

COIL Institute for Globally Networked Learning in the Humanities

Course Development and Implementation Case Study

9. Ghana - USA: Film & Media Studies

Abstract

Re-Envisioning Diasporas was an overall positive collaborative and learning experience for faculty and students. Each individual made adjustments for new ways of learning and performed to the best of their ability given the nature of diversity, intercultural exchanges, mediated connectivity, and working with teams. Future courses should take into consideration technological inequalities, budgetary disparities, institutional expectations and educational cultures.

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Section 1: General Course Information

1. Course

Course Title	Institution(s)	Discipline	Academic Level
Re-Envisioning Diasporas	Swarthmore College	Film and Media Studies	2nd-3rd year undergraduate

2. Team

Team Member #1	
Name:	Sunka Simon
Role on Team:	Faculty
Institution:	Swarthmore
Position at Institution:	Associate Prof.
Department and/or Program:	German Studies, and Film and Media Studies
Team Member #2	
Name:	Carina Yervasi
Role on Team:	Faculty
Institution:	Swarthmore College
Position at Institution:	Assoc. Prof.
Department and/or Program:	French/Francophone Studies, associated faculty in Film and Media Studies and Black Studies
Team Member #3	
Name:	Michael Jones
Role on Team:	Technologist/Instructional Designer
Institution:	Swarthmore College
Position at Institution:	Director, Language Resource Center
Department and/or Program:	
Team Member #4	
Name:	Mikelle Antoine
Role on Team:	Faculty
Institution:	Ashesi University (Ghana)
Position at Institution:	instructor
Department and/or Program:	History
3. When?	
Spring 2012	

4. Number of students enrolled from each institution

7 (Swarthmore), 33 (Ashesi)

5. Is this typical for classes of this type?

Class at Swarthmore was slightly smaller than average (10-15)

Yes, since this was not a required course for any major, students were wary of the unknowns involved in committing to an internationally taught hybrid course

Class at Ashesi was probably slightly larger than average (25)

Prof. Antoine mentioned a few times that “we are stars on campus” (due to the collaboration with the US)

Section 2: Issues of Language

6. Language(s) of instruction at each institution
English at both
7. Primary language of most students in each class
English (Swarthmore), different languages from Arabic to French and Ghanaian dialects (Ashesi)
8. Language of the course collaboration
Yes, English. But students reflected on language use and their own mother tongue using VoiceThread.
9. Language fluency
From our oral/aural assignments, we could gather that speaking/listening fluency of Ashesi students was adequate but varied from proficient to struggling. Reading was a different matter - our impression was that students had not been exposed to lengthy texts with a heavy emphasis on critical studies and theory (whether in English or another language). Even though Ashesi had more stringent objectives and requirements for writing, only $\frac{1}{3}$ of Ashesi's class contributed regularly and in depth to our weekly online writing activities.
10. Language proficiency difference
Potential proficiency difference in English might have made certain Ashesi students more hesitant in responding or initiating online written work - Wordpress and Skype group presentations helped to alleviate this somewhat in that each member of the group had to participate.

Section 3: Curricular Information

11. Online or blended?
blended form for each campus
12. Duration
for 13 weeks
13. Class work or discussion related to their collaboration before and/or after the actual collaboration period
Swarthmore: 30 minutes of synchronous collaborative time vs. 45 minutes face-time Tue and Th until DST Ashesi: 30 minutes synchronous collaborative time vs. 1:30 hours of face-time Tue and Th until DST After DST change: 1 hour synchronous time on Wednesdays for both

