

Meet Me in Cyberspace! — Shrinking the University Campus Via A Cross-College On-Line Project



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Abstract

Faculty from the foreign language education program in the College of Education and the foreign language department in the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Central Florida in Orlando developed, within the context of their curricula, a collaborative project utilizing an on-line course management program. As a course requirement, beginning Spanish and French students responded electronically in the target language to queries posted on line by their instructors. A second group of students, composed of foreign language education majors, assumed the role of "instructor" within the context of the on-line assignment. They provided constructive feedback on line to the language students. The pilot study spanned a semester, at the end of which both sets of students completed surveys geared toward their particular group. Education majors reflected on the experience from an educator's point of view, while language learners discussed their experiences from a student's perspective. Foreign language education students reacted favorably, as future teachers, to the project. On the contrary, the responses of the foreign language students were mixed. An additional outcome was a newly found interdependence between faculty from both Colleges in the development of quality foreign language education.

Introduction

Colleges within the same university can often seem worlds apart, functioning within their own departmental boundaries. Students and faculty within different colleges often maintain an insular existence, drawn together primarily during interdisciplinary functions. As in numerous other universities, the individual colleges at the University of Central Florida in Orlando have traditionally followed the same segregated mode of operation. However, the university president's recent encouragement of interdisciplinary collaboration (through bonuses, stipends, and other faculty incentives) has produced a marked increase in cross-college curricular development.

Collaborative interdisciplinary endeavors open the door to numerous possibilities. Students and faculty from different programs/colleges can benefit from each other's expertise. Because they often come from diverse backgrounds, they can proffer different perspectives.

Drawing upon each other's strengths, collaborative faculty can provide their students with greater richness and depth in their studies. Research conducted in a variety of disciplines and instructional environments has yielded results validating the benefits of collaboration to both students and faculty (Braun & Robb, 1991; Freeman, 1992; Lorenz & Verdager, 1997).

To assure the success of collaborative efforts, educators need to establish common goals, coordinate their tasks, and delineate the desired outcomes of their partnership (Austin & Baldwin, 1991). During a university faculty summer institute, foreign language education (FLEd) and foreign language (FL) faculty at the University of Central Florida recently addressed all three components as they convened to develop a cross-college project. Although the curricula of both groups of faculty address language instruction, the faculty had not previously functioned in an interdependent fashion. The FLEd program is housed within the College of Education, while the FL department is a component of the College of Arts and Sciences. Although the programs/departments share courses and students, they have functioned relatively independent of each other. The FL department concentrates on the preparation of students to graduate with a Bachelor of Arts in the target language. It also serves non-majors satisfying the university's foreign language graduation requirement. The pedagogical component of teaching a FL drives the FLEd program. Students exiting the FLEd program graduate with a B.S. degree in Foreign Language Education—Spanish or French.

FL faculty and I, the FLEd program coordinator, participated in a weeklong university summer faculty institute in which additional stipends were awarded for interdisciplinary project development and implementation. During this week of intense interaction, we met frequently to share syllabi and brainstorm ways to integrate assignments in our respective courses. I had recently developed a course entitled "FLE 4932, Technology in the Foreign Language Classroom" and wanted to utilize technology to integrate the course requirements with activities in FL classes.

The collaboration of programs resulted in the on-line interaction of students in both FL and FLEd classes. Beginning FL stu-

dents were required to post responses to their instructors' statements/questions via an on-line course management program called Web CT (Course Tools) that runs on the university's server. Web CT is a commercial course-management program that provides communication tools, teacher-developed content, and evaluations. It provides a framework on which courses can be "hung" for manageability.¹ Using this program, instructors posted to a course web site statements such as the following: "Tell me about yourself. What is your name? How old are you? Where do you live?" FLEd students, who were training to become educators, provided written feedback in response to the students' on-line comments. Kern (1998) suggests that computer-based activities can enhance collaboration among language learners at various levels of literacy in the target language. Fast (1998) elaborates: "[On-line communications] provide the learner with an opportunity to maintain connections with instructors, tutors, peer learners, and nationally or internationally located native speakers outside the classroom" (p. 127). Both groups of students were afforded the opportunity to interact with peers, one group functioning as the recipient of peer feedback and the other group providing the feedback. Peer input has been found to be very effective in the development of writing skills, both in one's native language and in one's L2 (Guerrero & Villamil, 1994; Horgan & Barnett, 1991; Stanley, 1992).

