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Transboundary Educational Experiences

Foundations for Learning and Research

Rationale: Hinckley
 Design, Organization, & Planning : Smith
 Pedagogical Foundation: Breslow & Flores

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Interest in Canada & Transboundary Learning Experience

- Nearest international neighbor
- Shared borders (nation/nation, state/province)
- Borderless for aboriginal people
- Perceived “shared environmental problems”
- From fit with our NSF-sponsored Integrative Graduate Education & Research Traineeship grant to critical component

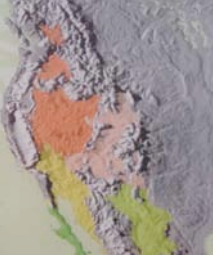
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Perspective



Familiar



Not-Familiar

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Borderless environment, but ...

- Perception, Regulation and Solutions to ‘shared’ environmental problems the same or not the same.
- If not the same, why?
- Foundation for an intensive learning experience using place, problems, and stakeholders as the learning environment.
- What opportunities exist for learning and research?

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Learning and Research

- Pedagogical issues:
 - Value: Experiential learning, place-based - powerful
 - Level: Freshman to Faculty (IGERT students; new faculty bus tour)
 - Context: Completeness, follow-up
- Research issues: framing, contrast & comparison, thoroughness (e.g., sewage disposal regulations on the San Juan and Gulf Islands).

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Strengths & Weaknesses



- Problem: Solving local forest use issues: Example: NE WA Forestry Coalition
 - Meet members of the Coalition
 - Toured the Vaagen Brothers Mill
 - Hiked in the Kettle Mountains
 - No Canadian comparison
 - Not all of the stakeholders
 - Single point in time
 - Awareness of border?
 - Successful story (gives particular impression)
 - Individual relationships important

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Research Example: Role of Aboriginal Peoples in Providing Habitat to Endangered Species (e.g., mountain caribou, salmon)

Role of family; concept of border

- Native Americans
- Treaty rights
- Reservations
- Endangered Species Act
- Trust/Sovereign Lands
- Federal, State, Private
- First Nations
- No treaty rights
- Reserves
- Species At Risk Act
- Federal Land
- Federal, Province, Private

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Trip design, Trip organization, & Logistical planning

- How do you design a trip around your objectives?
 - complexity & interconnectedness
 - highlight socio-economic, ecologic, and legal "web"
 - place-based learning
 - what changes as we move between places? Complexity (no); issues (not really); stakeholders (maybe); place itself (yes - explore it!)
 - multiple "perspectives"
 - disciplinary (natural science, economic, legal)
 - stakeholders/values (conservation, business, academic, community-based, government)
 - historical (how does time perspective influence the issue)

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Trip design, Trip organization, & Logistical planning

- No limit of issues, so who do you know?
 - pick up the phone – who shares your enthusiasm? Their recommendations?
- Encourage diversity of places and people
 - look for issues that are in various stages of resolution
 - ex. national forest management/sawmill; climate change/beetle
- Think about sequence if possible
 - start w/ journal session; end with UBC symposium
 - move from less-resolved to more-resolved to give students sense of potential solutions to really tough questions
- Explore the areas you visit
 - canoe Diablo Lake
 - visit Nk'Mip Winery
- Allow for reflection
 - oops ☹

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Trip design, Trip organization, & Logistical planning

- Confirming speakers/sites
 - initial approach (phone call)
 - follow-up confirmation letter (stress desire for information needs to avoid dog/pony show)
 - 2nd phone call to discuss presentation
 - final email reminder w/ all logistics sorted
 - helps if you can offer lunch/lodging to non-profit folks

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Trip design, Trip organization, & Logistical planning cont.