Section 4: Asynchronous Technologies Used

14. Tools
Moodle, VoiceThread, Youtube, Xythos network storage
15. Server location
Both Ashesi and Swarthmore use Moodle as their LMS ... the course in this instance was hosted at Swarthmore. The goal was to make access to the course seamless and equal to students from both institutions. We achieved this by creating a “trust” relationship between the Moodle servers at Swarthmore and Ashesi. Xythos network storage was provided Swarthmore. VoiceThread and Youtube were cloud based.
16. Technical problems
Moodle was meant to be a central communication tool as well as provide access to many documents, media, tools and discussions for the course. Instability with the Ashesi network and Moodle server in the first weeks of the course did impede access to materials for the students from Ashesi. It became necessary to create accounts on the Swarthmore server for all the Ashesi Students to facilitate their access. That made access slightly less seamless. The cloud based services were not a problem.
17. Frequency of use
Each student was tasked with asynchronous activities for each Tue and Th session, but intensity and workload ranged from shorter exercises (forum posts, blogposts, Wiki entries) to longer assignments over the weekends and the final Wordpress projects
18. Informal communication
They used Skype, Facetime, Google Hangout etc. as well as email and blogs
19. Re-use
Yes. Administration should support a better discussion/group platform. Skype is all right, but not reliable enough for classroom use.

Section 5: Synchronous Technologies Used

20. Tools
Skype was the major tool for synchronous communication between the classrooms. We purchased equivalent cameras and microphones for both classes to use.
21. Server location
Free ... not cloud-based or institutionally provided.
22. Technical problems
Skype wasn't so much a problem as bandwidth and network stability in Accra. There were frustrating periods of dropped calls, audio fallout and video freezes. Even at the best of times there was often an echo in the audio that was disconcerting to users. The students worked around the problems as best as possible, though it did make it difficult to achieve momentum in discussions. We explored the possibility of backup network connections, but that proved impossible.
23. Frequency of use
Classes were scheduled so to make synchronous contact between the classes possible during every class. Daylight savings time changed that mid semester, forcing some activities and the schedule of classes to be altered. Students were assigned regular group discussions, blogs, wikis and creative projects around various themes and readings. The goal was to have group discussions summarized and reported for the class in synchronous sessions. Despite ice-breaker activities and other efforts it took some time for groups to work together effectively. Not all students were equally engaged with tasks and the notion of collaboration.
24. Informal communication
Class groups were encouraged to use Skype for discussions. Office hours were conducted over Skype.
25. Re-use
It's not so much the tools that were an issue, more of the bandwidth and DST being an issue.

Section 6: Assessment Information

26. How?
Exit Survey Tool
27. Common assessment rubric
Yes, the Survey
28. Assessment outcomes
Students, who were already critically engaged or were developing critical engagement with the material of the course and the pedagogical method, responded using the vocabulary that had been provided over the course of the term rather than from emotional or situational reactions. The same percentage of students who seemed to have superficial knowledge or engagement with the materials from the course (see #11) remained fairly consistent with results.
29. Peer assessment
In almost all online activities, students directly responded to and assessed each other's work - the final projects were peer-reviewed with constructive critique encouraged
30. Charter or guidelines for student interaction
<p>FMST 59: Re-Envisioning Diasporas Course Charter</p> <p>The course will take place on two campuses, Ashesi University in Accra, Ghana and Swarthmore College in Philadelphia, USA. The class will utilize a hybrid of face-time and online or digital communication. For 30 minutes each class day, we will attempt a synchronous classroom experience via Skype, video chat or satellite. For this reason, intercultural communication and collaborative learning are central to our work this semester.</p> <p>Because many of the topics we will be discussing this term may be of a sensitive nature – race, class, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality, geography – and may impact each member of the class in different and overlapping ways, we need to be mindful of the line between ideas and lived experiences. We can talk about these issues in the abstract but recognize that these may result from and affect real experiences. Tips: Ask questions, situate yourself, which includes situating your own assumptions. This will set the tone for discussion with others in the class. If ever you need clarification during or after a communication, ask first: “What did you mean by that; maybe I didn’t understand?”</p> <p>1. Student commitment to the course:</p> <p>Please adhere to the following protocol for all activities, assignments and group meetings</p> <p>Email and chat etiquette:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be respectful, consider cultural and linguistic differences before using irony or sarcasm.• Use standard English, no abbreviations or emoticons (for example: LOL, smiley faces etc.).• If you are asked to comment on other students’ work, write more than one line following the 5 Ws: who, what, when, where, why.