Both sets of faculty established common goals, coordinated their responsibilities in the project, and determined the outcomes they sought for themselves and their students. They devised an activity providing a comprehensive instructional experience for their students, while expanding the boundaries of the classroom by creating interaction between two different groups of students. Faculty also provided their students a different mode of assessment, albeit from dissimilar perspectives. Finally, FL faculty wanted an alternative means by which to address the magnitude of written productions generated by their students. (A faculty member typically teaches at least 4 beginning FL classes, each consisting of 30 students.) Except for monitoring the course web site on a regular basis to peruse the quality and quantity of the comments provided by both sets of students, the faculty readily handed over their responsibilities as "instructor" to the FLEd students. The FL faculty members were

thus relieved of the obligation of posting feedback to their students.

Student outcomes desired by both faculty groups were similar: (a) enhanced enjoyment of the assignment due to peer interaction; (b) increased proficiency in the skill to be developed by the activity (either the language or the mode of assessment, depending upon whether one functioned as the “learner” or the “teacher”); and (c) student appreciation of expanding the classroom boundaries (i.e., being able to utilize one’s skills—whether in the language or in the mode of assessment—with someone outside of the class).

Student Background

The motivations of students within the FL department courses vary, depending upon their academic goals. For language majors lacking sufficient proficiency to test out of the beginning courses, these courses constitute the initial courses in a sequence of language classes. For other students, the language courses constitute the content portion of their FLEd major as they progress through the teacher education program within the College of Education. In addition to the language courses, education courses, including two semester-long internships, form the foundation of their major. However, for the vast majority of students enrolled in language courses, the beginning courses merely satisfy a graduation requirement of the university: “Students graduating with a Bachelor of Arts degree must demonstrate proficiency in a foreign language equivalent to one year of college instruction. This requirement may be met either by successful completion of the appropriate college-level course or by examination” (*University of Central Florida Undergraduate Catalog*, 2000-2001, p. 58).

Description of the Study

During the university summer faculty institute, FL faculty decided to begin cross-college collaboration within the context of their beginning Spanish and French classes since those classes already had in place an on-line Web CT component. Faculty, guided by research supporting the value of electronic asynchronous communication in enhancing student use of the language (Beauvois, 1997; Walthers, 1994; Warschauer, 1995), required students on a weekly basis to respond to them on line and in the target language to questions posted on Web CT. The assignment afforded the students opportunities to enhance their reading and writing skills outside of class time. The questions typically asked the students to elaborate on topics discussed in class, thus providing

both additional reinforcement of the material and communicative opportunities. Instructors then reacted to the students’ responses by contributing constructive grammatical feedback and/or continuing the conversation in a natural way. Given the large number of introductory-level classes, tending to this feedback became very time-consuming.

Students in FLE 4932 were education majors who had to demonstrate mastery of the Educator Accomplished Practices, a certification requirement mandated by the Florida Education Standards Commission. The Educator Accomplished Practices consist of a series of teaching principles with key indicators of behavior reflective of each identified principle. These principles provide a model of continuous improvement for educators as they progress from pre-professional to the accomplished practice level. (Florida Department of Education, 1996).

