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Integrative Learning Project Report: Disseminating the collective wisdom of participants

Review of *Integrative Learning: Opportunities to Connect*, the public report of the Integrative Learning Project sponsored by the Association of American Colleges and Universities and The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching. Edited by Mary Taylor Huber, Cheryl Brown, Pat Hutchings, Richard Gale, Ross Miller, and Molly Breen. Stanford, CA, January 2007. Available at: <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/elibrary/integrativelearning>

Reviewed by Jeannie Brown Leonard, George Mason University.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities' (AAC&U) mission includes championing liberal learning for undergraduate students in all fields of study.¹ Through thoughtful self-reflection, AAC&U staff members help institutions plan for systemic change needed to embrace a student learning-centered identity. AAC&U recently partnered with the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, "an independent policy and research center," on a project on integrative learning. I was interested in the work of the Integrative Learning Project (ILP), especially since my dissertation (completed two months after this report was released) focused on integrative learning. Although very different in their aims, the work of the ILP and my research are complementary.

Integrative learning has been touted as a desired learning outcome for undergraduate students by several national organizations and scholars (AAC&U, 2002, 2005, 2007; Baxter Magolda & King, 2004; Newell, 1999; Thompson Klein, 2005; Seabury, 1999). These scholars and organizations emphasized the importance of colleges and universities embracing a learning-centered approach, intentionally cultivating desired learning outcomes, and included integrative learning as one of the essential learning outcomes of the 21st century. Indeed, the increased interest in integrative learning is embedded in a larger movement to create campuses that are attentive to student learning in all aspects of their operation. Reflective of this broad

scope, student affairs professional organizations also have embraced the learning centered approach as well as integrative learning as a desired goal. These organizations make the case that student affairs professionals need to collaborate with faculty and other administrators to promote student learning (AAHE, ACPA, & NASPA, 1998; Keeling, 2004).

Given this climate of heightened attention to integrative learning, AAC&U and the Carnegie Foundation invited institutions to participate in the Integrative Learning Project (ILP) to "develop and assess advanced models and strategies to help students pursue learning in more intentional, connected ways." The project coordinators selected 10 diverse institutions from the 139 applicants for this three-year endeavor that included six formal meetings of small teams representing the participating campuses. Included in this project were two Associate's Colleges (College of San Mateo, La Guardia Community College), three Baccalaureate Colleges (Carleton College, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, and University of Charleston), three Master's Colleges and Universities (Philadelphia University, Salve Regina University, and State University of New York College at Oswego), and two Doctorate-granting Universities (Michigan State University, Portland State University). The ways in which these campuses and the other applicants defined integrative learning and proposed to enhance integrative learning locally varied greatly (DeZure, Babb, & Waldmann, 2005).

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ILP Report ...

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The projects represented by the ILP institutions include:

- expanding learning communities on campus,
- redesigning general education requirements to be more attentive to integration,
- developing integrated capstone courses,
- designing and implementing electronic portfolios,
- crafting more intentional ways for study abroad to serve as an integrative experience for students,
- revising the second and third years of a general education program,
- creating an integrative and interdisciplinary first-year program,
- linking general education and professional education more intentionally,
- developing integrated learning assignments that match broader learning outcomes at the institution, and
- integrating key literacies across students' educational experiences.

Participation in the ILP allowed institutions to make marked progress toward their goals and to learn from each other. The public report of the ILP, *Integrative Learning: Opportunities to Connect*, is an entirely web-based document comprised of summaries and papers produced by the project staff as well as separate sections written by the participating institutions describing the specific nature of the projects and their status. Also included in the report are two video clips from the presidents of the sponsoring organizations. Lee Shulman of the Carnegie Foundation addresses the link between integrative learning and integrity, and Carol Geary Schneider from AAC&U discusses integrative learning as an important part of liberal education. One of the espoused goals of the ILP is to disseminate the collective wisdom of the participating campuses so that others can benefit from the thinking and insights that emerged from

this intensive attention to integrative learning. By adopting a web-based format, the report is easily accessible at no cost to all who are interested.

