Global Online Connections for Freshmen as Portals and Alternatives to Study Abroad

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We live in an interconnected world.
A World Interconnected

gereligion  climate change
water quality  drugs
terrorism  energy
politics  population  disease
East Carolina University

- ECU is a 103 year old doctoral university
- 28,000 students on 2 campuses
- Rural eastern NC location
- Member of University of NC
- Online degrees since 1996
- 2,700 courses online Spring 2011
- Many kinds of Internet Learning
Why the GU Project?

- The world is diverse - need to understand
- Student attitudes shaped by movies and TV
- Stereotypes and misunderstanding abound
- 2% of students study aboard – 97% do not
- 100% of students live in a global society

Project Goal: use regular internet technologies to bring international students and faculty into the same virtual classroom

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Global Understanding
Forming Lasting Partners since 2004

Algeria, Brazil, China, Ecuador, Egypt, The Gambia, India, Iraq, Japan, Macedonia, Malaysia, Mexico, Moldova, Morocco, Pakistan, Peru, Russia, Samoa, Taiwan, Turkey, UK, USA

Algeria, China, Mexico, Netherlands, Nigeria, Poland, Rwanda
Global Understanding

COAD 1000 Freshman Seminar Vignettes

✓ First Year Experience course - 1 SH credit
✓ Freshmen and 1st semester transfer students
✓ All majors and undeclared
✓ 75 sections of 25 students each fall
✓ Two class periods dedicated to Global Understanding experience
Global Understanding
COAD 1000 Freshman Seminar Vignettes

✓ Four questions:
  ✓ What do you do for fun? What stresses you out?
  ✓ What is “the good life” What is most important?
✓ Local answers and discussion
✓ Vignettes from global students
✓ Discussion: what, why, meaning
Global Understanding

Global Understanding Course Overview

✓ ANTH, PSYC, SOCI, POLS & INTL @ 1000 level
✓ Live video each class, 3 + 1 cultures per semester
✓ Video, chat, email, web 2.0
✓ Student interactions
✓ Students partnered for joint work
✓ 4 or 5 week sessions per partner
✓ Local sessions provide context for understanding
Global Understanding

Elements of Understanding

- Establish atmosphere of personal respect
- Enable and encourage open discussions on
  - Family life – College life
  - Cultural traditions
  - Meaning of life
  - Prejudices and stereotypes
- Require partners to create joint project
Global Understanding

Unique Features of the Course

✓ Partnership engages the whole student: mind and heart engaged
✓ Partners in many cultures are interconnected
✓ Provide the opportunity for all partners to participate equally
✓ Multiple cultures ensure balanced view
✓ Create a formal partnership – the GPE – to administer the program

www.thegpe.org
Global Understanding
Administrative Issues

✓ Taught in English and on central schedule
✓ Use technologies that are widely available
✓ Cost / time effective compared to alternatives
✓ Administratively independent
  ✓ No credit is exchanged
  ✓ Partners teach course in their context
  ✓ Course responsibility & grading is local
  ✓ Accreditation compliant
Questions and Discussion

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