



2009 DEMONSTRATION PROJECT FULL PROPOSAL

Due: July 1, 2009

Project Title: Representing South Asia: An Integrative Approach

Submitted by:

Name: Jason Freitag, Anjali Nerlekar, Denise Nuttall

Department: History, English, Anthropology

Title: Assistant Professors

Email: jf Freitag@ithaca.edu, anerlekar@ithaca.edu, dnuttall@ithaca.edu

Total Funding Requested: \$2,200.00

*Proposals should be submitted to Janet Wigglesworth, Interim Assistant Provost (jwiggles@ithaca.edu). Electronic submissions are preferred.
Due July 1, 2009.*

Representing South Asia: An Integrative Approach

Overview

We propose to take advantage of a confluence of courses on South Asia in the Fall 2009 semester in order to explore a creative model of interdisciplinary teaching that would serve as a blueprint for multiple, easily deployed, inexpensive and flexible small-scale integrative learning projects across the curriculum.

In the Fall 2009 semester, Jason Freitag will be teaching the history course "South Asia: State & History," which examines the forms of historical writing in and about South Asia over time. Anjali Nerlekar will be teaching the literature course entitled "Postcolonial Identity and Indian Literature," which explores the diverse forces of colonialism, tradition and modernity in modern South Asian literature. Denise Nuttall in Anthropology will teach "South Asia : India and its Neighbors," which analyzes current anthropological debates on South Asia, including issues of caste, gender and national identity.

All of these classes deal with related conceptual and intellectual issues. In previous semesters, essentially by chance, we have shared students who have independently made valuable and interesting connections between our courses. Through this proposal we seek to make these connections more structured, intentional and therefore deeper for the students in our classes. We will do this by offering an interdisciplinary and integrative colloquium to the students enrolled in our courses in order to provide a space for exploring the intersections and disjunctions between our disciplines, topics and methods of study.

Practically, we envision this new course to be a weekly, 1 credit, Block II offering open only to the students currently enrolled in one of the three courses outlined above. This course would be team facilitated by all three instructors, but would be a student-centered and student-led experience. Students will make panel presentations on topics crafted by the instructors, the goals of which would be to foster discussion and critical exploration of the substantive intersections of the three courses, while also serving as a platform for reflection on the process of making integrative connections across courses and disciplines.

This proposal addresses two different sets of goals. The first, learning goals for the integrative course, would provide the opportunity for students to more deeply engage the material from their individual courses in a more intentional and structured environment. The second goal is to provide both students and faculty an opportunity to reflect on the nature of interdisciplinary study and the process of knowledge integration itself.

From an administrative perspective, the course provides an example of a quickly and easily deployed integrative experience. This proposal provides a model for taking advantage of more coincidental opportunities – such as this confluence of courses on South Asia in the fall – and therefore adds a flexibly responsive tool for quick, creative combinations of topics and integrative experiences. This model directly addresses the core desire of the integrative curriculum concept through its ability to bring people, topics and/or disciplines together. It also has the potential to expand easily within existing course structures at Ithaca College (the block courses), and therefore serve many students across the campus without significant administrative upheaval or cost. This makes the project feasible both in small and large-scale application.

Project Description

Objectives

This demonstration project has the following objectives:

- Explore a creative model of interdisciplinary teaching that would serve as a blueprint for multiple, easily deployed, inexpensive and flexible small-scale integrative learning projects across the curriculum.
- Explore the connections and disjunctions between disciplines in a structured and intentional way.
- Create learning communities for people who have developed a disciplinary or area interest.
- Identify and resolve administrative hurdles to interdisciplinary teaching.
- Create a space for experiential learning, defined here as learning which is student-led and in which the outcome has an element of unpredictability that is both the result of, and is enhanced by the integrative, interdisciplinary nature of the course and the material.
- Identify ways to support and streamline learning experiences that happen off the campus.
- Provide spaces for students to explore learning for its own sake.

Method

In the Fall 2009 semester, Jason Freitag will be teaching the history course "HIST:39201 South Asia: State & History," which examines the forms of historical writing in and about South Asia over time. Anjali Nerlekar will be teaching the literature course entitled "ENGL: 38600 Postcolonial Identity and Indian Literature," which explores the diverse forces of colonialism, tradition and modernity in modern South Asian literature. Denise Nuttall in Anthropology will teach "ANTH: 22500 South Asia : India and its Neighbors," which analyzes current anthropological debates on South Asia, including issues of caste, gender and national identity.

This demonstration project involves the creation of a weekly, 1 credit, Block II offering in the Fall 2009 semester. This course will be open only to the students currently enrolled in one of the three courses outlined above (approximately 60 students), with a maximum enrollment in the demonstration course of 10-12 students. This course would be team facilitated by all three instructors, but would be a student-centered and student-led experience. Students will make presentations on topics crafted by the instructors, the goals of which would be to foster discussion and critical exploration of the substantive intersections of the three courses, while also serving as a platform for reflection on the process of making integrative connections across courses and disciplines.

