

# THROW WHAT YOU KNOW

## Encouraging Student Learning Ownership by Introducing Knowledge Management

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### INTRODUCTION

In the classroom, learning ownership is the ability of students to exercise some control in terms of the organizational, procedural, and cognitive aspects of their coursework (Stefanou, Perencevich, DiCintio, & Turner, 2004).

Allowing students to have more autonomy has been linked to student perception of the course and amount learned (Demir, Burton, & Dunbar, 2019).

A familiarity with knowledge management it is important to prepare students to participate in complex work environments (Dalkir, 2013).

In an effort to give students more agency over their learning and introduce knowledge management, those enrolled in a non-major, writing-intensive, agricultural communications course at were required to complete a “how-to” assignment.

### HOW IT WORKS

Students were given an assignment requiring they choose an interesting and technical skill or task not commonly known to the general public and give simple, step-by-step directions for completing it.

This “how-to” assignment could be completed in the form of an audio recording, video, or text with supplemental images.

### RESULTS TO DATE

How-to topics ranged widely, including how to hook up a trailer, calculate the grade of a T-bone steak, use a tensiometer, move cattle in a low stress manner, and several examples of student’s specialty recipes.

Of the 86 students who submitted the assignment, 66 chose text submission, 10 chose video, and 10 chose audio.

When asked about the assignment, a few key themes emerged as described in the main panel.

### ADVICE TO OTHERS

Review examples of each submission type in class as it may make audio and video submissions more approachable to complete.

Reserve class time for brainstorming ideas as many students were uncomfortable with so much freedom in submission topic and type.

Assignment submission files may be very large, so require students to upload their submission to an online file management platform and submit a link to their work.

### COSTS & RESOURCES NEEDED

This activity can be executed at no cost to the instructor or students.

### REFERENCES

- Dalkir, K. (2011). *Knowledge management in theory and practice*. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.
- Demir, M., Burton, S., & Dunbar, N. (2019). Professor–student rapport and perceived autonomy support as predictors of course and student outcomes. *Teaching of Psychology*, 46(1), 22–33. doi:10.1177/0098628318816132
- Stefanou, C. R., Perencevich, K. C., DiCintio, M., & Turner, J. C. (2004). Supporting autonomy in the classroom: Ways teachers encourage student decision making and ownership. *Educational Psychologist*, 39(2), 97–110.

Student responses to “how-to” assignment

**“ALLOWED CREATIVITY TO FLOW.”**

“It was something new and gave us a break from writing and allowed us to be more creative.”

“I liked having the ability to choose our topics because I feel like when I am given more creative liberty in my assignments, I am more interested in them.”

**“I KNOW MY STRENGTHS.”**

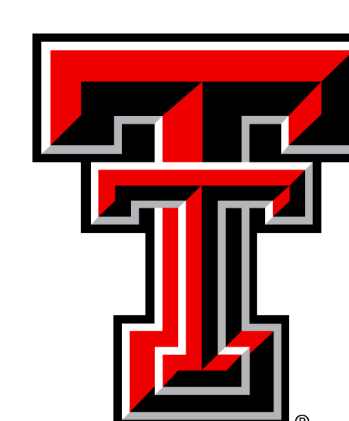
“I liked being able choose the way I completed the assignment, because I know my strengths.”

“Leaving it open meant that we could choose something that we had a better chance of getting a higher grade on.”

**“CAN BE A LITTLE STRESSFUL.”**

“Sometimes that can be a little stressful because I’m kind of out of practice thinking in that way since all of my classes usually have strict, defined criteria/guidelines for how they want our work.”

“Most classes don’t offer that level of freedom in assignments.”



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