Integrative Learning: Opportunities to Connect is an insightful and comprehensive presentation of the ILP. Both beginners and those more experienced in thinking about integrative learning can glean helpful ideas from the report. It is a practical document rather than a scholarly piece and, therefore, is not intended to comprehensively address all facets of integrative learning. The report weaves together a vast amount of information ranging from defining the ILP, characterizing integrative learning, considering ways of cultivating integrative learning, and addressing ways to promote change at the campus level. One of the benefits of the web-based approach is that it offers different levels of detail for readers. Helpful links are provided to allow readers to investigate the ideas presented on the main page in greater depth, including articles published in *Peer Review* and essays written by ILP project coordinators. In-depth, institution-specific details also are offered by each of the participating campuses that are accessed through links on the main page of the report. These campus progress reports are “show-and-tell” pieces that are instructive, especially about topics related to the institutional change process. Readers may or may not be interested to know, for example, about the intricacies of the sophomore writing portfolio at Carleton College but might be eager to learn how ILP team members made strategic choices about how to implement their ideas on their campus and how to create institutional change. Learning from example about how campus leaders plan and implement real change in the face of uncertainty or use existing data to persuade campus constituents of the need for change is instructive. As the report mentions, the three-year span of this project was long enough to encounter changes in upper administrative staff, changes

in budgeting priorities, and the loss of some key campus champions for integrative learning. Working through these hurdles was part of the important learning that participants experienced.

Defining Integrative Learning

One of the topics I was most interested in was how the ILP defined integrative learning. In my own research I found no consensus in the professional literature about a definition. The interdisciplinary studies literature grapples most directly with what it means to integrate (Newell, 1998). Although interdisciplinary work is heralded as the “most familiar vehicle for integrative learning,” the report suggests that integration also is important within disciplines. Integrative learning clearly has something to do with connection making, but what is being connected and how are ill defined. The ILP embraces a broad definition summarized in *A Statement on Integrative Learning*. The four areas of integration mentioned in the *Statement* include “connecting skills and knowledge from multiple sources and experiences; applying theory to practice in various settings; utilizing diverse and even contradictory points of view; and understanding issues and positions contextually.” Other parts of the report encourage individual institutions to define integrative learning for themselves. Doing so requires faculty and staff to engage in a process of reflection to identify the defining elements of integrative learning within their distinctive institutional history. The point of institutions shaping their expectations for student learning within their own context is well taken and serves an important first step to assessment. However, might some overarching consensus of what it means to be an integrative learner be helpful to our conversations about it? Without a shared understanding of integrative learning, we risk confusion over what integrative learning looks like in our students, and we lose the chance to learn from each other about ways to intentionally foster it. The report claims that many forms

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Evaluating interdisciplinary research:

Research Evaluation considers challenges in special issue

Review of the Special Issue of *Research Evaluation* on the Assessment of Interdisciplinary Research, 15:1, April 2006.

Reviewed by Christopher R. Wolfe,¹ Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies, Western College Program, Miami University, Oxford, Ohio.

“The Editor-in-Chief of Duke University Press—known for publishing interdisciplinary works in literary studies and other fields—contends that interdisciplinary work is harder to evaluate than to produce” (Lamont, Mallard & Guetzkow, 43). Although I am not prepared to go that far, clearly interdisciplinary research presents special challenges to those charged with its evaluation, such as peer reviewers of manuscripts and grant proposals. Those challenges are taken up in a special issue of the journal *Research Evaluation*, 15:1, April 2006. The issue addresses the particular problems of assessing interdisciplinary research, with an emphasis on research in the natural sciences. This special issue (published by Beech Tree Publishing, 10 Watford Close, Surrey GU1 2EP, England) emerged from a virtual seminar called Rethinking Interdisciplinarity supported by the French Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique and includes both empirical and theoretical contributions from experts on both sides of the Atlantic.

