THE BCA RON MOFFATT SEMINAR ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION—PEACE, JUSTICE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY

CO-SPONSORED BY THE BURREN COLLEGE OF ART

Meeting Notes Compiled by Samantha Martin
Ballyvaughan, County Clare, Ireland, June 21—26, 2010

Seminar Notes with Discussion Points and Additional Resources/Readings

- Introduction and Background, James Skelly
- Relevant Developments in the Field, Everett Egginton and James Skelly
- International Partnerships- Knowledge Without Boundaries, Mary Walshok
- Liberal Arts Colleges and Global Citizenship, Thomas Kepple
- The Global Conversation, James Skelly and Mell Bolen
- La Conversacion Global, Raul Favela and Everett Egginton
- The Global Conversation: Student Experiences, Jenna Goodhand, Chris Kjonaas, Samantha Martin
- The Academic Divide: The Faculty and International Education, Mell Bollen and Pat Drinan
- The Perspective from Non-US Institutions, Mary Hawkes-Greene
- Final Session, All

Please Note:
The 2011 Ron Moffatt Seminar will take place in the days prior to the annual national NAFSA conference at the Simon Fraser University’s Wosk Centre for Dialogue in Vancouver. It will be a collaborative initiative with the United States Institute of Peace, and will be co-sponsored by SFU’s Human Security Report Project. Further information will be posted to http://peaceandjusticesig.pbworks.com/.

Introduction to the Ron Moffatt Seminar
James Skelly

Since Ron Moffatt, Everett Egginton, and I, began our discussions several years ago, there is a general sense that we have made a great deal of progress in getting international educators, including NAFSA, to pay much greater attention to peace and justice concerns as they inform international education initiatives. In addition, it also seems clear that an increasing number of international educators have begun to understand that their work is helping to build a global civil society in which peace, justice, and global citizenship is
highlighted. Rather than globalization from above through corporate and government initiatives, what we are engaged in is “globalization from below” by connecting students to their student colleagues throughout the world around issues that are certain to define our common future.

This year’s NAFSA conference in Kansas City had a great number of panels, presentations, and poster sessions related to our common concerns, and the conference next year in Vancouver looks set to have an even greater focus on these matters. Shortly before I left Kansas City, I had a very productive meeting with two senior staff members of the United States Institute of Peace. USIP is set to have a much greater profile in the near future as they will open their permanent home on the Mall in Washington early next year. My two colleagues from USIP made it clear that the Chair of the institute’s Board had explicitly stated that he wants to support study abroad as a significant aspect of USIP’s broader peace initiatives. We should, I think, help them in this regard.

Therefore, in my mind, there are two “products” that I would like to see result from this year’s Moffatt Seminar. The first would be something resembling a “final report” from this phase of the Moffatt Seminars that will provide compelling language which NAFSA, international education providers, and educational institutions can integrate into their mission and values statements regarding the importance of international education. The second “product” of this year’s seminar could be a draft proposal that is submitted to the USIP for a two-day Moffatt Seminar held just prior to the NAFSA conference in Vancouver, and which would include 50 to 60 participants rather than the 15 to 20 we have had at them to date.

**Background**

James Skelly

From an academic and policy perspective, the main purpose of the seminar was to begin a conversation about how international education, including study abroad, can contribute to the development of global civil society, and therefore to a more pacific and just world order. As a field, international education has lacked a solid theoretical base that would provide it with greater standing within universities and colleges. Too often, study abroad has been seen by the academic establishment as, at best, an enhancement to a student’s primary course of study, and at worst, as akin to an extracurricular activity that takes the form of educational tourism. Although these criticisms are an inaccurate characterization of the educational value of study abroad, one reason that they have been sustained is that international education has been under-theorized, and therefore has not developed a deep intellectual connection with major theoretical trends within the academy. As international education and study abroad become more central to the missions of universities and colleges the need for stronger theoretical justification for international programs and projects has become acute.
These problems have been compounded by the fact that many international educators, and the institutions that support them such as NAFSA, have often articulated a truncated view of their work. Thus, international education is often characterized as contributing to “global economic competitiveness,” the national security of the United States, or preparing students for a global labor market. Many of those who work in the field sense that these foci are morally and intellectually inadequate, but have often been unable to embed their sentiments in a discourse with solid theoretical foundations that provides an alternative vision.

