16th Annual Knowledge Building Summer Institute  
August 6-10, 2012  
By Al Rudnitsky

The Summer Institute this year was designed to develop ideas as well as concrete arrangements to support knowledge building. This year the institute tried a different format and divided the conference into seven main themes. Each theme had a plenary session in which the "Design Challenge" was introduced, then participants broke into smaller groups attending parallel sessions which included papers, workshops, and posters presentations. Led by the design leader, the group returned to discuss the theme and talk about next steps. Themes follow:

1. Intellectual Engagement and the Inclusive Knowledge Society  
2. Creative, Sustained Work with Ideas  
3. Knowledge Building Partnerships and Professional Development  
4. Technology for Knowledge Creation – International Open Source Initiative  
5. Social Innovation & Systemic Change  
6. Assessing for Knowledge Creation  
7. Research Based Innovation; Sustainability and Scalability

I was the design leader for theme 4. I learned a lot that will help our work (especially the Davis Educational Foundation group) and made worthwhile contacts. I also learned that Smith is among the leaders in adopting knowledge building to higher education. The knowledge building community has urged us to publish accounts of our work. Papers, posters and workshop abstracts are available at the following:


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1 The Design Challenge for theme 4:  
Develop technology that
- is optimized for knowledge creation, incorporating insights drawn from research on knowledge building/knowledge creation and model-based thinking
- embeds OERs (Open Educational Resources) in collaborative knowledge building to support an online community with a high level of intellectual engagement, collaboration, and idea development; this requires creating a global open source network
- enables coherent discussion to be carried out incorporating speech, writing, and other forms of knowledge representation
- incorporates assessment tools to support teachers in preparing for future international assessments

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