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## For Immediate Release

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October 13, 2010

### Penn Project Showcases Student Created Video Projects in Teaching and Learning

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The David B. Weigle Information Commons at the Penn Libraries announces the release of **Nurturing Student Creativity with Video Projects**, a set of six digital case stories about University of Pennsylvania faculty and students, created as part of the national MERLOT ELIXR project. MERLOT ELIXR supports a digital repository of real-life stories showcasing successful and innovative teaching strategies and the process of implementing them. These digital case stories can be used freely in faculty development programs and also accessed by individual instructors.

**Nurturing Student Creativity with Video Projects** is online at <http://wic.library.upenn.edu/elixr.html>. Funding for this project has been provided by the Fund for Improvement of Postsecondary Education (FIPSE) through the MERLOT ELIXR national initiative, managed by the California State University's Center for Distributed Learning. More than 30 higher education institutions in 10 states have participated in creating digital case stories online at <http://elixr.merlot.org/>

Penn's creation features five faculty who have integrated video project assignments into the courses they teach. Faculty and students discuss the assignment details, how the assignment was structured and assessed and the process by which video creation fit into the pedagogical goals for the course. The five faculty contributors are: Regina Austin (Penn Law), Peter Decherney (English and Cinema Studies), Louise Krasniewicz (Anthropology), Andrew Lamas (Urban Studies) and Jacqui Sadashige (Center for Programs in Critical Writing). A brief summary of each case story follows:

Regina Austin (L'73), William A. Schnader Professor of Law, discusses her Visual Legal Advocacy course where law students make videos on behalf of real clients and organizations. Her students realize the power of video in a legal context. In one student-created video, confusing regulations are explained in simple language to assist immigrants.

Peter Decherney, Stephen M. Gorn Assistant Professor of English, shares his expertise on copyright as it relates to video projects. His students discuss how they use and reuse video, and how the process of making videos has helped them gain mastery of their research. One student speaks about the blurring between the real and the virtual through video-game culture.



Louise Krasniewicz, Anthropology Faculty, discusses how her anthropology classes use video projects, and shares suggestions on how to structure such assignments to be logical and fair. Her students express pride in their mashup video creations and discuss their willingness to showcase coursework on Facebook. One student talks about the sense of accomplishment she feels when classmates marvel at the video she has created.

Andrew Lamas, Urban Studies Faculty, uses the metaphor of a homegrown versus a store-bought tomato to explain why making videos can be powerful. He argues the importance of video and media literacy, and the need for a sense of control over mass media messaging. His student, Julia Luscombe (C'10), talks about her primary research into alternative currencies and her use of video to gather qualitative data in compelling ways.

Jacqui Sadashige, Critical Writing Faculty, discusses how video projects work in a freshman writing seminar. Her students speak eloquently about the learning curve challenges and the ultimate rewards of making a video project. One student's video, "Racism in Disney", has been viewed over 800,000 times on YouTube and is included in the case story.

At the Penn Libraries, Sarah Jacoby, Vitale Digital Media Lab Consultant, has edited the video and multimedia content for Penn's MERLOT ELIXR initiative and Anu Vedantham, Weigle Information Commons Director, has directed the project.

The Weigle Information Commons supports collaborative learning and group activities using the latest technologies and hosts student assistance services from several program partners on Penn campus. The Commons houses a variety of collaboration spaces including Data Diner Booths, flexible group study spaces, a high-tech teaching space and the Vitale Digital Media Lab.

