Voices From the Periphery: The Case of Victoria University and The University of Texas at El Paso Global Learning Community
The University of Texas at El Paso

Public, Comprehensive Four-Year University

High Research Activity Institution

Enrollment 22,749 (Fall 2012)

• 19,217 Undergraduate
• 3,532 Graduate
The University of Texas at El Paso

Student Profile

- 77% Hispanic
- 83% El Paso County
- 97% Commuter
- 81% Employed
- 64% Receive Financial Assistance
- 55% First-Generation College Students
Victoria University

Multi-Sector University:

• One of only five universities in Australia offering Vocational, Further and Higher education courses

Courses Offered:

• Certificate Courses, Diplomas, Bachelor Degrees, Graduate Diplomas, Masters and Doctoral Studies
Victoria University

Student Profile

• 7,859 Offshore International Students
• 3920 Onshore International Students
• 44% Melbourne Residents
• 39% Non-English Speaking Background
• Students and Staff of more than 90 nationalities
• Almost 3000 Full-Time Equivalent Staff
Global Learning Community

Imagining Nations, Imagining Regions: The Making of Cultural Diversity in Australia and on the U.S.-Mexico Border

The U.S.-Mexico Border
UTEP, Irma Montelongo, Lecturer

Imagining Australia
Victoria University, Effy George, Lecturer
GLC Timetable

VU Semester II: July 20 – November 28
  • Mid Semester Break: Sept. 21 – Oct. 5

UTEP Fall Semester: Aug. 24 – Dec. 7
  • Classes linked for 7 weeks between Aug. 25 and Oct. 22
  • Students followed their respective course schedules and then shared their research and analysis via technology with their GLC cohort during the 7 week overlap.
Topics of Study

Colonialism
Nationalism
Migration
Culture
Criminology
Gender and Sexuality
Our Commonalities and the Creation of Our Virtual Space

• Differences and Commonalities

• Building a Collaborative Learning Experience

• Compare and Organize Themes For Successful Student Interaction

• Defining Tools That Would Allow Students to Share/Exchange Experiences and Perceptions of Different Cultures
Technology

Video Conference

Social Network - NING
- Discussion Forums
- Lectures and Readings
- Videos
- External Links
- Personal Pages
My Utep Vu Experience.

I came into this subject with little perception of what we would be covering or learning about. I have been amazed at what has been covered and what I have learnt not only about my country but myself. At the commencement of our last lecture, Etsi asked what we had learnt about our country's history. On reflection, much of our history was known to me, as I had previously never had an interest in politics. I was amazed at how much politics was involved with the creation of our country. All...

Continue

Posted by Gloria Waters on November 19, 2010 at 7:06pm

The Ideologies of Early Explorers; the White Man's Burden, and The Dead Women of Juarez

Much of the way Australia was imagined in the pre-settlement...

Time in:

El Paso, Texas, USA
02:31 PM
Wed, February 2

Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
08:31 AM
Thur, February 3

"Once social change begins, it..."
**VU Lecture 1**

Early colonial Australia - Lecture 1

**UTEP Lecture 2: The Creation of The U.S. - México Border**

By the 1830s, American westward expansion was in full swing. The term Manifest Destiny was coined by John O'Sullivan in 1845 to describe this American expansion. Expansion was in fact taking place in the name of liberty and democracy, but it was a liberty and democracy that was for all intents and purposes intended for the “Anglo-Saxon” person.

Manifest Destiny is more than a term, however; it is an ideology that began with the Puritan colonies, who believed that God had ordained their venture into the wilderness of North America. Implicit in this term was the notion that the Anglo-Saxon race had the God-given (providential) right to move into supposedly empty areas or areas deemed incapable of self-rule in order to improve these areas through Anglo-Saxon liberty and democracy. From this perspective, the continent’s far west was imagined to be empty and in general, and Mexico’s northern frontier in particular were seen as chaotic land where “dark skinned mongrels” squandered a space in need of superior Anglo-Saxon leadership. Westward expansion was at the core of Manifest Destiny. Expansion encouraged a mission into the unknown; it tested courage and strength in uncharted territories. Expansion was a divine mission designed specifically for the Anglo-Saxon character. To a certain extent, Euro-Americans “imagined” the West to be empty, there for the taking, but even if they were willing to acknowledge that the West was not empty, they saw themselves as politically, economically, and socially superior to the Indian and Mexican who were not using the land properly, therefore conquering the land as well as those bodies that resided on those lands was acceptable.

Of course, we have already discussed that racism was also at the core of Manifest Destiny, but also supporting Manifest Destiny was the belief that Protestant Christian ideals and work ethics must replace the backward, vile, superstitious Catholic religion believed to be the work of the devil. In other words, Euro-American expansion supported the notion that civilization must be brought to the empty, savage, dark, west. Manifest Destiny, then, justified the removal of Mexicans and Indians who had wasted the land thus far.
What Did the GLC Accomplish?

The website and video conferences provided a forum for UTEP and VU students to exchange ideas related to global issues.

Class assignments facilitated a deeper learning of different regions and cultures.

UTEP and VU students enhanced their knowledge of technological resources.

UTEP and VU students developed social and academic networks.
“Besides gaining friends, this was a new experience that most people haven’t experienced yet. Even though it was an “experiment,” I believe it turned out to be very successful. We learned together and we could ask each other for help. I think we learned tolerance, too, because of so many topics we had to express. Everyone had different opinions and point of views.” (UTEP Student Post Assessment Evaluation)

“My understanding of other countries and cultures has been enriched so much as a result of the GLC. I felt being able to interact with the UTEP students allowed me to gain more knowledge of the US-Mexico border, especially because it is coming from their personal perspectives.” (VU Student Post Assessment Evaluation)

“I believe interacting with UTEP students helped me to achieve my course objectives. Their questions and curiosity about our issues, history, culture etc. made it even more interesting and motivating to research the information myself with the intent of sharing it with everyone. I felt it was a good relationship and we all contributed well.” (VU Student Post Assessment Evaluation)
Contacts

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Questions?