

Technology for Teaching Project (TTP)

Proposal submitted by
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Project goals

The overarching goal of the proposed project is to enhance the new Global Studies curriculum in two related areas: 1) media production; and 2) global media analysis. By purchasing audiovisual equipment, accessing relevant programming from around the world, and hiring students to assist in the production of video footage for use in the classroom and in student projects, we aim to strengthen and transform existing courses and to lay the foundation for at least two new courses. A concerted effort in 2001-2002 would yield curricular results (not limited to Global Studies) that would far outlast the term of the project itself.

Description

There is currently only one course in the Global Studies curriculum explicitly devoted to media studies: GS340 (Global News Analysis), taught by John Collins. To date this course has focused on the news media, but it been hampered by a lack of access to a sufficient range of international media outlets, particularly non-US television news broadcasts that could be viewed and analyzed in the classroom. Consequently, the course has featured a rather narrow emphasis on how the US media covers "foreign" news stories. Equipping the 82 Park and 84 Park buildings with a satellite dish would globalize this course, which will be offered in Fall 2001, in two concrete ways. First, it would allow the actual class meeting (which would take place in the classroom in 84 Park) to serve as a time for collective viewing of news images beamed in from across the globe. Second, it would enable students, working under faculty supervision, to record large blocs of news coverage. These recordings could then be digitized (using existing software on campus), thereby providing material for students projects and class discussions.

Three courses (one existing and two under construction) taught by Tom Thornton would benefit in similar ways from the satellite dish and programming, as well as from the purchase of a digital video camera and microphone. The camera could be used by students and faculty to shoot original video footage that could be used in both research and teaching on Global Media and other topics (political economy, culture & ecology, food, etc.). As an example, Tom was recently in Jamaica for a conference and might have used such a camera to capture images (digital still and video) of sugar cane production, distribution, and consumption patterns as well as the meaning of sugar to Jamaicans (laborers, consumers, plantation owners, etc.) within the shifting global economy. He could then have used these images to enhance his teaching about sugar production in Culture and Ecology (GS280) or the Food and Globalization course he is developing. Within certain guidelines, students could do the same thing locally, and perhaps even internationally, as part of research projects within Global Studies courses. But even locally, the technology would be very useful, for example, in capturing advertising images and cultural beliefs surrounding chocolate (an important global food) that SLU students are exposed to.

While the primary emphasis of this proposal is on the courses just discussed, clearly the materials we have identified would benefit the full range of Global Studies courses. Faculty teaching our two introductory courses (GS101 and 102), for example, could make regular use of satellite programming, particularly the public affairs programming that Dish Network provides. Given the thematic emphasis of these two courses (global political economy and multiculturalism, respectively), the increased use of

media texts from around the world is entirely appropriate and is in keeping with the department's commitment to examining global processes in a truly multi-perspectival way. Moreover, there would be ample opportunities for faculty in other departments and programs (e.g. area studies) to make use of both the equipment and the programming we purchase. Global Studies will assume the cost of programming subscriptions after the term of the grant has run out.

Resources needed

| Item description | Est. cost |
|---|------------------|
| Satellite dish and receivers | \$450 |
| Installation of satellite equipment | \$300 |
| Basic satellite programming package (\$34.99/month) | \$419.88 |
| Extra programming packages (TV Asia, Dish Latino, TV5, ART America) | \$500 |
| TV and VCR for 82 Park St. | \$600 |
| TV and VCR for 84 Park St. | \$600 |
| Panasonic PV-DV601 digital video camera w/case and battery | \$815 |
| Stereo mini-phone jack directional microphone | \$75 |
| Student assistants (200 hours @ \$6.00/hr) | \$1200 |
| Total | \$4959.88 |

Anticipated outcomes

- Use of satellite-delivered programming (especially news and public affairs broadcasts) as core texts for in-class analysis in GS340
- Access to global, multilingual news and public affairs broadcasts for use in other Global Studies courses
- Creation of a digital archive of locally-generated images related to major issues in Global Studies (e.g. trade, migration, food, ecology, cultural identity) for use in GS280, new courses (Globalization and Food, Indigenous Peoples and Globalization), and other existing courses inside and outside the department
- Enabling of new types of student projects involving the use of digital video recording
- Practical experience in basic media production for student assistants

Curricular impact

This project would enhance the entire Global Studies curriculum by bringing it into the digital age. Its impact would be both immediate and long-term, and would be felt in the full range of Global Studies courses, including those not explicitly devoted to media topics. It would also bring students much more directly into the learning process, for the proposed resources would allow them both to shape the content of individual courses and to join faculty in the collaborative work of doing course-related research and learning important techniques in media production.