Four interrelated questions stand at the heart of this exploration of the assessment of interdisciplinary research. The most important question is, “What is quality in interdisciplinary research?” This fundamental question is addressed in some way by all eight articles in the special issue, particularly those written by Irwin Feller and Veronica Boix Mansilla and her colleagues. The processes, procedures, and criteria for assessing interdisciplinary research are explored by Michele Lamont and colleagues, Julie Thompson Klein,

Irwin Feller, and Veronica Boix Mansilla and her colleagues. Potential biases in evaluating interdisciplinary research are considered by Grit Laudel and Gloria Origgi as well as Liv Langfeldt. Finally, to address these biases and ensure quality, Laudel & Origgi and Julie Klein discuss special procedures designed specifically for evaluating interdisciplinary research. Collectively, the articles in this special issue begin to shed light on these thorny issues.

Irwin Feller addresses the assessment of quality in “Multiple actors, multiple settings, multiple criteria: Issues in assessing interdisciplinary research.” He notes that there is a pervasive unease in the research community about the quality of interdisciplinary research. In “Assessing expert interdisciplinary work at the frontier: An empirical exploration” Veronica Boix Mansilla (17) writes: “a re-emerging awareness of interdisciplinarity as a pervasive form of knowledge production is accompanied by an increasing unease about what is often viewed as the ‘dubious quality’ of interdisciplinary work.” Yet with respect to trans-disciplinary and interdisciplinary research proposals, “It is clear that we are losing groundbreaking proposals simply because of the conservatism built into the system,” (Feller, 10) according to the director of the National Institutes of Health Center for Scientific Review, Elvira Ehrenfeld.

Interdisciplinary research is often “assessed in terms of consistency with multiple separate disciplinary perspectives, balance in weaving

together perspectives, and effectiveness,” Feller (11). Feller describes several currently employed direct measures of quality—importance, originality, and rigor—as well as indirect measures—publications, citations, and impact factors. Feller characterizes these as “tripwires” in contemporary debates about interdisciplinary research because they sometimes can be used to bring down worthwhile interdisciplinary proposals, even if the dangers aren’t apparent to interdisciplinary researchers. Boix Mansilla finds that “researchers systematically (and somewhat reluctantly) rely on indirect quality indicators” (18). This can have a number of unintended consequences. For example, it is not clear whether interdisciplinary journals, particularly the newer ones, will be accorded much, if any, weight in assessing scholarly impact. To illustrate, *Issues in Integrative Studies*, is not indexed in the Social Science Citation Index, and thus citations in this journal are not included in the calculation of impact factors.

Boix Mansilla (18-19) defines interdisciplinary research as “a form of inquiry that integrates knowledge and modes of thinking from two or more disciplines (e.g., history, physics) or established fields of study (e.g., ethics, law, the visual arts) to produce a cognitive or practical advancement (e.g., explain a phenomenon, create a product, develop a method, find a solution, raise a question) that would have been unlikely through single disciplinary means.” Thus interdisciplinary research is

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Evaluating interdisciplinary research ...

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purposeful, disciplined, and integrative. In this study of 50 people working in interdisciplinary research institutes she found that conflicting standards of validation were frequently employed. Indeed “in highly innovative work where novel territories are charted and few precedents are available, developing validation criteria is part of the inquiry process itself” (Boix Mansilla, 21). Despite the over-reliance on indirect measures, Boix Mansilla (22-23) was able to develop an epistemic framework for directly assessing quality. The framework has three aspects: “1. The way in which the work stands in relation to what researchers know and find tenable in the disciplines involved (*consistency with multiple disciplinary antecedents*). 2. The way in which the work stands together as a generative and coherent whole (*balance in weaving together perspectives*). 3. The way in which the integration advances the goals that researchers set for their pursuits and the methods they use (*effectiveness in advancing integration of disciplinary views*).”

