GLOBAL CITIES/CITIZENSHIP: TRANSFORMATIONS OF URBAN AREAS IN EUROPE AND THE USA

Objectives. What were the original objectives of the project? For each objective list the activities that have taken place. Discuss the reasons for any setbacks or shortcomings and describe any significant changes that occurred (changes in leadership, staffing patterns, strategies, activities).

The primary objective of the project is to develop, with partner institutions Portland State University, the University of Bologna, and the University of Nottingham, an undergraduate curriculum dealing with the social (cultural) and natural (ecological) problems and challenges facing European and American cities in the new “Metro Millennium.” The idea is to integrate courses from the partnering institutions into a shared curriculum that is broader and stronger than any one institution could offer on its own. The grant money supports student and faculty exchanges between partners. Students go to a European partner institution to study for the fall term, and faculty visit for shorter periods throughout the academic year to provide lectures or seminars on specific topics. The project is intended to promote multiple disciplinary perspectives on urban problems in hopes of achieving better—and perhaps novel—interdisciplinary solutions. The resulting shared curriculum will integrate not only the sciences and humanities, but also European and American approaches to understanding the city. We anticipate that exchanges will produce new courses, new student research initiatives, collaborative grant-writing, and joint research projects on urban life and sustainability.

The 2009-2010 grant year initiated student and faculty exchanges between partner institutions. Portland State University sent two students to the University of Bologna. The
University of Denver was unable to send students to either Bologna or Nottingham. Portland State also did not send students to Nottingham. DU sent two faculty members abroad, one to Nottingham and one to Bologna. Portland State sent one faculty member to Bologna.

The University of Denver received two students from Bologna and Portland State received two students from Bologna. No students came to either American partner from Nottingham.

The most significant shortcoming of the project so far has been the absence of student exchanges with the University of Nottingham. Nottingham is in the partner mix because of its prior established relationship with the University of Bologna. No prior relationship existed between the American partners and Nottingham. We are still learning about each other and what each partner brings to the project. The American partners have students interested in studying at Nottingham, but the university has provided very little information supporting the exchange and appears unready to accept students. However, the one faculty member who traveled from DU to Nottingham in fall 2009 (Daniel Brisson, School of Social Work) gave a glowing report about the possibilities available there for American students and faculty.

Another challenge of the project is to better clarify for interested students that this is not a garden-variety study abroad program, but rather one with distinctive educational aims focused on study of the city. We expect students to have a significant interest in the problems and challenges facing American and European cities in a rapidly urbanizing world. This educational constraint needs to be better communicated to prospective exchange students at Nottingham. Two students were selected from Nottingham to attend
American partner campuses in fall 2010 (one each at Denver and Portland), but the one student bound for Portland has recently cancelled because the educational constraints of the exchange were not clearly communicated to the students or their faculties. The second student selected at Nottingham and bound for DU is still considering the situation.

A major tragedy and setback befell the project when the European Director, Professor Giovanna Franci of the University of Bologna, passed away in fall 2009. As a result of Professor Franci’s passing the European side clearly lost some momentum in developing its program, especially as regards getting Nottingham fully incorporated into the project. The American side suffered as well, given that the Atlantis exchange was Professor Franci’s brainchild and she was a driving force behind development of the project. Professor Franci has since been very ably replaced by her colleague Professor Franco Minganti.

**Institutional Resources.** Describe how the project is being implemented at each institution. Describe the work of the faculty in carrying out the project. What institutional contributions are being made to the project?

At the University of Denver faculty from several departments across the Arts and Sciences have offered up an excellent array of courses and internship opportunities. Our project’s major challenge is student recruitment given stiff competition from the university’s “Cherrington Global Scholars” study abroad program. The Cherrington program offers all first quarter juniors at DU an extensive menu of study abroad opportunities, each of which is fully subsidized by the institution. DU’s Study Abroad Office has, however, worked with us to integrate the Atlantis and Cherrington programs in a way that allows students having an interest in the city to benefit from both programs.
Portland State is also getting excellent contributions from faculty and staff, most notably in the form of a “Portland Seminar” specially designed for Atlantis students. The university is making in-kind contributions to match effort expended on the project by campus coordinator Kathi Ketcheson and by faculty and staff in Italian Studies, University Honors, and the Office of International Studies.

**Student Selection and Recruitment.** What strategies for student recruitment are the most effective? If you did not meet your annual target for student mobility, please explain why. Please explain how your consortium is making plans to continue to support student mobility when federal funding runs out.

