



Connecting Multiple Campuses Around the World: Graduate Student Perspectives

Mary E. Risner

Center for Latin American Studies

University of Florida (UF)

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Overview

- Motivation for the Exploratory Study
- MDP Program/Global classroom
- The Study
- Preliminary Results
- Recommendations
- Future Research

Motivation for the Exploratory Study

- UF Goals:
Internationalization
E-learning initiatives
- Center for LAS desire to connect students to campuses around the world in other courses.

Objectives of the Study

- Obtain student feedback on course satisfaction and engagement from UF students in order to improve where needed
- Consider possible ways to reduce Transactional Distance (Moore, 1991)
- Identify types of interaction taking place Student–Student, Student-Instructor, Student-Content (Moore, 1989)

Uniqueness of Course for Study

Many online courses:

- Are only asynchronous
- Connect students within same campus
- Connect among domestic campuses
- Connect with fewer campuses

- This course is blended with face-to-face and online portions, synchronous and asynchronous formats
- Using technology to connect students for multicultural perspectives on global issues outside of liberal arts

MDP Program/ Global Classroom

Master's in Sustainable Development Practice (MDP)

2-Year Graduate Practitioner Program focusing on interdisciplinary education to address the practical challenges of sustainable development.

Integrated Approaches to Sustainable Development Practice

3-credit course required for all students in the MDP program

Topics Covered: health, economics, policy, agriculture, ethics, and education

* <http://globalmdp.org/network/columbia-university>

MDP Network



1. Bimtech- Uttar Pradesh, India
2. BRAC Development Institute- Dhaka, India
3. CATIE- Turrialba, Costa Rica
4. Columbia University- New York City, New York
5. Emory University- Atlanta, Georgia
6. James Cook University- Cairns, Australia
7. Lund University- Lund, Sweden
8. Sciences Po- Paris, France
9. TCD and UCD, Dublin- Dublin, Ireland
10. TERI University- Vasant Kunj, India
11. Tsinghua University- Beijing, China
12. Universidad de los Andes- Bogotá, Columbia
13. UFRRI- Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
14. UCAD- Dakar, Senegal
15. University of Arizona- Tucson, Arizona
16. University of Botswana- Gaborone, Botswana
17. UC, Berkeley- Berkeley, California
18. University of Florida- Gainesville, Florida
19. University of Ibadan- Ibadan, Nigeria
20. University of Minnesota- Minneapolis, Minnesota
21. University of Peradeniya- Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
22. University of Waterloo- Waterloo, Canada
23. University of Winnipeg- Winnipeg, Canada

The Global Classroom

Weekly Face-to-Face (2 hours)

- Each institution has autonomy to design their own activities

Weekly Online Synchronous Global Session (1 hour)

- All campuses meet virtually through Adobe Connect
- Optional one-on-one campus connections through Skype (Organized 2-3 times in a semester)

Ongoing Asynchronous Activity

- Required recorded lectures, **optional** readings, **optional** student forum in Moodle, repository of some course materials

One-Hour Synchronous Format

- Lecture by expert
- Students from 2-3 universities have four minutes each to comment on lecture (prepared prior to talk)
- Speaker addresses comments, takes other questions submitted if there is time

Data Collection

- Qualitative Interviews with:
Students, faculty member, graduate assistant
 - What did you like about the Global Classroom?
 - What did you dislike about Global Classroom ?
 - Did you ever feel engaged? When?
 - Did you participate in the Moodle forum?
 - Suggestions

Participants

From UF campus only

- 18 students in class, 10 respondents
- 1 faculty member
- 1 graduate assistant

*Botswana campus

Student Comments

- Exposure to experts
- Exposure to student perspectives on local issues from other campuses
- “Concept” of interacting with global counterparts
- One-to-one campus Skype meetings

Student Comments

- Lectures too long
- Too many lectures
- Lack of time for Q & A
- Lack of time for student voice
- Most only felt engaged during post-lecture activities (or in small Skype meetings)
- No activity/interest in the asynchronous forum

Graduate Assistant Comments

- For the first half of the semester, classroom cameras were on throughout the initial lecture, making it nearly impossible to see the speaker.
- The technology seems overly complicated, requiring landline telephones as well as a computer, leading often to feedback, confusion, and dropped calls. Technology which could run all sound and video entirely through the computer would make the process much easier for participants.
- Management of time became problematic-If a lecturer went over time, it reduced the chance of students being able to ask questions and participate.
- Chances for students from different universities to interact with one another was extremely limited-This was done only twice during the semester through an additional Skype session with another university outside of normal class hours, thus resulting in low attendance.

Implications

How many classes can you connect and have quality student <> student engagement?

How can you balance student < > content with student <> student interaction?

Recommendations

- Allow back channeling
- Break up students into smaller online groups across campuses for forum discussions/virtual projects
- Provide guidance/netiquette on forum postings
- Establish informal forum for students to connect outside of class
- Organize and require more one-to-one campus class meetings

Future Research

- Quantitative survey of all MDP global classroom participants on their perception of the course
- Qualitative interviews with at least one campus from each world region



Thoughts from the Audience?

Thank you for your attention!



A word cloud featuring the word 'Thank you' in various languages and scripts. The words are arranged in a roughly circular pattern. The languages include: English (mercì, shukran, danke, Mauruuru, Obrigado, Thanks, mesl, Asante, Grazie, Gràcies), Hindi (धन्यवाद), Polish (Dzięk), Russian (Спасибо), and Japanese (多謝, じも). The colors of the text vary, including shades of green, brown, and blue.

mercì
shukran
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Thanks
mesl
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Grazie
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Dzięk
Спасибо
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Contact

mrisner@latam.ufl.edu

@langforcareers