Boix Mansilla (23) found that “the vast majority of researchers evaluated the degree to which their work was reasonably consistent with antecedent disciplinary knowledge (i.e., accepted methods, preferred conceptualizations, and epistemic values.” Boix Mansilla, Feller, and Gardner (73) add: “A basic premise of quality interdisciplinary work ... is that it satisfies the standards arising from the disciplines involved.” On one level this makes a good deal of sense. After all, who wants to fund research in psychophysics if the physics is lousy? But placing a premium on consistency may threaten the very promise of interdisciplinary research. To illustrate, consider the case of cognitive psychologist Ryan Tweney’s psychohistory of the 19th century scientist Michael Faraday and the discovery of electromagnetic induction (see Tweney, 2007). Drawing on Faraday’s copious notebooks and

other primary sources, Tweney traced the process of hypothesis generation, testing and refinement in exquisite detail producing new insights into the nature of scientific inference and discovery. This body of work dating back to the mid-1980s is highly respected in cognitive science circles. Yet it fails to meet even the most basic accepted methods and epistemic values of psychology. He doesn’t even have a control group! Indeed, to my dismay (though not surprisingly), in preparing for this review I discovered that none of this body of research was included in the three ISI Web of Science databases, the Science Citation Index Expanded, Social Sciences Citation Index, or the Arts & Humanities Citation Index (<http://portal.isiknowledge.com/>). Instead most of Tweney’s research appears in book chapters and journals such as *Bulletin for the History of Chemistry* and *Physics Education*. Perhaps it is for reasons like this that one of Boix Mansilla’s informants remarked, “Interdisciplinarity is a luxury of seniority” (21).

Liv Langfeldt’s “The policy challenges of peer review: Managing bias, conflict of interests and interdisciplinary assessments” examines the peer review process from three perspectives, social dynamics, uncertainty, and organizational. In studying the European Young Investigator Awards Scheme, Langfeldt (37) found that “The success rate for ‘radically’ interdisciplinary applications was 8% (one in 12) whereas 21% of the ‘normal’ applications in the European competition were offered an award.” Langfeldt laments the risk aversion of social-cognitive “gate keeping” mechanisms and the consequences of tightening budgets. However, even as an interdisciplinary scholar, I found myself unconvinced that the acceptance rate *should* be the same for the two groups. I found myself drawing an analogy to baseball players. Typical disciplinary researchers can be likened to hitters who bat for high averages.

They are more likely to get on base with a single or a double but seldom hit home runs. Sluggers, on the other hand, are like Langfeldt’s interdisciplinary researchers. They are more likely to “swing for the fences” and hit a home run. On the other hand, they are also more likely to strike out. Like good ball clubs, good science needs both kinds of players to succeed.

I would have preferred to have seen some kind of two-by-two analysis of the perceived risks and potential payoff of the two kinds of research. Imagine characterizing research proposals as belonging to one of four categories: low risk, high potential payoff; low risk, low potential payoff; high-risk, high potential payoff, and high risk, low potential payoff. Obviously most funding agencies would be very interested in finding proposals in the first category, low risk, high potential payoff. Few would be interested in funding proposals in the fourth category, high risk, low potential payoff. Where things get interesting is in deciding how to divide scarce resources among relatively safe proposals characterized as low risk but with low potential payoff compared to relatively high-risk proposals with high potential payoff. Of course, all analogies break down rapidly under scrutiny. In Lamont, Mallard and Guetzkow’s thoughtful study of 81 panelists, “the main challenge of interdisciplinary evaluation consists in assessing whether the proposal reaches the proper balance between breadth and originality on the one hand, and depth and empirical rigor on the other” (46). Radically interdisciplinary proposals are almost by definition not “normal science” as described by Thomas Kuhn (1962). The extent to which interdisciplinary researchers are “sluggers” is a matter of speculation.