One of the teaching principles in which education majors must demonstrate competency is assessment. Faculty in the summer institute discovered a natural fit between the need to provide feedback to the entry-level language students’ responses on Web CT, and the FLEd students’ need for practice in a different mode of assessment. Thus a collaborative relationship was formed between both sets of students and their respective faculty. Beginning students would continue to respond to queries posted by their instructors. However, instead of the FL instructors addressing the written productions, FLE 4932 students would reply to them weekly by providing both indirect and direct grammatical feedback. Since there were only four FLE 4932 students (three Spanish education students and one French education student), only four beginning FL classes (three Spanish and one French) were included in the study, one class per student.

To orient the FLEd students, one of the FL instructors met with the class to demonstrate how to access the Web CT course account and how to respond to the students’ replies to the questions/statements presented by the course instructor. She and I taught them to focus on meaningful communication and to continue dialogue in a natural way, providing correction of errors by modeling and requesting clarification. Overt grammar correction and explanation of grammatical rules were to be used only as a last resort.

The education majors were also coached in web etiquette and in the provision of tactfully-stated constructive feedback. The students were reminded to maintain their “teacher persona” and to serve as

motivational facilitators in the learning process of their “students.” Under the guidance of the FL instructor, they were then given hands-on time at the computer to gain the competence and confidence for the successful completion of the assignment.

In order to monitor students’ performance of their respective roles in this assignment, faculty from both programs accessed the web site weekly. This project spanned the entire semester and served as a pilot study for future interdisciplinary projects to be carried out between both programs/departments. It afforded a number of different opportunities: (a) language students communicated with peers in another class and received prompt feedback; (b) education students received practical experience in a novel medium for informal assessment; and (c) faculty collaborated across disciplines.

At the end of the semester, both sets of students completed surveys geared toward their particular group. In other words, education majors were provided with a survey that addressed their observations/concerns from an educator’s standpoint. The survey completed by the language students questioned them from a learner’s viewpoint.

During the last class meeting of FLE 4932, the author administered the education major survey, which consisted entirely of open-ended questions ranging from the students’ enjoyment of the assessment mode to their opinions concerning the adequacy of the computer facilities. All four FLEd students completed the survey and their open-ended responses are provided in the next section of this article.

The first seven questions in the survey administered to the language students required them to respond to statements along a five-point Likert scale that ranged from “Strongly Disagree” to “Strongly Agree.” The statements were the following: (a) The feedback was helpful; (b) The feedback was easy to understand; (c) The feedback was stated tactfully; (d) The feedback was stated in an encouraging way, making me want to continue the activity; (e) I would have preferred receiving feedback from my professor; (f) I would have liked to have met the foreign language education students so I would know with whom I was communicating; and (g) The overall experience was positive. The latter portion of the survey consisted of five open-ended questions ranging from the most valuable feedback received from the FLEd students to suggestions for modifications to the assignment.

Three faculty members (two instructors and one adjunct professor) from the FL

department and I participated in the study. Instructors A and B each taught sections of SPN 1120, the beginning-level Spanish language and civilization course. Instructor C taught FRE 1120, the beginning-level French language and civilization course. Although the Web CT responses were a course assignment, not all FL students completed the surveys at the end of the semester. Consequently, the survey responses obtained were from students who chose to complete the survey, a total of 34.²

Results

Reactions of FLEd Students

Overall, education majors' responses were overwhelmingly positive, although the students did express a desire to have some face-to-face interaction with the language students. FLEd students found the unique mode of assessment to be challenging, yet intriguing because of its novelty with respect to the typical classroom setting. They also appreciated the opportunity to become familiar with the typical types of grammatical, syntactical, and lexical errors that they will encounter guiding second-language learners through the natural stages of language acquisition.

The first statement to which the students responded was the following: "This activity provided you with experience in the assessment of students within a 'virtual' learning environment. Did you enjoy this mode of assessment? Why or why not?" Most of the students indicated that they appreciated developing and refining skills that they would eventually put into practice as educators. The comment of one student, however, did convey concern:

Yes and No. Yes because it allowed me to use my evaluation skills as a future teacher and I had fun and no problems doing it. And no, because this mode does not necessarily mean that the students fully understood my feedback.