The course will be structured in the following way:

- Instructors will rotate as discussion facilitators. All instructors will attend and participate in all classes.
- Students will be organized into interdisciplinary groups, with no two of the same majors in any group (e.g., History paired with Anthropology, English with History, etc.).
- Each class will feature a student group presentation.
- Presentation topics will reflect issues in South Asian studies and larger integrative themes:
 - The individual (caste, religion)
 - The political body (village, nation)
 - Gender

- Students will be required in final projects to make a critical analysis of each of the three perspectives (anthropological, historical, literary) as they come to bear on their chosen topic. The focus of the final project will be the conversations and discontinuities between the disciplines. Possible projects include:
 - Examination of a particular event (e.g., the partition into India and Pakistan).
 - Examination of realist literature (e.g., the novel Kanthapura on nationalism in village India)
 - Examination of memoir/history (e.g., Nehru's Discovery of India, Sen's Argumentative Indian)
- The texts and issues that are covered in the demonstration project will be those not dealt with directly or in depth in any of the individual feeder classes, making this demonstration a true enhancement to the experience of the feeder class.

The course will also feature an integrative, experiential component. We plan to take a trip to New York City to allow students the opportunity to experience elements of South Asia culture more directly. The trip will have visits to the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Sackler Gallery of South Asian Art, the Hindu Temple Society of North America Ganesh Temple in Flushing, Queens, and then end in Jackson Heights ("Little India") for an Indian dinner and immersion experience in a South Asian diaspora community. Our goal is to expose students to South Asian culture in a variety of settings beyond the classroom, and in a variety of contexts from highly structured and controllable (museum) to much less predictable (neighborhood walking tour), and allow them to use their classroom experiences to understand and integrate their learning in real world settings.

What will the IC Community Learn?

This demonstration project deals with both curricular and administrative issue. From the curricular perspective, the project will:

- Provide a mechanism for making impromptu collaborations among faculty more formal and structured.
- Help IC learn where collaborations are occurring, and where interdisciplinary conversations are naturally happening, in order to allow the college to encourage these conversations further.
- Provide an easily deployable and flexible structure that will allow faculty to focus structured and intentional efforts more clearly on one-time or unique events (e.g., the H&S speaker, a department lecture series, a visiting scholar, etc.).
- Provide a possible model for a more dynamic and flexible way to add integrative work throughout the curriculum in support of general education or individual program requirements. A series of these one-credit integrative courses, for example, could add up to the equivalent of a single full course in a particular curricular area, or fulfill interdisciplinary and integrative requirements distributed throughout the curriculum.
- Provide a program for curricular creativity that is easily and inexpensively expanded on an as needed basis.

Administratively, this demonstration project seeks to identify and resolve administrative barriers to interdisciplinary work within the college. This project will directly address the following questions:

- Where will the course be housed?
- How will the credits be distributed amongst the instructors and their departments?

- Given that student statements differ across departments, what kinds of statements will be required to address an interdisciplinary course? How will these statements be used for individual faculty evaluation and review?
- How will we process the registration/addition of the course to the schedule? What administrative unit will be responsible for basic course support?
- What structures are in place to support off-campus learning experiences and short trips? How can these procedures be streamlined to become more effective and responsive to integrative and experiential learning?

Assessments

We will engage a full program of assessment in reviewing the effectiveness of this course in meeting student learning goals. The assessment will have three components.

- We will draft student learning goals that reflect the integrative and interdisciplinary nature of the course. These goals will reflect the degree to which students are required to make conscious connections between the content issues and disciplinary practices that structure these issues across the three disciplines represented here.
- We will draft learning goals for the instructors that reflect the issues involved in teaching across disciplines and making substantive connections between our fields in ways that are unfamiliar to us. These goals will reflect that the processes of integrative work require intentional effort and are novel, in a classroom setting, to the instructors as well as the students.
- We will engage a professional experience assessment from each instructor that will consist of independent reports from each instructor reviewing their experiences conceptualizing and teaching the course. This will be a reflective exercise designed to help the instructors understand the strengths and weaknesses of the project in order to prepare and refine future projects.

Timeline

This course will occur in Block II of the Fall 2009 semester, beginning October 19, 2009. We would hope for a relatively quick decision on this proposal to allow for our planning and coordination.

Students will enroll in the course during the first half of the semester. The class will be completed by the end of the fall semester, and the assessment piece will take place in the spring and summer of 2010.

Written progress reports will be provided in November (the number of students enrolled, the course syllabus and preliminary observations on student presentations), March (assessment of student learning goals) and August (assessment of the faculty goals, and report on administrative objectives).

Personnel

Jason Freitag, Assistant Professor, History
 Anjali Nerlekar, Assistant Professor, English
 Denise Nuttall, Assistant Professor, Anthropology

Roles

The instructors will serve as co-facilitators of course. Each instructor leads the discussion for two classes, with one team taught class during the semester. Each instructor will attend all classes. Instructors will grade all projects from all students individually, and then collaborate on the assignment of the final grade.