The University of Denver did not meet its target for student mobility in fall 2009. As noted in last year’s report, we were able to begin aggressive recruiting only after most DU students had already chosen their study abroad sites in Italy and elsewhere for fall of 2009. We’ve had much better luck recruiting for fall 2010, resulting in 3 students heading to the University of Bologna. We had one student tapped for Nottingham, but the uncertainty described above led that student to change her study abroad destination to Spain.

Portland State sent two students to Bologna in 2009. In 2010 it is sending 5 students abroad: 2 to Bologna and 3 to Nottingham.

The University of Denver recruits students for the Bologna exchange through a variety of means, including: 1) participation of project staff in the annual Study Abroad Fair; 2) announcing the grant and emailing application forms to students enrolled in the Italian program and Urban Studies minor; 3) distributing flyers advertising the grant opportunity to Italian professors and Italian classes, as well as to Urban Studies professors and classes; 4) visiting classes having urban studies themes and Italian classes, and 5) promoting the opportunity in conjunction with the Study Abroad Advisors for Italy and
England in the Office of Internationalization.

Colleagues at Portland State University recruit on the university’s Education Abroad web page, through the Education Abroad Fair held annually in Winter Quarter, and through contact with faculty in departments across the university, especially International Studies, Foreign Languages, University Honors, University Studies, and Sociology. The best strategy at PSU is to ask individual faculty to nominate students for the program.

To support mobility when the funding runs out, faculty from PSU and DU will continue to cultivate formal exchange agreements with Bologna and Nottingham. For example, Kathi Ketcheson will travel to Nottingham and Bologna in fall 2010 to discuss shared curricula and community based learning and/or internship experiences for our students in the coming years. Project staff will continue to establish faculty exchanges that can result in continuing relationships with the two universities.

Language and Cultural Instruction. Describe the language plan. How are students assessed for language skills? Summarize the results of the language testing.

The Italian Section in DU’s Department of Languages and Literatures develops Italian language proficiency across the four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking), and literary and cultural awareness in the Italian context. Goal 3, Objective 3A of our Evaluation Plan states that students’ non-native language skills will improve and that students will increase their ability to communicate in a non-native language, both orally and in writing. In fall 2010 DU students with Italian language background studying in Bologna will enroll in an intensive Italian language course at the University of Bologna’s language school (CILTA) before the beginning of the academic term and will be tested
through that program. Upon return there will be two measures of linguistic assessment to measure proficiency gain using the following instruments: 1) the final comprehensive DU language Placement Exam administered at the end of winter quarter 2010 will be repeated, and 2) a language test developed by the Cultura Italiana language school in Bologna that was administered at the conclusion of spring quarter 2010. Scores will be recorded in the project database. DU students with no Italian language background were not required to take the CILTA language course in 2010 as when they applied for the grant in 2009 the A1 beginning course was no longer being offered. Subsequently, the course has been reinstated and future grant recipients will be required to take it.

Bologna students traveling to PSU and DU are required to take the TOEFL exam and demonstrate their linguistic skills in English prior to acceptance into the program. Two Italian students studied at Portland State University in fall 2009. One student’s speaking abilities were not strong when he arrived, although his comprehension and written communication were very good. However, by the time he left he had very strong verbal skills and expressed a desire to continue studying English. Key to this improvement was a course load reduction from 15 to 12 credits. Intensive interaction with other international students in residence hall and social circles greatly improved this student’s spoken English abilities and he was able to complete his courses at a high level of performance. The other student coming from Bologna spoke English with near-native fluency and did not experience the same issues. Neither, however, was used to the number of assignments and the amount of writing they were asked to complete in their PSU courses. They were also not used to being called upon to speak in class. Both students commented frequently,
however, on how much they liked the PSU course format and the engagement they had with faculty and other students, and how much they enjoyed the subject matter.

Portland State’s Foreign Languages Department will be more involved this year in assessing outgoing students’ abilities and in prepping them for their experience in Italy. There are also a number of small issues to be worked out with the Office of Institutional Affairs; specifically, around student visa requirements and insurance issues. Portland State will have a more organized protocol this year to deal with the special nature of the program.

**Curriculum Development. What progress is being made in curricular development? What new or modified courses or instructional materials are being developed and implemented?**

Exchanges in fall 2009 used mostly existing curricula. However, Bologna partners developed a special “Exploring Bologna” course for American students, and Portland State offered a “Portland Seminar” developed by Dr. Ethan Seltzer in the School of Urban Studies and Planning. Both courses served to introduce Atlantis students to their host city and are designed to be taught by different faculty. At DU, the “Culture and The City” course required for all Atlantis students serves as an introduction to Denver.