When queried about whether they made a conscious effort to respond in a way so as to encourage the learners to continue to participate in this activity, the FLEd students responded affirmatively. One student elaborated:

I gave them feedback in the most basic and simple way I know how. I still praised them for doing a great job, even when they made many basic mistakes. The fact that they are trying to participate means a lot to me as a teacher; so I think that they deserve a big hand of applause anyway.

Opinions were mixed regarding whether they found the assignment to be time-

consuming. Three of the students indicated that the assignment had not required much of their time while one stated, "Very much so."

Students were also asked if they would prefer to have met the FL students so they would know with whom they were communicating. Three of the students responded affirmatively:

- *Yes, because I don't know if they knew why I was correcting their letters. If they knew who I was first, they would be more apt to respond.*
- *Definitely. A relationship with the student would be a good idea because it helps you understand who the student is.*
- *Yes, I would have loved that. I think that it would have been more interesting and more constructive for both of us (student/teacher). Because they may have had many questions to ask me that may help them in their assignments and learning.*

When asked to specify the most valuable lesson learned from this activity, FLEd students indicated that they gained considerable insight into their students' cognitive processing and were impressed with the variety of responses and the similarity of grammatical mistakes most frequently committed. One reflected on the role of the teacher within this unique instructional context: "The most valuable thing I have learned from this activity is the mentoring and coaching skills. I think that the role of a teacher is not only lecturing and teaching but also directing and serving as a guiding light."

When asked what, if any, modifications they would make to the assignment, one student suggested gearing the topics of the on-line questions more toward the learners' interests. Another response, echoed by several students, emphasized, "I would have arranged for the students (at least some of them) to meet with their coach (student-teacher) so that the relationship will be more meaningful to both parties."

When asked about what they enjoyed most about the assignment, students stated that they enjoyed utilizing the technology to provide feedback to "real students performing real assignments." The final question asked whether the overall experience was a positive or negative one. All four students responded in the affirmative, but one missed the "direct personal contact with the students."

Reactions of FL Students

To facilitate reader interpretation of the tables, the 5-category Likert scale

responses of the FL students were collapsed into three categories: (a) Disagree; (b) Neutral; and (c) Agree.

Contrary to the comments expressed by the FLEd students, Spanish and French students' reactions to the collaborative assignment ran the gamut (see Table 1). In addition, some faculty were inundated by semester-end projects and exams and confessed to administering the surveys in a hurried fashion. Thus, in order to determine whether student responses may have differed because of extraneous variables (e.g., instructor explanation of and/or enthusiastic support of the Web CT collaborative assignment, context within which the survey was presented, explained, and administered, collected, etc.), the data for the seven Likert scale responses are also presented per class instructor (see Tables 2, 3, and 4).

As mentioned previously, the reactions from the language students were mixed. Thirty-two percent of the 34 FL students appreciated feedback from a peer. Some students felt that the feedback did not affect their use of the language. Several students expressed a preference for one-on-one interaction rather than asynchronous written communication. Since a number of students expressed their resentment of the entire university FL requirement; it is my opinion that the overall negative evaluation they accorded the assignment may have been a generalization of this resentment.

Students in the FL classes also answered five open-ended items. Student quotes are coded (A), (B), or (C) per instructor designation.