- Comment first on a post with the least responses, and make sure you don't overlook early entries.
- Stay on message when responding, dialoguing and discussing topics in and out of class!
- Be mindful of the 5 hour time difference: 3 pm Swarthmore is 8pm Ashesi time.
- If you encounter technological difficulties when communicating, try another technological tool. Example: if skype is down, chat – if email won't work, blog. Do not get frustrated, seek practical solutions.
- In case of communication delays, technology is usually the culprit. Try a different mode of communication to reach your partner. If experiencing prolonged silence (3 tries over 72 hours), please contact one of your instructors.
- You will be working in teams across continents and cultures. You will need to plan your work accordingly, which means: ample time to contact each other, to gather and access information, to meet, to discuss, to write, etc. and review and submit. For a typical asynchronous homework assignment, you will probably need to figure in at least 5 instances of back and forth contact.
- For visual assignments: the most important part will be content, not production value; that you show your understanding of the course materials in a clear and analytical way.
- For written assignments: please refer to the section on writing in the syllabus, but remember to adhere to professional standards, which include always citing outside sources to avoid plagiarism, and citing each other's ideas.
- For synchronous assignments: Listen well! Hear each other out! Don't interrupt! Mind the gap-- there is always a few seconds delay with our technologies. If one of you is consuming more than 80% of airtime, something is wrong with the hierarchy of the discourse.

2. Faculty commitment to this course

- Faculty members will communicate regularly with each other and with the students in an honest and open way.
- Faculty will review all student work. This includes daily homework and group projects, and we will look for the grasp of historical information, film/visual analysis, intercultural competencies, writing, and the on-going participation in the course. Faculty will follow local grading procedures for own school groups, while keeping a grade log for all three faculty to see.
- Faculty will discuss grades for final projects and offer comments to each student.
- Faculty will collectively monitor blogs and wikis, but will "officially" write comments for students on the teaching units for which we are responsible.

Assessment: Faculty will invite students to assess the course progress, technologies, and learning points with short anonymous response requests throughout the term. Faculty ask that students be candid and honest so that we can improve the course as it unfolds.

Office hours: To facilitate student-faculty interaction and on-going assessment in an informal environment, faculty will hold joint office hours online on Fridays.

Procedure for intervening: Faculty will step in if/when necessary. While we hope to never have to intervene in student work, students should be aware that we are here to provide a safe and productive space in which they may work. We will get involved and arbitrate in a case by case basis, especially if students are not following the above protocol.

31. Attrition

No attrition at Swarthmore - at Ashesi probably 5-10 students

32. Is this typical for similar classes at your institution?

The 7 students at Swat were and stayed - for the most part - very committed to this pedagogical experiment

The workload at Ashesi seemed to be a problem as well as the interdisciplinary humanities methodology in a very science-and engineering-heavy learning environment

Section 7: Institutional Support

33. Type of support
<p>During the initial grant-writing phase, we were supported by our institutions to varying degrees. Swarthmore's provost wrote us a letter of support and agreed to some financial help with equipment purchase and small stipends. IT, through the work of Michael Jones, was very supportive and responded to our class's needs throughout the process. At Ashesi, there was some confusion about who would take on the administrative role of support, but that eventually worked out. Financially, Swarthmore paid for and sent the shared equipment and Ashesi agreed to pay import taxes on new media equipment. Over the course of the term, Michael and Swarthmore IT worked out most of the glitches in the courseware and other technical problems. But on the Ashesi side, there was a campus-wide moratorium of internet use during our synchronous meeting time to make sure we had available band-width for our Skype meetings. Pedagogical support was achieved by having the four team members meeting and/or speaking regularly about the progress of the course. This course's topic at Ashesi worked into the existing curriculum as a required course on African culture and was originally a part of Mikelle's teaching course-load. At Swarthmore, faculty cross-listed the course with Film and Media Studies and Black Studies, but it was an elective course for students. Team-teaching created internal support that worked at all phases of the COIL grant.</p>
34. Engagement with the international programs office
<p>Very little at Swarthmore during the implementation of the course. Ashesi faculty had a connection to the international programs office and would have liked to see some kind of exchange program develop from our course. Swarthmore faculty agreed and would have liked to create an exchange component for the course. Currently Swarthmore administration is working with Ashesi administration to create such an exchange or study abroad but it would not be linked to this course.</p>
35. Importance given to globally networked learning
<p>Ashesi is well aware of the importance of globally networked learning and Patrick Awuah, the president of Ashesi came to meet with Swarthmore administration last year. Swarthmore international (off-campus study) office is primarily engaged with sending Swarthmore students abroad.</p>
36. Commitment
<p>When the application was made, the administrations at both campuses seemed to be interested in having a commitment to developing globally networked programs. Now, the course itself feels like it might have been a singular commitment.</p>
37. Future iterations
<p>No. Ashesi faculty is no longer at the institution. Swarthmore faculty are assigned to teaching courses in their disciplines. It could potentially be offered in the future at Swarthmore, but team-teaching would need to be approved and a new international partner found.</p>
38. New globally networked courses
<p>Expectations are low that other globally networked courses will take place at Swarthmore, however, our</p>