Although it has enjoyed much wider currency in academic and intellectual circles in Europe and other parts of the world, the theoretical developments surrounding the idea of “global civil society” seem to provide the foundation to further support the development and status of work in international education, as well as a discourse that embodies the vision that most international educators hold. In *Global Civil Society 2002*, the yearbook produced by the Centre for the Study of Global Governance at the London School of Economics, researchers mapped the global flows of students studying abroad and argued that, “A growing practice of studying abroad may therefore be one catalyst of the emergence and spread of global civil society” because “students are major transmitters of knowledge and ideas, and interlocutors across cultures.”

The idea of “civil society” has a long and distinguished history and can be traced in recent centuries from Adam Ferguson, through Locke, Adam Smith, and Hegel. Although its meaning has changed over the years, it was utilized in contemporary times by activists challenging the state in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe under communist rule. As Mary Kaldor of the Centre on Global Governance has noted, “..the emphasis was on self-organization and civic autonomy in reaction to the vast increase in the reach of the state..” Essentially, the argument that developed was that free, unregulated association was essential to the preservation of a people’s liberty, and served as a check on the authoritarian tendencies inherent in the state.

It was this distinction between civil society and the state that was seized upon by dissidents more than 20 years ago who suffered oppression under the former socialist regimes east of the Iron Curtain. Vaclav Havel in Czechoslovakia, Adam Michnik in Poland, and Gyorgy Konrad in Hungary, among others, made the revival of civil society central to their political arguments. They claimed, with clear evidence, that the so-called communist governments were set on the extinction of civil society, and thus of liberty. In this period, these advocates of civil society presented such a formidable challenge to those who wanted to continue centralizing and maintaining all power in the state that the regimes ultimately collapsed.

Subsequently, since the end of the Cold War, the argument has remained alive, not least because most states, including some democracies, seem intent on centralizing power and making free association increasingly problematic. International educators have certainly seen

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this with the increasingly restrictive visa policies of many states. In addition, civil society is now also counter-posed to large corporations that often appear to have the same inherent tendencies as the state – Microsoft, Walmart, and Google, would be the object of this kind of criticism. Therefore, since the early 1990’s, the term “global civil society” has been used as a counter to the increasing power of global corporations and the contemporary state. Jürgen Habermas has perhaps best described the character of contemporary global civil society:

“Civil society is composed of those more or less spontaneously emergent associations, organizations, and movements that, attuned to how societal problems resonate in private life spheres, distil and transmit such reactions to the public sphere. The core of civil society comprises a network of associations that institutionalizes problem solving discourses of general interest inside the framework of organized public spheres.”

Therefore, in this increasingly tempestuous period of globalization, those who advocate for “civil society” as a counter to the state and the corporate world, look to efforts to build a global civil society in which individuals become something akin to "global citizens." This, of course, is where international education could be significant because, broadly speaking, the efforts of international educators are meant to be focused on helping individuals transcend narrow national cultures and identities. Unfortunately, for the most part, the broad context has not been attended to by international educators, and instead, the field has often appeared to be focused on the more narrow concerns of governments and multinational corporations rather than providing a critical perspective which might help to transcend such concerns and provide a truly global perspective on the challenges we face as this century unfolds. Thus, the Moffatt Seminars are an effort to stimulate a broader discussion and to lay some modest intellectual foundation for understanding the importance of international education to the creation of a global civil society in which peace and justice are highlighted. One hope, therefore, is that organizations such as NAFSA, as well as those individuals who work in the field of international education, may come to think of their work in supporting study abroad as contributing to the development of a global civil society and a new form of citizenship within that context. By linking international education to a rich theoretical discussion within the academy, we also think that the Moffatt Seminars may begin to provide a foundation for a common discourse accessible to both international educators and scholars in various academic disciplines.

Relevant Developments in the Field

*Everett Egginton and James Skelly*

Everett discussed how he defined NAFSA’s role and our role as international educators during his 2007 NAFSA presidency:

1. Public Policy and Advocacy

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2. Internationalization within our campuses
   a. Campus to campus relationships (transactional, transformational, transcendental)
   b. Focus on international student integration into communities
3. Education Abroad
   a. Study abroad expectations within programmatic requirements
   b. Greater participation of minority groups
4. Internationalize our local communities
   a. Get voters to represent legislation and policies that matter for international education
   b. How can the business community educate universities about their needs?