Question 8 asked the students if knowing that they would communicate with fellow students encouraged them to participate more frequently in the Web CT activity. Twelve of the 28 students who responded to this question indicated that their awareness did not motivate them to participate with greater frequency. The unanimously negative comments of the seven French students who answered this item suggested outside factors that may have influenced student responses. Most of the negative responses conveyed students' difficulty in accessing the Web site and sorting through the numerous postings. They found the cumulative listing of students' comments and lack of menu-driven directions, characteristics of this particular software program, overwhelming, confusing, and frustrating. The following responses are representative of these students' complaints:

- *Not really, very confusing. (C)*
- *No, everything was complicated and disorganized. (C)*

Table 1

SPN 1120 and FRE 1120 Students' Responses to the Quantitative Survey Items

SPN 1120 and FRE 1120 students, N = 34	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1. The feedback was helpful.	12	6	16
2. The feedback was easy to understand.	11	4	19
3. The feedback was stated tactfully.	9	6	19
4. The feedback was stated in an encouraging way, making me want to continue the activity.	11	6	17
5. I would have preferred receiving feedback from my professor.	3	9	21
6. I would have liked to have met the foreign language education students so I would know with whom I was communicating.	14	13	6
7. The overall experience was positive.	11	4	19

Note: Even though n = 34, two items of data are missing due to lack of student response.

Table 3

Instructor B's SPN 1120 Students' Responses to the Quantitative Survey Items

Instructor B SPN 1120, n = 14	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1. The feedback was helpful.		2	12
2. The feedback was easy to understand.		2	12
3. The feedback was stated tactfully.		2	12
4. The feedback was stated in an encouraging way, making me want to continue the activity.		3	11
5. I would have preferred receiving feedback from my professor.		3	10
6. I would have liked to have met the foreign language education students so I would know with whom I was communicating.	7	4	3
7. The overall experience was positive.		2	12

Note: Even though n = 14, one item of data is missing due to lack of student response to one statement.

• *The experience was so frustrating that I could have cared less. (C)*

In addition, the majority of the responses from the French students reflected their

overall distaste toward every aspect of the assignment. One French student spewed hostility as he scribbled, "Destroy the program and fire all people involved [sic]." The overwhelmingly negative

Table 2

Instructor A's SPN 1120 Students' Responses to the Quantitative Survey Items

Instructor A SPN 1120, n = 8	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1. The feedback was helpful.	1	4	3
2. The feedback was easy to understand.	1	2	5
3. The feedback was stated tactfully.		2	6
4. The feedback was stated in an encouraging way, making me want to continue the activity.	2	1	5
5. I would have preferred receiving feedback from my professor.		2	6
6. I would have liked to have met the foreign language education students so I would know with whom I was communicating.	2	3	2
7. The overall experience was positive.		2	6

Note: Even though n = 8, one item of data is missing due to lack of student response to one statement.

Table 4

Instructor C's FRE 1120 Students' Responses to the Quantitative Survey Items

SPN 1120 and FRE 1120 students, N = 34	Disagree	Neutral	Agree
1. The feedback was helpful.	11		1
2. The feedback was easy to understand.	10		2
3. The feedback was stated tactfully.	9	2	1
4. The feedback was stated in an encouraging way, making me want to continue the activity.	9	2	1
5. I would have preferred receiving feedback from my professor.	3	4	5
6. I would have liked to have met the foreign language education students so I would know with whom I was communicating.	5	6	1
7. The overall experience was positive.	11		1

nature of the comments led me to wonder whether these students had received adequate instruction in the use of Web CT. The Spanish instructors, whose curricula had included this assignment for

several semesters, were clearly proficient in this program. However, I was unaware of the French instructor's level of familiarity with the program. Student confusion and frustration would certainly be expected if lack of sufficient technological preparation, through no fault of their own, hindered their successful completion of the course assignment.

The remaining nine students responding to Question 8 stated that they appreciated the opportunity to "communicate with others and make friends." They also believed that communicating with peers enhanced the level of interest in the Web CT assignment.

