

CLASP Notes

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Report of the Steering Committee

This issue of CLASPnotes summarizes the information presented and exchanged at our conference on outreach, held at the University of Texas at Austin from May 6-8. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Nick Shumway and the Institute of Latin American Studies at UT again for their support for the conference. We could not have asked for a more congenial site. To Kate Bennett, outreach coordinator at ILAS at UT, and Valerie McGinley Marshall, director of the Curriculum Resource Center at Tulane, I also express gratitude for their hard and thorough work. The conference was a great success. Participants returned home with new ideas and knowledge about how we can better serve our constituents.

The CLASP business meeting considered several matters of importance to members. Foremost, perhaps, was the revision of the bylaws written to secure the organization's tax exempt status in 1994, when we separated from LASA. Here I will only summarize the principal changes in the new Constitution and Bylaws approved at the meeting. Copies of these documents will be mailed with the fall issue of CLASPnotes.

CLASP has traditionally been an organization of institutional members. The EC attempted to take differences among institutions into account by creating three dues categories according to enrollment. The new Constitution goes a step further by establishing a membership category for individuals, with dues set at the same level as for the smallest institutions. The creation of a Membership Committee was also approved. The chair of this committee will be responsible for maintaining the current membership roll, managing the CLASP listserv, and developing plans for increasing membership in CLASP. I am pleased to announce that Rosalind Eannarino (University of Pittsburgh) accepted the chairpersonship of the new Membership Committee.

Other changes in committee assignments were approved. After many years of stalwart service as chairperson of the Committee on Teaching and Outreach, Julie Kline (University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee) resigned to devote herself to the Américas Award Committee, among other activities. Valerie McGinley Marshall has taken over as chair of the outreach committee. This move means that Valerie will no longer be editor of CLASPnotes after this issue. Beginning in the fall, Kristin Janke DeMuzzio (Latin American Studies Consortium of New England) will produce CLASPnotes. Finally, Kate Bennett agreed to be the master of the CLASP website. Our sincere thanks go out to David Robinson (Syracuse University) for setting up the website initially and keeping it going.

Elizabeth Mahan, CLASP Chair
University of Connecticut

Proceedings of the "Meeting on Outreach in Latin American Studies"

The Meeting on Outreach in Latin American Studies was held May 6-8 at the University of Texas at Austin. Sponsored by both the Institute of Latin American Studies at UT-Austin and CLASP, the meeting attracted participants from both Title VI and non-Title VI funded centers. The organizers wish to express their gratitude to all participants for making the meeting a success.

Outreach to Business and/or Media

Presenters: Rosalind Eannarino - University of Pittsburgh, Elizabeth Mahan - University of Connecticut
Facilitator: Julie Kline - University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee

Elizabeth Mahan described UCONN's approach to business outreach given its isolated location in Storrs, CT. After initial contact with the Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce, the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies published a Directory of Connecticut Companies in the Latin American Market, a manageable, low cost way to provide resource support services to businesses and the state. Updated every two years, the directory is shared with businesses listed, Connecticut trade offices, chambers of commerce in Latin America, and with students seeking employment in international business.

Urban University of Pittsburgh provides an interesting comparison with UCONN. According to Rosalind Eannarino, Pittsburgh has transitioned from its long industrial history to become a city of corporate headquarters, medical services, and technology. Prior to funding of the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Business as a Title VI CIBER, the Center for Latin American Studies did more direct business outreach, including training, internships, and short-term research projects. Now it frequently partners with its CIBER, serving as a liaison to bring business interests together in western Pennsylvania. For example, the Center coordinates orientations or provides contacts within Latin America, in part via its extensive inter-institutional agreements.

Partnerships with Community Organizations

Presenters: Valerie McGinley Marshall - Tulane University, William Ney - University of Wisconsin - Madison
Facilitator: Kate Bennett - University of Texas at Austin

In this session, presenters Valerie McGinley Marshall of Tulane University and William Ney of the University of Wisconsin-Madison offered examples of programs that forge partnerships with community organizations.

Valerie McGinley Marshall discussed Tulane's 3-day workshop organized with the Audubon Zoo and the New Orleans Museum of Art. The Maya: Pre-Colombian to Present consists of three sessions: one at the Zoo on the environment, another at the Museum on Mayan art, and a conclusion at Tulane on modern Mayan history and culture. The goal of the workshop is for teachers to return to the classroom with a sense of what it means to be Maya.

Other notes: In a collaborative effort like this, it is important for each partner to compromise to provide for the teachers. Coordinate your calendars so you don't compete. Join your informal (museum) educator group!