Discussion

- Some colleges and institutions (e.g. Eleanor Roosevelt College at UCSD) require study abroad, language learning, and international studies as a requirement of entry into the school
- Content knowledge should be a vital part of training for study abroad professionals
  - Study Abroad offices are most effective when integrated into Academic Affairs

International Partnerships- Knowledge Without Boundaries

Mary Walshok

Globalizing adult learning is important now because the global issues that we face require that adults in positions of leadership now have the skills to begin to solve the problems we face. We do not have time to wait for 18-21 year olds to grow up to become adult leaders.

The Global Context encompasses three main areas:
   1. Economic Impacts and Trends
   2. Key community institutions transformed by globalization (e.g. Healthcare)
   3. Civil Society

Extension programs linking the university to the direct community is a way to re-define who the ‘student’ is and to train adult learners in:

- Local economic prosperity and good jobs in the global context
- Diversity skills in the regional workforce
- Increasing knowledge and respect of other countries

Discussion:

- How can we think about internationalizing our local communities more?
- What are we as international educators doing in the area of adult community education and does NAFSA have specific resources and information for adult communities?
• What role does the research university play in the community, liberal arts college, state university, etc.?
• What is the profile of a “global citizen”? How can “global citizenship” be obtained without leaving home?

Liberal Arts Colleges and Global Citizenship

Thomas Kepple

Language in Motion at Juniata

• 3000 colleges and universities in the US; 1200 are private
  o Most were founded in the 1800s/early 1900s; modeled after Oxford, Cambridge
• More PhDs from liberal arts graduates
• Juniata College includes many middle income students
  o All students pay the same Juniata tuition even for a semester abroad through BCA
• Community dynamics are an important part of a university, not just in medicine and law!

Discussion

• Raúl and Mary discussed the aspect of self-actualization in volunteering and asking oneself “what is my legacy?”
• Working in a community requires listening to all sides
• Liberal arts colleges have traditionally provided a safe space for dialog and because of this play an important role in the global civil society

The Global Conversation Course

James Skelly and Mell Bolen

The Global Conversation module focuses on the way in which the structure of the global economy affects the environment both globally and locally. It also explores what we as individuals, informed by differing cultural and political perspectives, might do to ameliorate the problems we face in our local environments, as well as how we might contribute to the construction of a global civil society. At a very basic level of analysis, it is about how we live on the planet both individually and collectively, and it poses the fundamental question – “Is our way of living on the earth sustainable?”

Mell Bolen explained how the Global Conversation Course grew out of BCA’s vision to create an online course to connect students at various BCA program sites around the world. The actual planning phase and implementation required a tremendous amount of work and staff time, but
the Global Conversation is now approaching its eighth semester and has become a successful content-driven online course.

Jim Skelly described how he initially became involved in the course and how it has evolved since 2007. He introduced the syllabus from Spring 2010 and shared a PowerPoint presentation that was shown at the ‘Sustainability, Peace and Justice, and the United Nations Luncheon’ at the 2010 NAFSA conference in Kansas City. The PowerPoint presented twenty-five questions about the state of our oceans, forests, consumption patterns, atmosphere, climate change, etc. The answers are data points on these various topics gathered by different research groups, organizations and individuals and participants of the Global Conversation course are meant to work in groups to answer these questions at the beginning of the course to get them thinking about how concrete data points relate to the wider environmental condition of our planet today.

La Conversacion Global
Raul Favela and Everett Egginton

Raul Favela and Everett Egginton created a series of seminars called ‘La Conversacion Global’ at the Universidad Autónoma de Chihuahua and New Mexico State University. In the fall of 2009 and early 2010, over 500 participants attended a series of ‘global conversation’ seminars. UACH students, faculty, and staff; representatives of governmental and non-governmental organizations in Chihuahua and citizens and residents from Chihuahua and nearby communities gathered to have conversations around the issue of creating peaceful communities and environments in the midst of external and ongoing violence. The overall purpose of the “conversation” was to provide hope and solidarity to a community devastated by violence and despair through a variety of individual, family, community, and internationally focused commitments and actions.

In early October, Raul had a meeting with a national foundation and they established the need for a manual about ways to deal with conflict, create community dialogue, and build community networks. Twenty-six faculty members from UACH will also be doing research in peace and justice issues. They hope to eventually build the Institute of Human Development. Raúl spoke about his community work in Chihuahua and how the community is a focal point for tying local to global.