FL students were also asked to respond to the question: "What was the most valuable feedback you received from the foreign language education students?" Eight of the 21 students who responded to Question 9 stated that none of the feedback had been of value. The remaining 13 students appreciated learning how to express themselves in more than one way. They commented favorably on the students' explanations of their lexical, grammatical, and syntactical errors. The students described the benefits of the FLEd students' feedback:

- *They helped me say things better and in more than one way. (A)*
- *Helped me recognize words (vocabulary). (A)*
- *The student helped me realize that I have a problem with gender identification. Everything was in masculine form. Their response helped me correct that problem. (B)*
- *Basically how to write better and understand the language more (B).*
- *Varied the given feedback and gave another's point of view. (B)*
- *That they evaluated your individual writings and you could see exactly in black and white what your mistakes were. (B)*

FL students were also asked whether they would make any modifications to this assignment. Five of the 25 students who responded to this question stated that the assignment was satisfactory as is. Several students complained of difficulties posting and sorting through messages. Two students disliked the lack of personal interaction with their "instructor" peers:

- *It would be nice to meet and talk to the person who was checking my stuff so we can learn and help each other. (B)*
- *More conversation exchange. (B)*

When asked what they liked most about the assignment, five students of the 21 who answered this question responded with a version of the following statement: "I liked communicating outside of class." (A) Four students appreciated being able to write in a conversational format, rather than writing compositions. Many of these students also viewed the assignment as a means by which they could review vocabulary and the concepts taught in class each week. The comments of five others conveyed their appreciation of the benefits afforded by technology. The following quotes are illustrative:

- *I like the fact that it was on the Internet, had a set time to get it done, and the fact that I can do it whenever. (B)*
- *It was convenient for me and taught me how to use the "special" keyboard commands. (B)*

The final question asked the students for suggestions regarding further collaborative activities that could be implemented in their FL classes. Twelve students responded to this question. Four students stated that they could not offer any suggestions, while two others confessed that they did not understand the question. Two students requested more Web-based material. In addition, three students expressed the desire for more interaction between the two groups of students:

- *I do believe that all foreign languages need to have an interactive segment. It does not have to be the Internet, although that is the most effective way. (B)*
- *It would be to meet with others, talk, get to know one another, maybe once, or meet at least one time a week for an hour to discuss things about the course. (B)*
- *A common holiday party where we'd have to speak only Spanish. (B)*

Discussion

Overall, FLEd students responded favorably to the project, despite the fact that it was a requirement. They appreciated the opportunity to develop their skills in assessment and to participate in a new form of assessment. They liked interacting with the language students in a facilitative manner. In addition, gaining an awareness of beginning language learners' common mistakes was an unexpected benefit. Their only significant complaint concerned the lack of face-to-face interaction with the students to whom they were providing feedback. As Beauvois (1997) noted, "The motivation to know who this person is and not just

his or her name seems to be part of this type of communication. ...Students seem eager to match log-in names with faces and ideas" (p. 176).

All of the above experiences related directly to the FLEd students' preparation as future educators. Thus perhaps this group of students viewed the assignment as more relevant to their careers than did the language students. Having already completed their general education requirements, the FLEd students were currently taking courses within their area of specialization. They thus had a vested interest in gleaning meaning from as many new experiences afforded by their education courses as possible. They viewed the Web CT assignment as such an experience and appreciated the unique mode of assessment of the interaction with students that it provided.

The mixed reactions obtained from the FL students were not surprising, given that the majority of this population was enrolled in the course for the sole purpose of fulfilling the university FL requirement. As reflected in several survey responses, many of these students were extremely resentful of this graduation requirement. A number of the unfavorable comments could have reflected their overall negative feelings toward the requirement and/or the project.

Several students, particularly those in the French class, did not feel that the interaction with peer "instructors" had any influence over their enjoyment of the activity, their increased achievement in the language, or the frequency with which they participated in the activity. However, students in the Spanish classes generally reacted favorably to the interdisciplinary component of the assignment. They were appreciative of the interaction with peers. They also felt that they benefited from the grammatical, lexical, and syntactical feedback and explanations afforded by the FLEd students' comments. A number of students also believed that the assignment enhanced their ability to communicate in the language. They also appreciated using the computer as the medium for communication. Without exception, all of the positive comments came from the Spanish students.