The next presenter, Willie Ney, discussed Sin Fronteras, a two-year, community-wide education and arts initiative celebrating Mesoamerica and an "America without borders." The project is a collaborative effort of the Latin American and Iberian Studies Program, the Madison Children's Museum, and Madison Metropolitan School District. Begun in 1998 with a teacher institute, Sin Fronteras involved the creation of "Mobile Museums" in six Madison "Barrio Schools." The project concludes in 2000 when the Central American All Stars (a group of well-known Central American musicians) return to perform at the Madison Civic Center for the entire Madison school district student body and to tour the U.S.

Other tips: Pay attention to your community; cater your outreach to the changing dynamic. Establish ties with the Latino community. Take advantage of opportunities to educate. Work with the children's museum in your area. Shoot for longer-term outreach.

Professional Development for Teachers: Workshops and Institutes

Presenters: Kristin Jannke DeMuzzio - Latin American Studies Consortium of New England, Annie Strah - Yale University, Mary Jo Dudley - Cornell University, Julie Kline, Sharon Mújica - Duke-UNC Program in Latin American Studies
Facilitator: Hilary Burger - Harvard University

Panelists at this session presented successful models for effective professional development workshops at the K-12 and postsecondary levels.

Kristin Jannke DeMuzzio and Annie Strah explained the steps taken to organize the Mesolore Institute on Mesoamerican Cultures for teachers, slated for the summer of 1999 in New Haven. Useful strategies include publicizing the institute through local and national teachers' conferences and purchasing mailing lists for high school and community college instructors. Though the presenters came from centers with Title VI funding, they also sought funds from other sources. They emphasized the importance of accounting for all possible expenses while writing the program budget and closely following the guidelines of individual grant programs.

Partnering with other centers and departments within a university and with other colleges and universities can be effective strategies. The Duke-UNC program in Latin American Studies paired with the Center for North American Studies at Duke in organizing the three year "Becoming Better Partners" workshop on Canada, the U.S. and Mexico. At Cornell, following up on professional development workshops, professors work with participants from two and four year colleges in upstate New York to develop reading lists for classes. Sharon Mújica of Duke-UNC requires that participants provide a letter from their college dean ensuring that they will be able to teach a course on Latin America the year following the workshop.

Finally, Mary Jo Dudley of Cornell emphasized the importance of avoiding excessive simplification of materials presented to workshop participants and recommended providing a range of readings that includes in-depth material.

Using Technology in Outreach

Presenters: Beth Frankland - Stanford University, Peter Smith - University of California, San Diego
Facilitator: William Ney

Beth Frankland provided background on an educational website her center is developing entitled Contemporary Profiles of Central America: Its Arts and Peoples. The webmaster has concentrated her energies on gathering information and resources on relatively unknown plastic and performance arts in Central America. Project collaborators include a consortium of El Salvadoran writers from San Francisco. Following the presentation, audience members suggested possible additions to the website, such as the broader inclusion of Spanish, Performing Arts Network, and a more systematic approach to menu design.

Peter Smith discussed the innovative Latin American talk show Hemiscope, broadcast monthly at the University of California, San Diego cable station, and also addressed the challenges faced by working with mainstream media outlets, particularly the print media. A high-quality pilot cable television program, Hemiscope covers material from across the Americas with host Peter Smith interviewing guests on issues. Hemiscope has been running for three years, producing approximately eight programs annually. Suggestions for expanding the impact of Hemiscope included distributing the program to Latin American Studies centers with cable-access programs, linking the program to local school districts, and diversifying the hosts to include young adults.

How to Recruit and Maintain Teacher Involvement

Presenters: Mary Jo Dudley, Beth Frankland, Sam Sommerville - University of Kansas
Facilitator: Annie Strah

The presenters shared their experiences of forming and maintaining teacher relationships. Mary Jo Dudley spoke about New York Spanish teachers who have taken leaves of absence to develop curricula on Latin America. With the assistance of Cornell's Latin American Studies Program, one group of teachers created two curricula, one for the 3rd grade and another for the 5th grade. The teachers combined their research with a trip to Guatemala, and once the unit was created, led in-services on the units at regional meetings throughout the state. At the end of their sabbatical, teachers and their districts had new curricula and Spanish teachers had the training to use it.

Beth Frankland spoke about six "working groups" at the Latin American Studies program at Stanford, which are coordinated by graduate students and provide members an opportunity to exchange research on the following topics: the Andean Region, Asians in Latin America, Brazil, Community Health, Mexican Studies, and Women and Gender. The Latin American Studies program offers professional development fellowships to community college faculty. Recipients of the fellowships are granted access to the Stanford Library. The Center does require that the recipients present at a conference and connect with at least one of the working groups.