Discussion
- Is it dangerous for faculty and organizers of La Conversacion Global? Everett shared that he frequently travels and speaks in border towns and often is asked that question, particularly by the media—who are targeted by drug mafia. Raul pointed out that somebody has to ‘hide in front of the tree’ because otherwise no one else will be able to follow and stand with that person who takes the risk.
- Often times people who live north of the Mexican border in the United States are not very well educated about what is happening on the border and how they may be
contributing. For example, drug users in the United States may not be aware that for every gram of cocaine purchased, half a liter of blood is spilled in Mexico. Education of the populations on both sides of the border is essential to stop the supply of drugs and weapons from crossing the border.

- What is our role as educators in this matter? We might consider that our job as educators is to challenge our students and our communities to consider, “Who is suffering because you live the way you live?”
- Chihuahua is an example of the “new wars” Kaldor discusses
- We need to education students on the US side of the border about bananas and unfair labor practices connected with our consumption patterns, but education about the interconnectedness of the drug trade is even more important! Some tuna has been banned because of dolphin cruelty; *Mexicans in Chihuahua need to have the same rights as dolphins!*
- The mass media doesn’t contextualize its programs, but instead tells the viewer that s/he is “better off” (BP spill vs Niger Delta; Las Cruces vs Juárez). Disconnected pieces of information lead to misinformation -> importance of The Global Conversation’s attempt to present the interconnectedness.

**The Global Conversation: The Student Perspective**

*Jenna Goodhand, Chris Kjonaas, and Samantha Martin*

Jenna Goodhand, Chris Kjonaas and Samantha Martin spoke about how they initially became involved in the course and their experiences as teaching assistants in the Global Conversation. Some of the interesting achievements of the course are that many students who take the course continue to be involved as students or go on to become TA’s because of the way that the course challenges them to think about their actual life, habits, and consumer choices. They feel connected to the content and other participants and want to stay involved. Also, the course incorporates many different components, such as mini-lectures from Jim Skelly, articles from newspapers and journals from around the world, textbook material, YouTube videos and lectures, and documentaries, etc.

Environmental issues are explored through the vehicle of online Learning Circles, each established with a small number of students studying in various parts of the world. The module will provide the Learning Circles with the background information necessary to give them both a general understanding of the relationship between environmental problems and economic imperatives, as well as more specific information on aspects of the global eco-system’s transformation, and ways in which human populations might mitigate its effects. Special attention will be given to the United States and China, as well as poorer countries because of their key roles in the debate about how to address these issues. We will also pay close attention to developments surrounding the recent climate change conference in December 2009 in Copenhagen. In addition to standard forms of assessment such as midterm and final essays,
Learning Circles will work towards completion of a collective project that looks at how specific environmental problems might be addressed given their political, economic, and social affects.

Challenges have been conducting the course in English when many of the students do not speak English as a first language. Also, students in different countries enter the course at different times. Learning Circle participation depends heavily on voluntary contributions from each student and when students do not actively engage in the learning circle discussions only one or two students and the TA may end up dominating the conversation. To overcome these challenges, the course is being translated into Spanish (and other languages in the future) and the TA’s contact students individually to encourage participation.

Several TA’s and Jim Skelly held the first Global Conversation meeting in New Paltz, New York in June 2010. As a result of the discussions of that meeting, there will be a new website launched in January 2011, a re-organization of course material and the syllabus, and revisions to the final learning circle project.

The Academic Divide: The Faculty and International Education
Mell Bolen and Patrick Drinan

It is widely acknowledged within the field of international education that there is a divide between faculty members and international educators. Mell Bolen and Patrick Drinan worked on a paper in 2009/2010 (as a result of conversations from the 2009 Ron Moffatt seminar) entitled ‘The Academic Divide: The Faculty and International Education,’ to address this issue. Part of the divide between international educators and faculty exists because the field of international education is under-theorized. Mell and Pat are proposing that the best prospects for reducing the theory deficit in international education is to focus on theories from the broader fields of Sociology, Political Science and Communications but also within the following disciplines:

1. Peace and Justice
2. Modernization
3. Urbanization
4. Intercultural Communication

Another issue is that international educators often define ‘education’ and ‘learning’ more broadly than faculty and perhaps the institution and a part of the challenge in bridging the divide is to communicate a broader perspective on learning through well-established and respected theories. In Design Theory there are 4 ways of learning that go through cycles:

1. Concrete Experience
2. Reflective Observation
3. Abstract Conceptualization
4. Active Experimentation
Mell and Pat present the theories and philosophies of Rawls and also Rorty as a way for international educators and faculty members alike to embrace peace and justice as a value that is important in education.