In fall 2010 “Exploring Bologna” will again be offered to PSU and DU students traveling to Bologna. The “Portland Seminar” will again be offered to the Bologna students attending PSU. “Culture and The City” at DU will offer an expanded number of site visits. Project staff at DU and PSU are working with faculty at both institutions to expand the menu of course offerings and/or develop new courses having urban themes that could be offered to exchange students. All partners still have considerable work to do as regards melding our course offerings into a clearly recognizable and sustainable shared curriculum.
Faculty Development. Describe in what ways the development and implementation of your project has been supported by the participating faculty members. What faculty development activities occurred and what faculty exchanges took place? Were there any programmatic, departmental, or institutional changes that occurred as a consequence of faculty involvement in the program?

Faculty teaching courses on the city at both DU and PSU have been very generous in submitting their courses to our curriculum list and working to accommodate the learning styles and other academic needs of European students traveling to the US.

With respect to faculty exchanges, in 2009-2010 the University of Denver sent one faculty member from the school of Social Work to Nottingham (Daniel Brisson) and one faculty member from the College of Business to Bologna (Pallab Paul). Portland State sent a faculty member from University Honors (Ann Marie Fallon) to Bologna. Reports by these three traveling faculty are posted on the project website:


As a result of Fallon’s work in Bologna she and PSU Atlantis coordinator Kathi Ketcheson are developing a course on urban immigration issues that will be taught in 2011 in Bologna. The course is an International Senior Capstone course for PSU students. Students will complete community based learning experiences working with immigrant populations in Portland and Bologna and reading appropriate texts on the subject.

For 2010-2011 Portland State will send two faculty members to Nottingham. The University of Denver is still soliciting applications for the 2010-2011 Faculty Exchange.

Impact on educational practice. How has the project impacted teaching and learning at the partner schools? If the project involved internships or work placements, how successful are these? How are these experiences integrated into the program of study? What lessons are being learned from this experience? If the project involves the use of technology, Web-based learning, or other electronic resources, describe the
development and implementation of this approach and the lessons learned. How does the evaluation inform decision-making among the partners?

The two Bologna students studying at DU took internships at the Somali Community Center in Denver. These were arranged through the Center for Community Engagement and Service Learning. The students were involved in developing an afterschool tutorial program for Somali immigrant children. Written reflections by these students on their internship work suggested that it was one of the highlights of their educational experience at DU, and helped them appreciate the challenges facing immigrant groups in urban contexts.

At Portland State one Bologna student completed an internship in the City of Portland’s Office of International Affairs (OIA) under the supervision of the director, Noah Siegel. This internship was co-sponsored by the Portland/Bologna Sister City Association (PBSCA). The participating student prepared a Bologna calendar of events and researched web links for inclusion on the OIA and PBSCA websites. Portland State is expanding internship and service learning experiences now that more students are entering the Atlantis exchange. The City of Portland’s International Affairs director and PSU project leaders are working to refine the internship opportunity that was offered last year. Although it was reasonably successful, the expected outcomes of the experience need to be better specified.

**Project outreach. Describe the outreach activities you and your partners are taking to make your project better known inside and outside your consortium. What is the current status of the project at your institution and the partner schools?**

The partners have been disseminating information about the project via email and through university list serves. At both DU and PSU reports are regularly submitted to senior leadership and communication with interested faculty made via email. At PSU
announcements are published in the university’s online newsletter. This year, PSU project leaders will establish a working group of faculty and Education Abroad staff to work on sustaining and advancing the program.

At the University of Denver project leaders developed a DU "Portfolio Community" webpage containing all sorts of information relating to the project, including application forms, course descriptions, and student and faculty reports and testimonials. The site is located at: http://portfolio.du.edu/atlant.

We are also alerting colleagues in our personal networks of professional contacts to the value of the project. For example, in the last academic year DU’s Roberta Waldbaum (Languages and Literatures) presented papers highlighting the Atlantis project at two national conferences. These included the 2009 annual meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Italian in San Diego, California on "Study Abroad alla Bolognese: The City as Laboratory,” and at the Dalton Institute for College Student Values 2010 Annual Conference at Florida State University in Tallahassee, Florida on "The Bologna Process in Action: Integrating Service-Learning and Civic Engagement in a Community Partnership.”