- Visualize your entire trip!
 - think about drive times – best to drive at night and get fresh early morning starts
 - plan enough time for border crossings
 - plan for lunches and dinners – reservations for big groups, know where you're going
 - water/snacks in the vans
 - directions in each van
 - be prepared for changes

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Trip design, Trip organization, & Logistical planning - Time


- Design: 1 week to set objectives & brainstorm ideas
- Organization: Expect to talk to 5-10 people for every 1 person you confirm
 - ~25 speakers; 4-5 months to organize
 - Make it easy for them (multiple contact points, organize their lunch, suggest carpooling, send thank-you notes)
- Logistics hints:
 - Book lodging asap
 - Tell confirmed speakers it is their responsibility to replace themselves if they back out (it happened & they did!)
 - Allow enough time for trip preparation (van pickup, shopping, packing)
 - A pre-trip BBQ to make sure everyone is on board

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Pedagogical Component

- Importance of facilitated learning
 - Make time for reflection & examination
 - Create mechanisms for processing, making meaning, synthesizing
 - Facilitate individual & group processing



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Course Pedagogical Goals

- Field trip was foundation for year-long seminar, with these goals:
 - Prepare for MCCE IGERT expectations
 - International collaboration
 - Pedagogical internship
 - Develop effective models for interdisciplinary collaboration
 - Build cultural and multinational sensitivity for effective & ethical international collaboration

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Fieldtrip Pedagogical Goals

- Build community that will last all year
- Introduce challenges of interdisciplinary, international environmental research
 - Demonstrate complexity of problems
 - Initiate awareness of diverse disciplinary, stakeholder & cultural perspectives
 - Prevent potential misunderstanding and conflict associated with these differences
 - Emphasize comfort with ambiguity
 - Encourage creative thinking – new models needed!

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Pedagogical Tools

- Readings, activities, assignments emphasize:
 - Place-based observation & reflection
 - Reflection on own perspective
 - Multiple points of view
 - Ambiguity & self-questioning
- Chronology of activities is key
 - Plan for mix of community-building, work, fun
- Flexibility is key
 - Pay attention to individual & group dynamics & needs
 - Change if needed; roll with unexpected trip events

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Preparatory Readings

Logan, J.A. and J.A. Powell. 2001. Ghost forests, global warming and the mountain pine beetle (Coleoptera: Scolytidae). *American Entomologist* 147: 160 – 172.

Nash, L. 2000. "The changing experience of nature: Historical encounters with a northwest river." *Journal of American History* 86(4): 1600-1629.

Newell, W.H. 1994. *Designing Interdisciplinary Courses*, from *Interdisciplinary Studies Today*, Jossey-Bass.

Pedynowski, D. 2003. Prospects for Ecosystem Management in the Crown of the Continent Ecosystem, Canada-United States: Survey & Recommendations. *Conservation Biology* 17(5): 1261-1269



Running, S.W. 2006. Is global warming causing more, larger wildfires? *Science* 313: 927 – 928.

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Introduction – first evening

- Process journaling activity
- Intro to course & fieldtrip
- Intro to major challenges of interdisciplinary collaboration (Newell reading)
- Prepare for ambiguity & discomfort (hand-clasping)
- Ice-breaker ("two truths and a lie")

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Observe as Researcher




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UBC Symposium

- Water management, salmon conservation, grasslands conservation, pine beetle outbreak
- Problems with borders in environmental management
- Importance of interpersonal relationships
- Positions v. interests
- Problem of perceptions of science
- More tomorrow at 2pm!



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Mock Interdisciplinary Research Proposals


- Topic: Management of Upper Skagit Watershed
 - Disciplinary teams
 - What is problem? What is question?
 - Methods? Data to collect? Analysis?
 - What is your metaphor/model for interdisciplinary collaboration?
 - Poster
 - Compare & discuss

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Reflection Paper

- Another chance to process
- Reflect on course goals & questions with examples from fieldtrip
- Serves as reference point for rest of year




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What worked?

- Initiated good group dynamic
- Initiated awareness of complexity & boundaries in environmental problems
- Initiated awareness of disciplinary differences
- Continues to provide source of examples & experiences
- Set stage for work to date




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What could have improved?

- More time for reflection
- More planning for facilitation
- UBC symposium rushed, stressful (but still successful): introduce earlier
- Mock proposal assignment – too much too soon: scale down
- How to provide similar experience for newcomers?



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