**UF Global Classrooms: VE Course Catalog**

**VE Faculty Questionnaire**

**UF Faculty First and Last Name:** Christine Miller, Ginny Greenway, and Michael Forthman

**UF Course Name and Number**: ENY2890: Insect Research & Scientific Engagement

**UF Department:** Entomology & Nematology

**UF College:** IFAS/ College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

**VE Project Title/Topic: (**i.e., Comparative Perspectives onChild Development)

Exploring the benefits and challenges of international research

**VE Project Description** (100 word summary of the project. See [example](https://offices.depaul.edu/global-engagement/partnerships/programs-for-partner-institutions/Pages/GLEPartnershipPages/international-writing-culture.aspx))

Project 1:

Students virtually interviewed international and UF researchers working around the world to gain firsthand insights into the benefits and challenges of international research and on how international experiences had shaped each interviewee's career.

UF faculty leading the project started out by identifying possible researcher collaborators with diverse biological research interests and a broad geographic spread. We also preferentially contacted early career researchers (e.g. senior graduate students and postdoctoral researchers), as they tend to be most involved in fieldwork and international travel and so students could better relate to their experiences. This pool of interviewees was recruited using both instructor networks of professional contacts, soliciting volunteers through a Google form, and reaching out to researchers across UF Entomology, Biology, Wildlife Ecology and Conservation and SNRE using departmental websites. These predominantly early career researchers were typically excited and eager to share their research when contacted with a brief outline of what being interviewed would entail. After surveying students through canvas on their specific areas on interest (e.g. conservation, public health, animal behavior), we then aimed to match individual students to researchers with whom they shared these interests. Each student was then given the contact details of their assigned interviewee and an email template to enable them to reach out to them in a polite and professional manner.

In a later iteration of the project, students worked in groups and used a scientific paper published by an international researcher as a springboard for their interview. To ensure the authors would be willing to be interviewed, instructors first reached out to them and compiled and Each group selected and read a scientific paper from a preselected list, the researchers and made sure they would agree to be interviewed). Students used the interview to discuss specifically that one paper and ask any questions they had about it. The interview included questions on how the researcher had collected the data, what was it was like to do fieldwork in a particular location, and about the international context that surrounded how that data was collected.

1. Who created the interview questions, you or the students?

Students were free to formulate their own interview questions but were provided with suggestions and one class period of preparation in which we discussed what made a good open ended question and considered what information students wanted to get from the interview activity. We encouraged students to follow their own interests, prepare by searching for their interviewee’s research and professional profile online and most of all to make the most of this opportunity. We advised them that the interview should ideally be around 20-30 mins in length and so to prepare sufficient questions

1. What did the students produce (i.e., a reflection on what they learned from the interview, a transcript of the interview?)

The main product of the interview was a transcript of the interview, annotated by the student to highlight particularly important quotes which related to benefits or challenges of international research

1. Was there any sort of whole class reflection or discussion of the experience or on what was learned through the experience?

Students both compared notes on their interviewee’s experience in class and were encouraged to reflect on their interview in their final end of semester written project, in which they synthesized quotes from their interviewee with other materials, media and experiences they’d had over the course of the semester.

1. How was the assignment graded? What criteria were used? (Completion, specific learning outcomes?)

The transcript was graded according to completion, with full marks given for an annotated formatted transcript. Given the complexities of scheduling and the dependence on the interviewee to provide quality responses, we were flexible with both the length of the transcript and, to a certain extent, with the submission date.

Project 2:

Students followed researchers from the lab who were conducting fieldwork in South Africa and Eswatini. They were introduced to the researchers at the start of the semester and then checked in with their progress each week via a blog the researchers published each week, which was required reading (<https://coreidlegs-sa.weebly.com/>). In this blog, they detailed their activities each week, any obstacles they had to overcome and team morale, how the data collection was going, people they were working with and wildlife they came across. We discussed the researchers’ latest news each week in class and students were asked to refer to the blog in weekly quizzes as well as in their final reflective essay on the topic of ‘benefits and challenges of international research’.

