Internet Marketing Course Collaboration between Panama and Slovakia:

Lessons learned creating an Internet Marketing Plan and Website for Habitat for Humanity
Quality Leadership University
Partnerships with ESC, University of Louisville, Towson University, Universidad de Chile and FIU
• Started January, 2009

• Currently 4th cohort

• Average 20 – 30 students

• Graduates – approx. 60 (Dec., 2012)
University of Economics Bratislavia

- 11,500 students
- Face to Face only
- Moodle
- High interest in taking a “US” course
- Certificate of completion for collaboration
Slovakia Higher Education Pedagogy

- Thomas Arnold
- Authoritarian
- Changes 1960-1980
- ECE Region
- Communist government
Slovakia Higher Education Pre-1989

- Czechoslovakia 1918
- First Universities 1919
- Quality “good”
- Education Free
- Communist government
Slovakia Higher Education Post 1989

- Economic Transformation
- Increased Access to Education
- State Monopoly Ends
- Academic Freedom
- New Funding Structures
Slovakia Higher Education 2013

• Financial Problems
• Staff Issues
• Atmosphere
• Quality
• Internationalization
Implications for Online

PANAMA
- High context
- Collectivist
- High power distance – may hesitate to participate, ask questions
- High uncertainty avoidance
- English usually a second or third language

ONLINE
- Low context
- Individualist
- Students construct understanding through participation; instructor doesn’t give a “right” answer
- Students resistant/anxious
- Communication relies heavily on reading and writing
Online education in Panama

- Universidad Interamericana de Educación a Distancia (UNIEDPA)
- Universidad Abierta y a Distancia de Panama (UNADP)
- Universidad del Istmo (UDI) – Whitney International
Online education in Slovakia

- “Beginning Stage” for 10 years
- LMS systems available, no training, no funding, no other support
- College of Management (City University of Seattle) – exception
Legal Considerations in Panama

- Until recently all “distance” education required a face-to-face component
- New legislation opens opportunities for 100% online
- Any online programs in Panama must be approved by Higher Education authorities
Legal Considerations in Slovakia

- Lack of legislation for online education
- Universities get accreditation awarding degrees (quality of teachers, research results, etc.), form is up the them
- Any non-university education programs seek approval from the Higher Education authorities independently of the form they use
Student Experience

**PANAMA**
- Prior experience:
  - online
  - APA
  - US education
- Plagiarism acceptable
- English usually a second or third language
- Familiar with workload

**Slovak**
- Prior experience:
  - No online
  - No APA
  - US education?
- Plagiarism acceptable
- English usually a second or third language?
- Unrealistic expectations
The Course

• 10 Week Course Collaboration
• Moodle at University of Economics
• Individual and Team Assignments
• Asynchronous Discussions
• Virtual Sessions
• Co-Developed
• Co-Taught
• Facebook
Panama/DR Student Age

What is your age?

- Under 20
- 20 - 24
- 25 - 29
- 30 - 39
- 40 - 49
- 50 or more
Panama/DR Devices Owned

Do you have....?

- High speed (cable) internet access at home
- High speed (cable) internet access at work
- An unlimited data plan for your phone
- A modem (air card) for mobile internet access

Options:
- Not sure
- No
- Yes
Panama/DR Prior Experience

Prior to your courses with SUNY/ESC, had you ever used Blackboard Collaborate/Elluminate or a similar tool?
Panama/DR Technology

How do you consider yourself with regards to technology use?

- No experience
- Little experience: email, word processing, spreadsheets
- Fair experience: online course
- Substantial experience: web page creation, statistical software
- Extensive experience: programming languages, CAD
Panama/DR Tools

Which of the following tools have you used for course related work?

- Elluminate/Blackboard Collaborate
- Skype
- Google Chat
- Google Docs
- Blogs
- Wikis
- Diigo
- VoiceThread
- Facebook
- Twitter
- All Other Responses

Legend:
- Very Frequently (several times in each course)
- Somewhat frequently (in most but not all courses)
- Occasionally (in a third to half of my courses)
- Almost never (have only used 1-2 times)
- Have never used
Course Demographics

• 7 Panama/DR (ESC) Students
  – All matriculated undergrad junior/senior
  – Elective course part of degree program

• 25 Slovak Students
  – Undergrad through PhD/”extra course”

• 5 Teams (1-2 ESC per team)

• 6 Panama Students complete course

• 5 Slovak Students completed course
Low Sensitivity to Plagiarism

- Plagiarism culturally acceptable
- Copyright laws not enforced
- Slovak not familiar with citation and copyright rules
Lessons Learned: Slovak

- Slow to engage
  - Pre-course student orientation
- Lack of experience
  - Face to face training in online learning
- Large drop out rate
  - Application process
  - Charge for course
- Plagiarism
  - Workshops on citation and copyright
Panama/DR Experience

• Initial concerns:
  – Team assignments
  – Working across time zones
  – Language differences

• Course Experience
  – Initial excitement during icebreaker
  – Frustration with lack of Slovak engagement
  – Concern about grades
Habitat for Humanity Websites

- http://habitatsk.wordpress.com/
“online programs only succeed if they are offered within cultures that accept them, or are at least willing to explore them... The issue is that our learners – their parents and our educational partners -- are unconvinced that online options have validity or worth. They are often categorized as impersonal, educationally ineffective, and simply introduced to reduce costs.”

David Starr-Glass – Prague program, 2012
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References