tricollege consortium colleagues at Bryn Mawr are running such a course, entitled *Global Shakespeare* with a partner institution in Japan through the tricollege Digital Humanities initiative. It also supported *Re-Envisioning Diasporas*.

39. Response of deans, chairs, provosts or other administrators to the possibility of expanding this pilot course(s) into a broader program of globally networked courses

At first, administrators seemed interested, but with time it became clear that any changes can only come from the faculty with no compensation. So it would be hard to predict who might have the time for such endeavors.

40. Institutional commitment to further developing globally networked courses

Swarthmore may develop at the administrative level with a partnership for student exchanges rather than globally networked classes. Ashesi seems to understand the importance of continuing developing globally networked classrooms and having student exchange. But neither school has announced further developments.

41. How to nurture the development of globally networked learning

A new perception: globally networked learning has to be perceived as something that is a skill set for a liberal arts education and as non-threatening at the administrative, dare I say budgetary level.

Section 8: Reflections

42. Goals set
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• create an environment for intercultural learning about global diasporas, and for students to gain access to cross-cultural awareness of language and modes of communication: visually, aurally, textually, digitally• offer an opportunity to students to learn with different pedagogical tools and spaces than in a standard classroom• develop a course that would engage our method and our content in both faculty and student collaborative modes
43. Goals achieved
<p>Some of these goals were met spectacularly for example with the students' VoiceThread discussions about language and their relationship to it. It opened the floor to have dialogue about cultural differences and made it possible for students to express their perceptions and learn from each other. The use of new technologies in the classroom was beneficial to everyone: Sometimes frustrating when bandwidth didn't cooperate, sometimes challenging when encountering a new way to present information, sometimes rewarding when student collaboration was cohesive and smooth.</p>
44. Most unique aspect for students
<p>Most unique was the intercultural learning experience and the opportunity to think about connectedness of diasporic communities through the students' and faculties' own virtual connections to their collaborators.</p>
45. Most successful aspect(s) from a pedagogical perspective
<p>The more specific the asynchronous and synchronous activities were, in questions, methodology, tools and time-frame, the better the assignments and collaboration seemed to work. The more dedicated and less fussy students were about the give and take, the better the student-run collaboration worked. The more we stayed in touch and voiced our concerns in a constructive manner and sought pragmatic solutions, the better the teamwork among the three faculty worked.</p>
46. Most problematic aspect(s) from a pedagogical perspective
<p>a) The unevenness of the workload was problematic – our Swarthmore team spent much more time on the planning and implementation phase of the grant, developing and fine-tuning the weekly syllabus, developing analytical questions for inquiry, and responding to online work in adequate time.</p> <p>b) While the course was clearly laid out as an interdisciplinary venture, the fact-oriented historical methodology of our partner often trumped our more analytical media-oriented approach by default. Since we had a smaller class, could rely on a better overall educational preparation for our students, and had less asynchronous time per week than our Ashesi partner, we could and had to push our students harder and faster to reach a higher level of analytical inquisitiveness of texts, theories, representations, often resulting in a skewed dynamics that also impacted the student teams: while we could assume that students here understood the “what” and “when,” and could challenge them to ask “why” and “how” during asynchronous and synchronous times, our partner at Ashesi would often (have to?) be content if</p>

her students retold “what and when.” Horizons of expectations regarding assignment outcomes would thus vary greatly.