At the end of the fieldwork trip, one of the researchers then came in person into the classroom and summarized their experience and answered questions the students had.

**VE Project Learning Outcomes:** (Examples of common learning outcomes for a virtual exchange are:

* Students gained direct insight into international research, the motivations behind it and the skills and preparation required to make it a success.
* Students were encouraged to describe and explain the global and intercultural conditions and interdependencies that provide the context for this scientific research.
* Students developed cultural self-awareness and effective communication communicating virtually with researchers working internationally

**Project Duration:** \_3\_\_ weeks for interviews, semester-long ongoing for blog

**Activity Type** (Check all that apply)

a) \_\_\_\_\_ Student-to-Student Dialogue (i.e., discussions about culture, compare and contrast, language practice)

b) \_\_\_\_\_ Student-to-Student Project (collaborative project, simulation, hackathon)

c) \_**X\_** Virtual Guest Speaker    (lecture or interview for whole class or small groups)

d) \_\_\_\_\_ Virtual Mobility (pre-mobility, virtual study abroad...)

e) \_\_\_\_\_ Other (Explain: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_)

**Time allotted to each activity:**

Synchronous Activities: \_\_\_1\_\_\_ hours

Asynchronous Activities: \_\_4\_\_\_ hours

Local group activities: \_\_\_\_\_\_ hours (depends on whether interviews are assigned as individual or group work)

Individual Work: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ hours

**Sequence of Activities: (**Example: Icebreaker video introductions, followed by weekly discussion posts and bi-weekly videoconferencing among students. Final reflection: individual written essay)

* 1. Throughout the semester: Blog with international researcher on the field in South Africa

Class were introduced to the international researcher at the start of the semester (either in person or via Skype/ Zoom) and could ask any questions they wanted. Each week or so students were encouraged to then check in with the researcher’s blog and track their progress

* 1. Mid way through the semester: Preparation for interview:

50 minute session to prepare students on how to conduct an interview, what questions might be useful to get open-ended responses, and tips on know to be polite and respectful, sending emails in a formal but inviting tone

* 1. Interview: students liase with their interviewee via email to find a mutually convenient time (copying a course TA on all correspondence). The interview is conducted over Skype and recorded for reference
  2. Students then submit an annotated transcript (using ‘dictate’ function to transcribe their audio recording), with key details on international challenges and benefits highlighted.
  3. End of semester: Final reflection essay- students incorporate quotes and insights from their interview and the blog posts they’ve been reading, along with other materials and perspectives, in a final essay in which they reflect on the challenges and benefits which come with international research

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**Technology Tools**. *The kinds of software used for communication among participants over the course of*

*the project. Include all types.*

1. Videoconference (i.e., Zoom, Skype, Google Hangouts)  \_\_\_\_\_Skype\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
2. Messaging Applications    (i.e., WhatsApp, Facebook, Slack)  \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Learning Management Systems (LMS)  (i.e., Canvas, Slack Moodle, Blackboard) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
4. Collaborative Authoring Platforms (i.e., Google Forms, Google Docs, Google Slides, Google Sheets)
5. Message Boards/Video boards (i.e., VoiceThread, Flipgrid)
6. Email\_\_\_\_Yes\_\_\_\_
7. Other: \_\_\_\_\_Free dictation/ transcription software (built into MS word and google docs)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Geographic Locations**: (i.e., U.S. and Colombia)

International researchers from: *Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Guatemala, Brazil, New Zealand, UK, Germany, France, Spain, Japan, South Africa, Swaziland (now Eswatini)*

UF researchers who were working internationally: countries above and also *Liberia, Kenya, New Caledonia, Cayman Islands, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Rwanda, Haiti, Tanzania, China, India*

**Additional Materials**

Teaching Enhancement Symposium presentation on VE project: <https://www.dropbox.com/s/9hrtk6brun5asd5/Virtual%20exchange%20TES_final.pptx?dl=0>

The blog students read to follow researchers on whilst they were in southern Africa is available here: <https://coreidlegs-sa.weebly.com/>