

Border Crossings: Collaborative Experiences for Student Learning
Grant Project II funded by the UW System Institute for Global Studies
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh
Fall 2002

The curriculum development project funded by the UW System Institute for Global Studies continues institutional collaboration between the University of New Brunswick Arts Faculty and the College of Letters and Science. The curriculum development project is part of the second exchange of campus visits in support of the College of Letters and Science Canada-US Studies initiative. This initiative began in December 1998 with the signing of a student exchange program with the University of New Brunswick. Dr. William Baurecht (English) is principal investigator.

This project is the first step of collaboration among colleagues at UW Oshkosh and the University of New Brunswick to modestly use learning technologies across borders to enhance student learning about national identities. The project was postponed during fall 2001, but several discussions were held in compressed video conferences; participants changed the project focus to reflect their interests for collaboration in 2002-2003.

During a two-day visit to the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh campus, November 8 and 11, 2002, four colleagues from the University of New Brunswick met with faculty to plan collaboration that will take place in spring 2003, and with administrators and student to raise awareness of the unique relationship of the universities. Visitors from UNB were:

Peter Kent, Department of History, Director of International Relations, Fredericton Campus. Dr. Kent specializes in the History of Italy and the Vatican in the 20th Century. He is the former dean of the Arts Faculty and one of the founders of the student exchange program.

Deborah Johnston, Department of History, Coordinator of ARTS 1000. ARTS 1000 is a one-year common intellectual experience required of all first-year Arts Faculty students. Dr. Johnston specializes in De-colonization in Africa and the History of Slavery.

Ross Leckie, Department of English, Director of Creative Writing and Editor of *The Fiddlehead*, Atlantic Canada's International Literary Journal. Dr. Leckie is a poet.

William Parenteau, Department of History. Dr. Parenteau specializes in the History of Atlantic Canada and the Environmental History of North America with an emphasis on Canadian-American Relations.

On Monday, November 11, 2002, the second Dean's International Forum of 2002-2003 took place titled "Sleeping with the Elephant: American Unilateralism and Canadian Foreign Policy." Presenters from the University of New Brunswick were Dr. William Parenteau, and Dr. Ross Leckie.

Prime Minister of Canada Pierre Trudeau, on his first trip to the United States, told the National Press Club: "Living with you is like sleeping with an elephant: no matter how friendly and even tempered the beast, one is affected by every twitch and grunt." Implicit in Trudeau's statement is the recognition that Canada is deeply affected by American initiatives, both foreign and domestic, whether or not interests north of the border are considered in the process of policy formation. Within the historical and contemporary contexts, the panel discussed the difficulties of Canadian foreign policy when the United States acts (or reserves the right to act) unilaterally on matters of international importance.

The following collaborations employing learning technologies were tentatively planned during the campus visit.

Collaboration Projects

Department of English Project 1: Creative Writing (Spring 2003)

Dr. Ross Leckie (English), UNB team leader, with creative writing colleagues
Dr. Ronald Rindo (English), UW Oshkosh team leader, with creative writing colleagues

Goals

- Engage creative writing students in cross-border conversations about their writing
- Read their own creative work to student and faculty writers across borders
- Critique creative work of cross-border student writers

Objectives

- Invite six or more creative writing students on each campus to participate
- Plan (faculty mentors and students) student readings
- Use learning technologies: modestly include Blackboard or Web CT to view, comment on and critique student creative work
- Hold two student readings through compressed video connections
- Students assess effectiveness of using learning technology in presenting and discussing their creative work across borders

Department of History Project 2: Canada-U.S. Relations (Spring 2003)

Dr. William Parenteau (History), UNB team leader
Dr. Stephen Kercher (History), UW Oshkosh team leader

Goals

- Engage history students in discussions of two events in Canada-U.S. Relations
- Discuss these events with student-faculty participation across borders
- Learn both nations' historical interpretations of these events

Objectives

- Invite six UNB students enrolled in *Canada-U.S. Relations Since 1945* and six UW Oshkosh students enrolled in *The 1960s* to participate
- Focus on national interpretations of the Cuban Missile Crisis and national participation in the Vietnam War
- Assign research projects about these events
- Hold two student-centered discussions through compressed video connections
- Use learning technologies: modestly include Blackboard or Web CT to continue discussions after the compressed video sessions
- Students assess effectiveness of using technology in learning about national identities across borders

Interdisciplinary Project 3: Connecting First-year Honors Students (Fall 2003)

Dr. Deborah Johnston (History), UNB team leader and tutors in ARTS 1000

Dr. William Baurecht (English) UW-Oshkosh team leader and tutors in the First-Year Honors Seminar

Goals

- Introduce first-year students enrolled in ARTS 1000 to those enrolled in the University Honors Program to learn about and from students in another nation
- Engage these students in a common intellectual experience
- Learn about national identities from students across borders by discussing a classic reading assigned in both courses

Objectives

- Invite six UNB students enrolled in ARTS 1000 and six UW Oshkosh students enrolled in the First-year Honors Seminar to participate
- Use learning technologies: Blackboard or Web CT to introduce students to each other and for students to comment on and discuss the classic reading
- Post photos and brief biographies of each student to personalize their interaction
- Establish a template of questions to stimulate their interaction
- Assign a classic reading from the syllabi of both courses
- Discuss the common reading (tutors with their students) before on-line experience
- Students assess effectiveness of using learning technology in learning about national identities across borders