c) Transparency – while Carina and I were very adamant about sharing all of our asynchronous coursework – posting it on Moodle etc. – we were often surprised by our partner’s asynchronous coursework (tests, quizzes, lesson content) in retrospect. On occasion, this would lead to parallel, rather than integrated pedagogical trajectories. Some of it had to do with the greater sum of time at her disposal and some with a more essentialist pedagogical approach.

d) Focus on Africa combined with experience-based approach on the Ashesi side sidelined some of the other case studies to the point of oblivion. Since such heavy emphasis was placed on students’ experience (of the aftermath of slavery, for example) it was very hard for them to think about another diaspora systematically, historically and analytically.

e) Forum-Discussion Questions – on several occasions, our partner would post and require the entire class to respond to forum discussion questions without consulting about them with us. While some of them spurred on great discussions, overly generally phrased others, on the other had, would encourage students to feed off of each other’s prejudices and stereotypes, just when we wanted all of them to question them.

f) Our heavy emphasis on Skype did not serve us well – we should have had some other synchronous tools on stand-by (Facetime etc.), although most of the troubles stemmed from bandwidth issues.

47. Changes for future iterations

We would probably look for a partner with an equal background in media studies, and an institutional setting that prizes and encourages a higher level of analytical discourse throughout the semester. We would give equal time to preparing students for the analytical frame of questioning representations as to the case studies of diaspora.

We would give equal time to the set-up of specific case histories, treat three in depth rather than six in a hurry.

48. Technical support

Our team did not include an instructional designer.

49. International programs person

Our team did not include an international programs person.

50. Time commitment

Three-five hours per week during the early design phase, which began in earnest almost 8 months before the course was implemented. Once the course was set-up, we worked about 2 hours per week meeting to discuss class and prepping, 3 hours to prep new materials in disciplines or subjects we were unfamiliar with, 3 hours in class, 1-2 hours to respond to Forum comments, 1-2 hours online office hours. It was not just the globally networked course that added time it was the team course implementation and team-teaching. A traditional course with some innovative elements would take a fraction of the time, about 80% less time.

51. Was it worth it?

It would be significantly easier to implement and support another iteration of the same course, yet we know that this will not happen. Partner faculty at Ashesi has left and the schools are already working on other projects outside the purview of our course. In the end, yes, it was worth it. But institutional support needs to meet the faculty half-way. If schools aren't going to support this kind of course, it is a waste of resources.

Section 9: Student Feedback

There are no evaluations from Ashesi

Swarthmore

Positive: “there was clear thought put into the structure of the the course, and that was very evident (and appreciated!)”; “there was a lot of freedom with assignments, which gave room for creativity and synthesis”; “I would recommend this course to others - it was an incredible opportunity, very eye-opening, and innovative”; “I would recommend this course because this class allows students to observe things from a number of different perspectives that would usually never be considered” the most interesting aspect “that there are always more perspectives on the world other than your own”

Negative: “just cut down on the readings or split it up more in the beginning”; “we often had more readings than were discussable in class”; “this course as a whole would have been far more interesting, exciting and valuable to my life if we had paid far more attention to our communication with Ashesi”; “we should have spent much more time discussing our backgrounds, honestly hunting down our biases, assessing the differing strengths in the students’ educations--these things would have made the course incredibly exciting.”

