



Bridging Cultures to Form a Nation: Difference, Community, and Democratic Thinking

Supported through a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and The Democracy Commitment (TDC) are leading a three-year curriculum and faculty development project for ten community colleges. These institutions are engaging faculty and administrators in intensive efforts to infuse questions about difference, community, and democratic thinking into transfer courses in the humanities; promote greater adoption of proven high-impact practices that advance important civic learning outcomes; create a series of humanities-enriched professional development opportunities for community college faculty, especially adjunct faculty; and expand the project's impact through collaboration with additional community colleges and partnerships with state humanities councils.

The project **launched with a week-long summer institute**, July 29-August 3, 2012 at University of Vermont, Burlington, VT and also convened **a culminating symposium** in June 2014 in Louisville, KY in conjunction with the ADP/TDC National Meeting. In between, Bridging Cultures participants and staff have shared work and resources via **myriad workshops and presentations** at national AAC&U and TDC conferences as well as external events such as League for Innovation in the Community College and the National Conference on Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education.

Project Webinars

- **“Effective Practices for Incorporating Service-Learning into the Humanities,”** Robert Franco, Director of Institutional Effectiveness at Kapi’olani Community College
- **“Project Recognition and Faculty Development,”** Rowena Tomaneng, Associate Vice President of Instruction at De Anza College
- **“America’s Immigration History: A Nation of Nations,”** Ramón Gutiérrez, Preston & Sterling Morton Distinguished Service Professor of American History and the College at the University of Chicago
- **“Flip This: Community Colleges, Online Learning, and the Future of Civic Engagement in the Age of Disruption,”** Dan Butin, Dean of the School of Education, Merrimack College and Executive Director of the Center for Engaged Democracy
- **“Engaging All Stakeholders in Bridging Cultures,”** Gwen Dungy, Executive Director Emerita, NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
- **“Bridging Cultures to Bring the World Home,”** Caryn McTighe Musil, Senior Scholar and Director of Civic Learning and Democracy, AAC&U
- **“Building Sustainable Structures: Continuing the Bridging Cultures Work and Partnerships”**—a conversation among Bridging Cultures participants (upcoming, November 2014)

Participating Campus Projects

Chandler-Gilbert Community College (AZ): The CGCC team developed two interdisciplinary first-year experiences, “The Humanities and the Democratic Imagination” (English composition, history, and humanities) and “Immigration, Nationalism, and E Pluribus Unum” (English composition, philosophy, and women’s studies). They also convened a three-day Bridging Cultures faculty development institute for faculty in the Maricopa Community College system.

County College of Morris (NJ): Bridging Cultures “faculty fellows” developed new or revamped humanities courses in Communications, Cultural Geography, English, History, Spanish, and Photography. They also convened an interactive faculty forum, co-sponsored by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities. This was an in-person workshop and webinar to CCM faculty and partner college participants from Mercer Community College, Middlesex Community College, and Raritan Valley Community College.



Georgia Perimeter College (GA): Focusing on four disciplines, English, English As a Second Language, History, and Political Science, the GPC team developed and implemented engaged pedagogies: collaborative learning, problem-based learning, service-learning, and problem-based research. They also infused Bridging Cultures elements into the GPC Reads common book program and the Day of Service.

Kapi'olani Community College (HI): Kapi'olani created and launched an interdisciplinary, writing intensive learning community exploring Hawaiian Language, Speech, Hawaiian Art and Design, and Philosophy. The learning community fulfilled institutional learning outcomes in oral communication, sustainability, diversity, and writing.

Kingsborough Community College, CUNY (NY): Since Fall 2012, KCC has offered 99 class sections under the Bridging Cultures project, in which faculty redesigned and created new courses that explore themes of diversity, difference, and democratic thinking in their classrooms. Disciplines include art history, English literature, animation, history, environmental philosophy, philosophy, and political science. The KCC team also leveraged their involvement in the project to implement a civic engagement requirement campus-wide and convened a variety of co-curricular initiatives related to Bridging Cultures initiatives.

Lone Star College – Kingwood (TX): The team revamped courses in English Literature, Composition, ESL, and History to incorporate Bridging Cultures themes while also implementing more high-impact pedagogies. The curricular innovations included introducing the “democratic syllabus” into classes to study-away components in history courses that engaged students in big questions around borderlands, cultural and national identity, democracy, and diversity.

Miami Dade College (FL): Team members infused Bridging Cultures themes into 84 class sections, reaching 3200+ students in courses such as Art History, Art Appreciation, Critical Thinking and Ethics, History, Philosophy, and Sociology. The team has also convened several faculty development workshops to help other MDC campuses weave Bridging Cultures themes into the curriculum.

Middlesex Community College (MA): Middlesex particularly focused on engaging contingent faculty, as over 75% of their humanities and social science courses are taught by this segment of instructors. They leveraged state-mandated requirements for civic engagement and democratic participation learning outcomes to get faculty enrolled in curriculum and professional development seminars around Bridging Cultures themes. Disciplines targeted included Anthropology, English Language Learning, General Humanities, Geography, History, Literature, Music, Philosophy, and Interdisciplinary Studies.

Mt. Wachusett Community College (MA): The team infused Bridging Cultures in introductory courses, service-learning programs, first-year experiences, and capstones. Naming participants “Bridging Cultures Faculty Fellows,” they have cumulatively revised 54 courses to incorporate Bridging Cultures themes, impacting 939 students and 20 humanities faculty.

Santa Fe College (FL): This team created and redesigned a number of courses and programs. They created and passed through the curriculum committee a new interdisciplinary course entitled, “What Is a Good Life?” as well as an interdisciplinary module for International Relations modeled from Bridging Cultures themes around nation-building and identity. Courses in ethics and American humanities incorporated new service-learning components, and English composition courses included immigration literature and narratives to connect with the campus-wide Santa Fe Democracy Commitment theme of immigration policy for 2013-14.