the assignment. There will be three major areas of concentration: Building Code violations/non-compliances, demographics (buildings locations, industry and labor force surrounding the buildings) and Racial, ethnic, gender and immigration status of the victims.

Final Presentation will be a 20 minute power point in-class presentation and a 5 page written submission.

This Final project requires the students to develop a link between all the events and a common denominator on the victim’s status, location, types of code violations and industry surrounding these buildings based on their research, class discussions and course materials that apply to the project.

At end of presentation, one student from each team will be selected and together they will present the connections/similarities that all the fires had in terms of the victim’s backgrounds, code infractions and the demographics for each of the events.

Learning Goals:

What do you aim to achieve with this activity?

The main goal for this project was to incite critical problem solving, information processing, thinking and association of an event with the socio-economic and cultural references affecting a segment of urban populations. This project will hopefully tie in the effects of regulations of the built environment on the lives and safety of the occupants.

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I have found our students lacking strength in verbal and written communication and I believe this project and presentation will help them understand the importance of these skills for their future in their careers as Architects.

Timing:

At what point in the lesson or semester to you use this activity? How much classroom time do you devote to it? How much out-of-class time is expected?

This project will be assigned to the students on the 6th week of the semester to give them enough time for research and presentation preparation. We will spend about ½ hour discussing the scope of the project and assigning each of the five fires to the members of the teams. We will be spending 10-15 minutes of each of the subsequent classes to answer any questions students might have on the project.

Part of the each of the student's team responsibilities will be to bring to each class a progress report of where they are in the development and preparation of the presentation on their assigned material.

Logistics:

What preparation is needed for this activity? What instructions do you give students?

I will give the students the 2 page handout with the locations of the fires, research locations and instructions for the presentation that will take place on the 14th week of the semester.

Continued support will be provided in class to the students on how to formulate and organize their findings into an analytical report that answers the requirements of the assignment.

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General Education SLOs:

Which of City Tech's [General Education Student Learning Outcomes](#) does this activity address?

Skills- Inquiry/Analysis- Understand and employ both quantitative and qualitative analysis to describe and solve problems, both independently and cooperatively.

Values, Ethics and Relationships- Community/Civic engagement- Apply knowledge and analyze social, political, economic and historical issues.

High Impact Educational Practices:

Which of [George Kuh's High Impact Educational Practices](#) does this activity incorporate? Does it use the [OpenLab](#) for [open digital pedagogy](#)? Does it include [place-based learning](#)? Choose all that apply and/or add your own.

George Kuh's High Impact Educational Practices:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> First-year seminars and experiences | <input type="checkbox"/> Common intellectual experiences (core curriculum) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Learning communities | <input type="checkbox"/> Writing-intensive courses |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaborative assignments and projects | <input type="checkbox"/> Undergraduate research |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Diversity and global learning ("difficult differences") | <input type="checkbox"/> Service- or community-based learning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Internships | <input type="checkbox"/> Capstone courses and projects |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Open Digital Pedagogy (the Open Lab) | <input type="checkbox"/> Place-Based Learning |

☐ **Other (please describe):**

Assessment:

How do you assess this activity? What assessment measures do you use? Do you include your evaluation in grade calculations?

This project will be the required Term Project for the course but the weight of the grade will be increased from 20% to 30% of the final course grade.

I will be modifying a faculty rubric and tailoring it to the project for evaluation of the submission and the ability to analyze the student's thinking process in developing the delivery of the requirements for the assignment

Reflection:

How has this assignment impacted your teaching? What challenges did you encounter and how did you address them? What feedback did students provide? How would you imagine this activity being used in different disciplines?

I was not able to assign this Term Project to the class this semester because of timing. I assign term projects on the 6th week of the semester, however I will definitely assign to the Fall 2015 Class. I am positive that the class will be excited about the contents of the assignment

Additional Information:

Please share any additional comments and further documentation of the activity - e.g. assignment instructions, rubrics, examples of student work, etc. These could be in the form of PDF or Word files, links to posts or files on the OpenLab, etc.