Student responses may have also been affected by faculty variables. Three of the four FL instructors were adjunct professors or visiting instructors who faced tremendous time commitments due to instructional responsibilities at multiple educational institutions. Their large teaching loads may have prevented the FL instructors from having the time or interest to "sell" the project to their students. For them it was but a single activity in the

midst of myriad other obligations. Lacking in time, energy, and interest, they might not have been able to communicate the degree of enthusiasm for the activity exhibited by me, who had fewer students and whose primary obligation was to a single institution.

In addition, of all of the instructors involved in the project, I was probably most aware of the immediate value of such an interactive activity to my students. Appreciative of the opportunity to experience a unique mode of assessment that this assignment afforded my education students, I functioned as a "cheerleader" when presenting the assignment to her students. As enthusiasm can be contagious, my students' favorable reaction to my explanation may have easily influenced their responses to the survey.

Worlds Apart No More: Continuing Our Collaborative Journey

As a result of this pilot study, faculty in the FL department and the FLEd program at this university plan to analyze further the responses of the two groups of students to determine means by which to enhance the experience so that both groups realize equal benefits from the collaborative assignment. Plans are also being made to conduct another study, one with much tighter control and commitment to participation. Since both groups expressed the desire for face-to-face interaction, faculty will look for ways that students can interact at the beginning and end of the semester, perhaps through introductions at the beginning and follow-up processing at the end. The provision for such interaction will require extensive coordination of scheduling between the two colleges.

As noted by Austin and Baldwin (1991), successful collaborative endeavors are dependent upon the partners' establishment of common goals, coordination of the steps necessary to accomplish those goals, and the specification of the desired outcomes of the partnership. Although the faculty did engage in these activities, it is apparent that more extensive planning needs to be conducted between faculty concerning precise goals and means by which to effect those goals in order to lessen the influence of extraneous variables.

One such variable that became readily apparent in both students and instructors was a lack of proficiency in the usage of Web CT. Faculty can easily avail themselves of free Web CT workshops that are offered regularly on our campus to faculty. It would then behoove instructors, once adept at using Web CT, to dedicate at least one class session to teaching the

program to their students and providing them with an opportunity to practice using it. Mini-workshop should also be scheduled throughout the semester for students requiring additional practice. By developing technological skills in these workshops, they will be able to focus more fully on the communicative aspect of the assignment.

FL faculty and I are currently exploring other interdisciplinary activities to enhance our own collaboration and our students' interaction with each other. My students would clearly benefit from exposure to as many instructional opportunities as possible. The FL students, as evidenced in survey responses, felt that they benefited from peer feedback but requested some face-to-face interaction. To address these needs, both groups of faculty are currently trying to develop tutorial sessions for the FL students during which my students can serve as instructors. We have also proposed having my students collaborate with the FL instructors to prepare and teach mini-lessons within their 1000-level foreign language curriculum. In light of scheduling nightmares, our main obstacle is currently logistical.

In conclusion, the cross-college project has significantly paved the way for future collaborative projects. Working closely together forged bonds between both sets of faculty and their respective students. Even though the resultant student attitudes and linguistic achievement were not as definitive or as positive as faculty hoped, faculty developed a mutual respect, appreciation, and sensitivity to each other's programs. Both programs/departments now operate with a newly developed interdependence, regularly consulting each other before programmatic revisions or initiatives are enacted. No longer worlds apart, the FL department and FLEd program at this university now function as a collaborative team focused on the enhancement of quality FL education.

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Endnotes

- 1 WebCT may be accessed at the following URL: <http://www.webct.com>
- 2 Eight of the 30 students in Instructor A's Spanish classes responded. Two sections taught by Instructor B participated. Seven of the 27 students in one of her classes and seven of the 28 in her other class completed the survey. Twelve of the 25 students enrolled in the French course completed the survey.