Qualifications

All three instructors have extensive research and teaching experience in our respective disciplines and in the field of South Asian studies in general. All instructors also have personal knowledge and first hand experience of Indian culture, both in India itself and within Indian communities in North America. Two of the three instructors have previous experience with team-taught classes (Jason Freitag at Columbia University, Brooklyn College and Ithaca College; Anjali Nerlekar at the University of Kansas and the University of Pune, India). All three of the instructors have extensive experience with experiential and interdisciplinary learning outside the classroom (All have lead study abroad trips to locations including Mumbai and Maharashtra, India and Istanbul, Turkey; Anjali Nerlekar has run museum trips to New York City from Ithaca College)

Budget

Program Expenses

- Salary: \$1,200, divided evenly between three instructors.
- Travel: \$1,000 for trip to New York City to visit the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the Hindu Temple Society of America Ganesh Temple in Flushing, Queens and Jackson Heights "Little India" to experience South Asian culture more directly through art objects, communities in diaspora, and food.

Program Revenue

No additional tuition will be generated from this course. The credit will be covered by the base tuition payment, which covers up to 18 credit hours per semester.

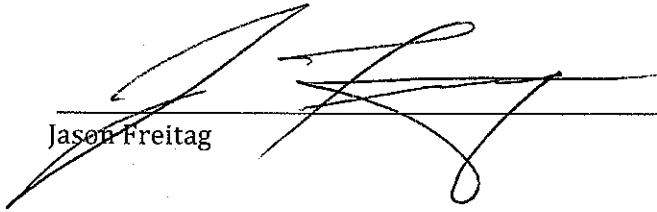
Signatures

Please note that by the deadline we were unable to secure a signature or direct statement of support from Jack Rossen, Chair of the Anthropology Department. Professor Rossen has supported Denise Nuttall's participation in the project throughout, and we will provide his signature as soon as possible.

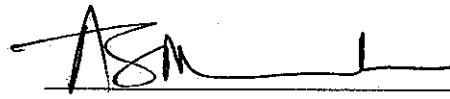
Denise Nuttall is currently in Mumbai, India, but has provided the attached e-mail indicating her commitment to this demonstration project.

Signature Page

Proposal Author:

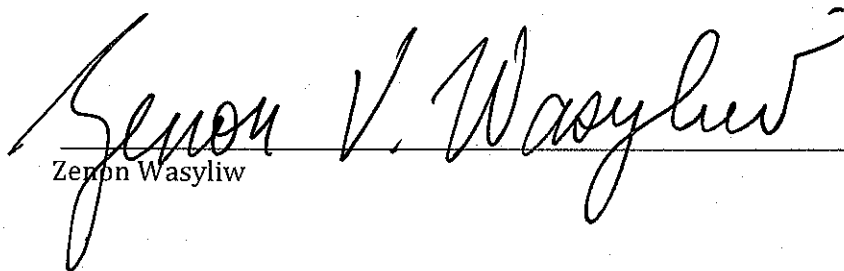

Jason Freitag

Co-Authors:

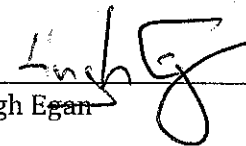

Anjali Nerlekar

Denise Nuttall

History Chair:


Zenon Wasyliw

English Chair:


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Anthropology Chair:

Jack Rossen

H&S Dean:

Leslie Lewis

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Leslie Lewis

From: <dnuttall@ithaca.edu>
Subject: **Re: Integrative Learning Proposal**
Date: June 30, 2009 3:20:00 PM EDT
To: "Jason Freitag" <jfreitag@ithaca.edu>
Cc: dnuttall@ithaca.edu, jrossen@ithaca.edu

Hi Jason,
Just got your message.
This note is to let you know that I do indeed intend to be part of the South Asian block integrative proposal for the fall term of 2009 at IC. I assume that you, Anjali and I will work towards the creation, implementation and analysis of the South Asia block course which focuses on South Asian studies in an interdisciplinary fashion for our interested students at Ithaca college. Please do let me know if you need any further information on this subject,
Yours,
Denise

Denise Nuttall
Assistant Professor
Department of Anthropology
School of Humanities and Sciences
Ithaca College, Ithaca,
New York 14850

----- Original message -----

Date: Fri, 10 Apr 2009 12:26:21 -0400
From: Jason Freitag <jfreitag@ithaca.edu>
Subject: Integrative Learning Proposal
To: jwiggles@ithaca.edu
Cc: Anjali Nerlekar <anerlekar@ithaca.edu>, Denise Nuttall <dnuttall@ithaca.edu>

Dear Assistant Provost Wigglesworth,
Please accept the attached document as a proposal for consideration in the initial round of Integrative Learning Demonstration Projects. Should you have any questions, or need further information, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your attention, and the opportunity to make this application.
Sincerely,
Jason Freitag

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