For Grit Laudel (57), “This reliance on peer review is inherently problematic when interdisciplinary research is concerned. Since interdisciplinary research is a new synthesis of expertise,

peers in the strong sense of the word do not exist.” Interestingly, the authors seem to disagree on whether reviewers are biased for or against their own disciplines. Laudel (57) writes, “While sound empirical evidence is scarce, the belief that peer review disadvantages interdisciplinary research is supported indirectly by observing that peers tend to favor research belonging to their own field.” Conversely, Lamont et al. noted that reviewers are sometimes too harsh on proposals drawing heavily on their own disciplines. With multidisciplinary panels this sort of bias can have undue weight because panelists typically follow an unwritten rule of “*deferring to expertise*” (Lamont, et al., 48). My own experience serving on review panels for the National Science Foundation and the U.S. Department of Education is that reviewers are often the most critical of proposals they know the most about. Indeed NSF reviewers are sometimes warned about this potential bias. Whether reviewers are biased against or in favor of their own fields, funding agencies would be well served by monitoring and explicitly cautioning panelists against any disciplinary bias.

Given the potential for bias against interdisciplinary research proposals, Laudel and Origgi (2) argue that “Specific precautions are necessary to make sure that interdisciplinary research is not the loser in the assessment process.” Klein (78) advocates a coaching model, rather than a jury model, that facilitates self-reflection about what researchers are supposed to be doing and how well they are doing it. One particular technique Klein advances is the use of “Guiding Questions for Integration” to both evaluate and nurture interdisciplinary research. Landfeldt reported that the European Young Investigator Award Scheme had interdisciplinary proposals evaluated by two panels rather than one to make sure that a diverse set of experts could provide input. The idea was that either panel could advance a proposal to the

next round. However, according to Landfeldt (37) “more reviewers seem rather to have implied that more doubts were raised about the feasibility of the project. . . . When the applications from different panels were compared, the interdisciplinary applications were the only ones that had been reviewed, not only by the panel that ranked it high on its list, but also by a panel that had not given it priority.”

Several authors described funding mechanisms reserved specifically for interdisciplinary research proposals. An issue not addressed is how to safeguard these scarce resources for proposals that are genuinely interdisciplinary. It is not difficult to think of examples of disciplinary research masquerading as interdisciplinary when conditions appear favorable. Proposals from economists on the psychology of building prosperity that contain no psychology, or neuro-cultural perspectives advanced by social scientists that use neurology simply as a metaphor, do not belong in competitions for interdisciplinary research. Yet disciplinary reviewers may be more comfortable with such proposals that may lack some of the risk of truly interdisciplinary research. Panelists may be unlikely to award funding to proposals simply because they meet definitions of interdisciplinarity such as those proposed by Boix Mansilla (2006), Newell (2001), or Wolfe & Haynes, (2003). However, it is not unreasonable to require proposals submitted in response to deliberately interdisciplinary Requests for Proposals (RFPs) to meet criteria such as these.

The challenges associated with evaluating interdisciplinary research are truly complex, and the stakes are significant for researchers and funding agencies alike. This special issue of *Research Evaluation* makes an important start at seriously addressing an important set of issues.

Note

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ILP Report ...

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of integrative learning exist and this variety seems plausible. What is less clear is whether these forms differ by what is being integrated or if there are qualitatively different ways of integrating.

The report gives additional hints to the nature of integrative learning in its “fostering integrative learning” section. It asserts that integrative learning requires effort and that the act of integration occurs within the individual learner. The report also suggests that integrative learning follows a developmental trajectory. These claims may make intuitive sense to practitioners, and in fact reflect the observations and shared understanding of the ILP participants. Although these ideas are useful and provocative, it would be helpful if the authors of the report clarified that their assertions are based on anecdotal and informed testimony rather than empirical evidence. Readers will note that most of the citations supporting the claims of the various authors are from AAC&U and Carnegie Foundation publications. This observation is not necessarily a shortcoming if the reader understands that the purpose of the report is to share the experiences and progress of the ILP and its participating institutions, and it is not a comprehensive treatise on the status of integrative learning today.