Latin American music from the Andes and Mexico, Afro-Caribbean influenced music and Latin Rock are the topics of seven new traveling suitcases Sam Sommerville is developing with the faculty at the University of Kansas. Each suitcase comes with a guide to the instruments, videos, and classroom activities. They will be available for loan through the Center's lending library.

Working with K-6 Teachers

Presenters: Kate Bennett, Mary Jo Dudley, Rosalind Eannarino
Facilitator: Kristin Jannke DeMuzzio

During this session two panelists described a variety of activities which target the K-8 audience. The first presentation, given by Kate Bennett, Outreach Coordinator for the Institute of Latin American Studies (ILAS) at UT, outlined several programs.

Kate Bennett started the session by describing the Compañeros Mentoring Program, designed to offer K-8 students an alternative way of learning about several Latin American topics. Kate recruited UT students to volunteer their time to visit speak about Latin America in Austin-area classrooms. Among the recruitment techniques she described was a flier she displays around campus asking students to volunteer to share at local schools on the experiences they enjoyed in Latin America. Kate also discussed the relationship ILAS has with the School of Education's Professional Development Services (PDS). PDS provides pre-service teachers with an opportunity to observe and become familiar with classroom teaching. In cooperation with the PDS program, ILAS has participated in an International Fair where they sponsored a

booth on Latin America. Kate also described a project developed for UT-Interactive, an event inviting the school community to campus. "Discovering Latin America" uses an interactive approach in inviting 6th grade students to learn about different aspects of Latin America. A computer at one station allowed students to explore the UT-LANIC website resources.

The second panelist, Rosalind Eannarino, described a fascinating program designed to introduce elementary school children to the art of Capoeira Angola "as a paradigm for African Americans attempting to overcome obstacles, both real and perceived, in the face of enormous adversity." A collaborative effort among community organizations, the local school district and CLAS this program not only includes curriculum development and language learning, but teacher training as well. During her presentation, Rosalind described in detail how this program began. A local community group, an enthusiastic volunteer, and student spearheaded the project. Rosalind then described the positive impact she believes this project has had on the school, its students and teachers, and the community as a whole. One of the most important aspects of the project, she maintains, is that in its final year (AY 2000-01), all of the Pittsburgh Schools will incorporate the program into their 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade curricula.

Study Abroad and Fulbright Projects for Teachers and the Community

Presenters: Julie Kline, Valerie McGinley Marshall, Sam Sommerville, Elizabeth Mahan
Facilitator: Sharon Mújica

The session on Study Abroad and Fulbright Projects for Teachers and Community was particularly useful to many at the conference, especially those who hope to apply in the near future. First, Valerie McGinley Marshall from Tulane University spoke about Tulane's 1994 Fulbright Study Abroad Project to Costa Rica for teachers from Louisiana, Texas, and New Mexico. Next Julie Kline discussed the trip to Costa Rica that twelve teachers took in 1995 with the University of Wisconsin - Milwaukee. Both presenters then spoke in detail about the innovative joint follow-up summer institute they designed to disseminate the materials produced by both projects. They also gave excellent advice on what they found to be successful and how to avoid some of the problems they encountered. Copies of the curriculum designed by teachers in both workshops were available for review. A lively discussion ensued regarding curriculum design and how to work with teachers to produce useful pedagogically sound curriculum. Sam Sommerville of the University of Kansas presented explained the various Fulbright Study Abroad projects carried out jointly by his Center and different departments of the University of Kansas. Kansas has sponsored a variety of Fulbright projects including a 1996 project to Mexico with business students, a 1997 project with high school teachers in Costa Rica, a project this summer in Ecuador, and a 2000 project again in Mexico. Sam emphasized various strategies that helped in the application process and offered insight about working with several departments to recruit good project leaders. A very worthwhile discussion resulted from all three presentations.

Elizabeth Mahan, who has been working with the Association of Programs in Latin American Countries (APLAC), asked us to examine and discuss "A Proposal for Examining the Academic Quality of Study Abroad Programs," developed by Carmen Madariaga Culver of SUNY - Plattsburgh. The document proposes important questions about three issues facing residential US Latin American Studies programs in Latin American countries: "Academic Quality, Individual Safety, and Home University Confidence." Elizabeth also suggested that CLASP work with APLAC to generate useful information on Spanish summer language programs and to maintain some kind of listing on our already established website for lesser taught language programs. Discussion was held and it was agreed that members of CLASP would try to look critically, using some of the criteria of the above-mentioned report, at any study abroad programs they either sponsor or visit. This information will be forwarded to Sharon S. Mújica who, in collaboration with the Language Committee, will design a format for posting information on the website. A partial listing should be available by summer 2000. A hardcopy will also be available in the same format as the list of Latin American lesser taught language programs which can be obtained from Sharon Mújica at the Duke-UNC Program in Latin American Studies.