Section 10: Course Collaboration Narrative

The collaboration between Ashesi University and Swarthmore College for *Re-Envisioning Diasporas* was overall a positive experience. Operating under the auspices of COIL with the series of weekly "deliverables" kept faculty and IT on track to prepare the course. We worked collectively on the general introduction, ice breaker, mid-term, final, and technologies selection. For each case study, faculty members worked individually on the weekly assignment that best represented her own specialty and IT supported each case study. We invited a guest professor to teach Cuban diaspora and several guest speakers during the semester to bring others into dialogue with students and our globally networked classroom. Student teams were formed with 1 student from Swarthmore and 6-8 students from Ashesi. In retrospect, we were able to see that this had some drawbacks such as the most common form of contact among students is texting, and the lone Swarthmore student couldn't text his/her teammates internationally whereas Ashesi teammates were in constant contact. Interestingly enough there were three teams that set themselves apart from the others. One became the dream team: 8 very bright women who got to know each other well, were enthusiastic, wrote to each other, Skyped regularly, prepared in advance, spoke eloquently, asked great questions. Yet surprisingly they produced a mediocre final project that stood in stark contrast to their daily and weekly course assignments. On quite another scale of achievement, two teams that faced the most attrition from the Ashesi side were combined to create a mega-team with 2 Swarthmore students and about 10 Ashesi students. This team however produced the most innovative final project even though it had the fewest ongoing participants. They had worked in adversity but had presented in critical discourse and analysis studies of diaspora what few groups showed in their finals: cohesion of topic with individual pieces complementing the whole. Clearly, we did not find the magic formula to team-creation, and it was anything but predictable. Rather than merely showing collaborative team-teaching, in the future, faculty should consider giving students readings about what it means to work in a team.

Focusing on our course description and our educational outcomes we can sketch a curve that pulsed up and down depending on faculty general enthusiasm for the topics presented, student focus and interest, and more importantly, demands on student time from external sources. For our course description we proposed the following at the beginning of the semester:

This trans-continental course (Berekuso, Ghana and Swarthmore, USA) explores the different and global dimensions of Diasporas. From the forced Diaspora formed by the Atlantic Slave Trade (15th-19th centuries) to present-day forced migrations, we will study the historical, cultural, representational, and theoretical specificities of different Diasporas by examining how visual and literary productions deal with questions of race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, nationality and globalization from a perpetual state of "elsewhere." How does the Diasporic experience mark the conceptualization, aesthetics, and politics of the artistic process and textuality? What role do language, body memories, and visualization/projection play in the works we will discuss? How do virtual and real-life diasporic communities interact with their imagination and reception? Students are encouraged to do work in their first and secondary languages.

The question we have to ask ourselves is whether we made it through all these ideas and all the materials in support of our description. The main objective: "...we will study the historical, cultural, representational, and theoretical specificities of different Diasporas by examining how visual and literary productions deal with questions of race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, nationality and globalization from a perpetual state of "elsewhere" was met through enforcing our collaborative mode and method rather than through the emphasis on content. The clear intention of the faculty on this project was for students to develop a critical apparatus of learning collectively and globally with content that constantly

mirrored our methodology. If we asked students to study the "digitized diaspora" by reading websites and looking at diasporic communities online, we were also asking students to reflect upon their own situational digitization within the course. To understand how distance and association create different digital modes of culture for diasporic subjects abroad, our students had to begin to understand the dynamics of learning and creating with others through different modes of mediated connectedness. In other words, our students were put into that "perpetual state of 'elsewhere'" every time they entered our classroom. Learning within paradox, although not a stated educational goal, became evident at every turn of our project with the students.