Although the report offers little empirical research, it does point to fruitful issues and questions for researchers to pursue. For example, one area that needs further exploration is understanding the development of integrative learners and, perhaps, identifying developmental milestones appropriate for first-year students, seniors and every stage in between. This developmental pattern is at the heart of my research interests that have included a longitudinal project exploring students’ experiences with interdisciplinary integration that I conducted with Dr. Carolyn Haynes (Brown Leonard & Haynes, 2005), and my dissertation

research that aimed at understanding students’ experiences with integrative learning in an intentionally integrative academic program. This latter research led to an emerging developmental theory grounded in the data of students’ experiences with integrative learning. My research suggests that the term “integrative learning” not only captures different integrated elements such as connections between and among disciplines, diverse perspectives, different experiences, theory and practice, personal and academic life, but also that there are different kinds of integration that vary with the level of sophistication or cognitive complexity.

The students in my study identified four types of integration: *application* which is a lower level form of integration; *comparison* which is a little more demanding; followed by *understanding context*; and *synthesis*. Students also identified assignments and experiences that facilitated their understanding of integrative learning including finding their curriculum personally relevant and encountering conflict (Brown Leonard, 2007). This continuum suggests that it may be possible to intentionally create opportunities for students to have experiences both inside and outside of the formal classroom that promote or serve as a catalyst for integrative learning. The continuum also helps capture the range of complexity possible.

Developing this continuum did not come easily. When I first began interviewing students for my research, I was disheartened to learn that they initially identified almost every experience as integrative. A similar sentiment arose when I first read the public report of the ILP, which also offered an “anything goes” perspective of integrative learning. If institutions as well as students and faculty are free to define integrative learning any way they choose, how is our understanding of the meaning of integrative learning clarified? If there exists no consensus, how can we know whether and how integrative learning

happens? While institutions should customize and create priorities about what aspects of integration are most important to cultivate and assess, I believe the definition of integrative learning needs to fall within some broad parameters for us to communicate what we are doing, assess what students are learning, and make improvements on how we work with them. This report could be strengthened by sharing the institutional definitions of integrative learning used by the 10 ILP participants in the “What is Integrative Learning” section of the report. In what ways did the participants’ ideas about integrative learning converge and diverge? Without some consensus of meaning the discussion is about learning, clearly an important goal of undergraduate education, but integrative learning must mean something distinctive or the term loses its importance.

Interdisciplinary scholars will note that integrative learning as defined by the ILP transcends interdisciplinary integration. Although the report includes interdisciplinarity as one of many forms of integration desirable for undergraduates, its focus is clearly on institutional efforts to embrace integrative learning rather than interdisciplinary or integrative studies programs per se. It seems crucial that interdisciplinary studies faculty contribute to the discussion about integrative learning on their own campuses and at the national level. In an attempt to generate discussion, the Carnegie Foundation set up an online dialogue open to all (<http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/conversations/sub.asp?key=244&subkey=1859>). When I visited the Web site in August 2007, only two entries had been posted and the comments did not reference each other. Certainly, this lack of response may be more of a hesitancy to engage in an online forum than a lack of interest in the topic of integrative learning. AIS members should note that this invitation offers a forum for those of us passionate about interdisciplinarity to assert our views and expertise on this topic.

Cultivating Integrative Learning

The materials on the Web site offer exciting insights from the extensive work of 10 institutions and program staff. The essays and summaries showcase insights culled from the meetings and experiences of the participating institutions and represent strong, creative thinking about integrative learning. Of particular note is the series of essays about ways to foster integrative learning. Mary Taylor Huber writes on ways in which the curriculum can contribute to integrative learning, Richard Gale addresses pedagogy that shows promise in cultivating integration, Ross Miller addresses the role of assessment in furthering integrative learning, and Pat Hutchings explores the ways in which faculty development can help instructors develop the capacity to engage students in integrative learning (or what she calls integrative teaching) as well as influence the campus culture so that integrative learning is a part of a rich, interactive campus context. The different voices and styles represented in these essays make for interesting and lively reading.