Discussion

- This research is much needed and will be helpful for both international educators and faculty.
- How will the paper be disseminated? It needs to be accessed by those in academia as well as those in the field of international education to allow for feedback and criticisms to inform the conversation before a final paper is distributed through the usual avenues (academic journals, top down dissemination, etc.).
- Jim discussed under-theorization in Peace Studies and misinterpretation of this field by academics
  - University of Bradford’s Peace Studies program has a scientific basis
  - Sociology and constructivism offer alternative approaches to peace studies

The Perspective from Non-US Institutions

Mary Hawkes-Greene

Mary Hawkes-Greene spoke about the evolution of the Burren College of Art (BCA) and how the institution has grown and changed since its founding in 1993. The BCA has expanded its purpose from being an art school to also a space where people from all over the world can gather to have discussions and think about ideas through seminars (like the Ron Moffatt Seminar). Additionally, the BCA has opened up its doors to the community and has initiated new programming where residents of Ballyvaughan can use the space at the college to gather and discuss issues relevant to the community and form working groups to solve local problems.

In terms of the primary purpose of the college—“to give student artists the opportunity to develop their creative potential in the unique environment of the Burren” (www.burrencollege.ie; History of Burren College of Art)—the BCA Master of Fine Art program is accredited by the National University of Ireland, Galway and is operated in association with the Royal College of Art, London and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. The undergraduate Study Abroad program, Summer School and Artist Residency Scheme also recruit internationally. The vision of the college is to help students develop not just skills but of concepts and ideas to break them of the “tell me and I’ll respond” way of approaching their art or craft. Students are asked to come up with their own ideas and then have to answer questions about their work. They are meant to consider the question of “who am I as an artist in the world?” This philosophy fits naturally with The Global Conversation, and students studying at the Burren College of Art have been active participants in the course.

The landscape of the Burren is a central part of the BCA’s identity and provides inspiration to
the art students and faculty as well as the visitors who come for conferences and seminars. Before students enter the studio to create, they are asked to go into the Burren and reflect on themselves as an artist, the purpose of their art, and to give themselves the time and space outside of the traditional classroom to think of new ideas. The following three components are meant to be incorporated into every student’s experience:

1. Design Thinking
2. Self-reflection
3. Purpose

Additionally, the Burren College of Art has opened its doors to the Ballyvaughan community to serve as a place where community members can come together to discuss issues relevant to them and to solve problems together. Recently, the College held an event in the “World Café” methodology which entails organic grouping of participants for work on projects and discussions. The result was that people formed committees and working groups around particular issues that were important to them, such as environmental advocacy, coordination of the town’s social events, tourism, etc.

**Discussion**
- How did the college change over time and how did you address specific needs at different times?
- The World Café style was discussed and the pros/cons to such a methodology.

**Next Steps**

*(All)*


2. NAFSA Panel/Seminar: 'The Annual Moffatt Seminar on Global Civil Society': Jim Skelly, Mell Bolen, Raul Favela, Samantha Martin, Pat Drinan, etc.

3. Financing Proposal for USIP: Mell Bolen and Jim Skelly

4. Planning Moffatt Seminar in Vancouver: Jim Skelly, Mell Bolen, Everett Egginton, Samantha Martin

5. Final report for the 2010 Ron Moffatt Seminar: Samantha Martin

6. Course on Border Issues and global conversation: Everett Egginton

7. Broader Project for Chihuahua: Raul Favela
8. FAQ's for NAFSA site and P&J Wiki: Samantha with help from Pat Drinan, Mell Bolen, Everett Egginton and others

9. Panel at NAFSA on Pat and Mell's paper 'The Academic Divide: The Faculty and International Education': Pat Drinan, Mell Bolen

10. Poster Sessions at NAFSA 2011: Jim Skelly, Samantha Martin to try to organize with others to plan on participating in 2011

11. Packaged Presentation through the Regions: Samantha Martin, Thelma Rohrer to provide template and share information about dissemination and organization

12. Responses/data from the Global Conversation and proposal for NAFSA 2011: Jenna Goodhand, Chris Kjonaas (Jim Skelly and Samantha Martin)

NAFSA Deadlines:
Poster Proposals: December 15, 2010
Session Proposals: August 2, 2010

NAFSA 2011's Theme: *Innovation and Sustainability*