An example of robust team work

As we headed into the first third of the course, students were finally getting to know to their teams/teammates and were regularly relying on each other for information. During week 5 (**February 13 -17 Case Study 2: Europe and Diasporas: The Case of Francophone African cinema**), student were required to watch a film and report back as a team about the relationship between diaspora, documentary, and the avant-garde. They needed to talk over the film collectively, record their conversation (using Forum in Moodle), and ultimately come up with an accurate account of the discussion to be presented by one team member to the entire class for 5 minutes or less during synchronous class time. This activity demanded some individual accomplishment (seeing and understanding the film), but the majority of the activity to be assessed by classmates and faculty was collective and collaborative in nature. This was a successful exercise in part because students displayed comfort in working with each other, but faculty believe it was also successful because students had to write up their comments in a forum that constantly and quickly shared information with the whole team (and with faculty) and they had a week to complete the task. The ongoing discussion was mediated through the forum and email as it took place over time, and clear ideas were formulated. The presentations were then, in a sense, lifted from the ongoing (written) commentary. Because no group had access to other teams' forums the presentations were both surprising as well as familiar. Many groups had arrived at the same conclusions, but when a group presented a new idea everyone was so familiar with the material from which the examples were drawn it generated lively (sometimes instantaneous) discussion. While writing reinforced ongoing dialogue in small groups, it was speaking about the film over Skype synchronously that produced an entirely different experiential event building knowledge through connectedness at many levels and feelings of mediated distance without alienation.

Examples of what caused problems

DST - Daylight savings time would be the first on our list of problems from which it was hard to recover. The students were on board with the work, but DST changed the dynamic of T/Th regular class times for both schools to exceptional meeting times early Wednesday mornings for synchronous class. The students and faculty rearranged their schedules and made it work, but the momentum of the course was gone. The teams remained strong, but class meetings were strained. Students mostly resented having their schedule disrupted. The change affected Swarthmore students more than Ashesi students. After a few weeks, students recovered enough to complete their weekly tasks, but faculty wondered whether the lackluster final project performance was a direct result of this inconvenience. Bandwidth, the second culprit in an otherwise smooth-running course, is huge. One cannot overstate the importance of bandwidth to run a globally linked course. This became an issue for several reasons. Budgetary: We did not have the funding to pay for a digital platform for our course on both campuses. Personnel: Staffing the connected classroom at Ashesi with an IT specialist who could immediately deal with issues arising from our connectivity loss was impossible. Class Design. Because our course was designed around weekly synchronous meetings, both faculty and students relied on the good

connections with Skype to accomplish each week's goals. Uneven disadvantage: The Ashesi campus went into "blackout" mode turning off all idle connections to the internet and requesting that people respect internet down-time during our synchronous class to assure the proper bandwidth would be available for our students to Skype. Presentations, lectures, Q & A with guest speakers, simple sharing of reactions to readings or films became nerve wracking. Faculty originally chose Skype because of its relative dependability and its budget-neutral cost. It was one of the few technologies that allowed what we thought would prove equal-footing for both campuses. It turns out though that Skype highlighted the privilege of Swarthmore in an unexpected way: privilege of bandwidth, something that most American students and faculty take for granted. If this course or another globally networked course were to be offered in the future with two schools that are clearly financially unequal, the wealthier school should have to commit funding for a more reliable communication platform.

Did we meet all our educational outcomes?

Over the course of the semester, faculty became mindful of an unexpected feature: as students learned, they generated their own materials and case studies that ultimately formed their individual essays at the mid-term and their group final projects. It must be said, however, that although students had ample time to get the work done, many of the final projects were unsatisfactory examples of this serendipity. Students fell back into learned patterns of what a final project ought to look like and wrote fairly banal papers and posted them as blogs. The real measure of our achieving our educational goals and seeing the unexpected came during synchronous time together when no one necessarily recorded the whole session but where presenting, developing questions, organizing thoughts, and speaking off the cuff formed the truest moments of intercultural learning. (NB: We rarely used the idea of "cross-cultural" learning because it became quite clear to us that Ashesi and Swarthmore students did not represent monolithic examples of culture that would somehow "cross" in a simple trajectory, but more specifically students came from such varied backgrounds in both locales that intercultural learning took place within both asynchronous and synchronous time.) Breaking the ice with questions about analyzing images, interrogating how media has a hand in generating ideas of otherness, sharing thoughts on one's mother tongue, being open to critique by writing and posting a weekly report, asking difficult questions of teammates, tracking teammates down given a 6 hour time difference, learning to critically assess difference and using it to create, seeing how world historical events develop both specificities and distinctions among living subjects, producing a final project that encompasses all the above challenges, these form the real objectives of any globally connected class.

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