I am left feeling excited and optimistic about the efforts of individual campuses to promote integrative learning. It appears as if the 10 ILP participants made great strides in achieving their aspirations. However, because the definition of integrative learning is broad in this report, at times it is not clear what type of integrative learning is being addressed. I also would have appreciated references in the main body of the report to the ways in which student affairs practitioners can contribute to integrative learning. The essays are focused on more traditional, faculty-driven approaches in the formal classroom.

This report reminds us that national organizations interested in creating change in higher education are embracing the value of integrative and interdisciplinary teaching and learning. This report marks an important starting point. AIS has a long history and commitment to integrative learning. Its members are experts and have much to offer the national conversation.

Now is the time for AIS members to take the lead in filling the gaps in the report, especially those questions related to defining integrative learning, curriculum development, and assessment.

Note

¹ In the interest of full disclosure, I served as an intern at AAC&U in 2005 during my doctoral studies, working with Dr. Alma Clayton-Pedersen on the Greater Expectations Summer Institute and issues related to Inclusive Excellence. I was not affiliated with the Integrative Learning Project.

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Job Posting

The Interdisciplinary Studies Program at the University of Texas at Arlington invites applications for two tenure-track Assistant Professor positions in Interdisciplinary Studies effective Fall 2008. Applicants should have a PhD (or highest degree given the specific field), and the promise of and potential for successful interdisciplinary research and publication. Applicants should have grounding in the interdisciplinary literature and an understanding of interdisciplinary research process and how it differs from, and is complementary to, disciplinary and multidisciplinary methodologies.

The University of Texas at Arlington is a Doctoral/Research Extensive Carnegie University and is part of the University of Texas system. It serves approximately 25,000 students in the Dallas/Fort Worth metropolitan area. The university emphasizes scholarship and funded research among faculty.

Interested candidates should submit a letter of application, curriculum vitae, three letters of recommendation, examples of papers presented or published, and teaching evaluations, if available, to: Interdisciplinary Studies Search, Box 19588, School of Urban and Public Affairs, University of Texas at Arlington, Arlington, TX 76019-0588, or to repko@uta.edu. Review of applications will begin November 1, 2007, and continue until the position is filled. Final official notice of employment is contingent on completion of a satisfactory criminal background investigation for security sensitive positions.

The University of Texas at Arlington is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer. ■■■

Metanexus Institute invites grant applications

The Metanexus Institute, a nonprofit academic institute established in the Philadelphia region in 1998, is inviting grant applications from groups of associated university scholars to pursue transdisciplinary research projects into the fundamental questions facing humanity. The purpose of these grants is to develop networked teams of investigators to forge new and enduring links among different fields of study, publish results in peer-reviewed journals and host lectures and other events among faculty, students, and the community at large. The goal is to promote engagement among the sciences, the humanities and the world's religious traditions, to foster creative and innovative ideas through projects that cut across the disciplinary boundaries and aspire to a transformational impact upon the pursuit of knowledge and education. Metanexus has provided grants to 239 interdisciplinary groups of scholars and communities in 43 countries.

The Metanexus Institute is a global network of scientists, scholars, clergy, and citizens who recognize the need for respectful, constructive dialogue among the sciences, the humanities, and the world's religious traditions. It is engaged in interdisciplinary, intercultural, and inter-religious dialogue, research, and education in 43 countries. Metanexus publishes an online magazine, *The Global Spiral*, dedicated to exploring humanity's most profound questions and challenges. Metanexus also hosts an annual international conference, inviting scholars, the curious public, and delegates from Metanexus groups. The Metanexus Institute is a new institutional member of the Association for Integrative Studies.

For more information about Metanexus and its grant opportunities, visit its Web site, www.metanexus.net. ■■■

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