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Interdisciplinary strategies: 5 case studies of research-intensive universities

By Creso Sá, Assistant Professor of Higher Education, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto

As most readers of this newsletter certainly know, the current popularity of interdisciplinarity is not unprecedented. Experts on the subject have described the waves of interest in interdisciplinary research and education over the 20th century (Klein, 1990), and point to the late 1970s as the start of the contemporary trend (Lattuca, 2001). Despite this long history, calls for interdisciplinarity have not changed the basic organization of research universities, based upon the close link between departments and academic disciplines. Rhoten (2004) claims that there is no lack of external support to or motivation from the faculty to engage in interdisciplinary research, but of systematic implementation of measures to facilitate such work. However, recent evidence points to a growing questioning of the traditional university structures, policies, and practices that pose obstacles to interdisciplinary research.

Two influential academic associations—the National Academies of Sciences and the

Association of American Universities—released in 2005 reports on the subject. The reports present examples of practices from several institutions to demonstrate how universities can facilitate interdisciplinarity. Higher education analysts have also detected a shift in the orientations of academic leaders. Recent studies indicated the widespread adoption of interdisciplinarity as an institutional goal or strategy among research universities over the past 6-10 years (Feller, 2002; Brint, 2005). Scholars noted that most leading universities boast commitments to fostering interdisciplinary activity on their campuses, while some institutions aspire to differentiate themselves as propitious places for interdisciplinarity. In this context, promoting interdisciplinarity is viewed as an organizational problem—enabling collaborative research among faculty from different disciplines.

I was intrigued by the organizational implications of present trends for research universities. Are they

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AIS Conference: You probably had to be there

By Gretchen Schulz, Oxford College of Emory University

Yes, you probably had to be there—at the 28th Annual Conference of the Association for Integrative Studies—held October 5-8 in Atlanta, Georgia, hosted by Emory University and Oxford College of Emory University and co-hosted by the University of West Georgia—in order to understand why those in attendance gave the conference such rave reviews. A mere report on the number of those in attendance (some 200) and the number of those who offered such reviews (90% of those who submitted evaluations) probably can't

do much to communicate the non-numerical heart of the matter—the fact that this *was* a conference with a heart—a conference that people praised for reasons that went well beyond the quantity and quality of the presentations and other programming.

True, we had a grand (a very grand) total of 94 presentations, involving 158 presenters from 96 colleges and universities (and two secondary schools) in this country and abroad. And true, there

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Research-intensive universities ...

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simply applying a “rhetorical veneer” to old practices (Feller, 2004), or is substantial change taking place? The abundance of examples provided in the reports above would seem suggestive of new departures from traditional academic models, but the evidence from actual contexts of implementation is very limited.

Studies of the organization of university research provided a basis for understanding traditional approaches and recognizing new ones in light of the evidence. I conducted a survey of institutional documents for 99 research-intensive universities to acquire a landscape view of the approaches employed to spur interdisciplinary collaborations. From this analysis five cases were selected, each illustrating a distinctive strategy: Arizona State University, Duke University, the Pennsylvania State University, Stanford University, and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Initiatives of these institutions have been featured in the reports mentioned above. While space limitations do not allow me to report on the cases, a few elements will be highlighted schematically to illustrate more general patterns.

Universities have traditionally created centers and institutes to supplement the roles of departments and conduct interdisciplinary research. Such units do not normally control tenure lines nor award degrees, so their intellectual vitality depends on the cooperation of faculty whose academic home is a department that expects members to contribute to the disciplinary mainstream. Naturally, strains on faculty participation in interdisciplinary centers have often been reported. Faculty may experience a work overload in developing center activities along with departmental duties, and yet feel that interdisciplinary research is undervalued at the time of evaluation. Similar concerns arise with faculty holding dual-appointments. Moreover, administrative and structural

issues have also been common in the relationship among centers, colleges, and departments. One example of these issues regards the distribution of indirect cost recoveries on external research awards. If a faculty member receives a grant as part of her participation in an interdisciplinary center, how is the overhead allocated? Tensions are frequently reported as both academic units and centers seek the credit and recognition of research achievements.

A few distinctive approaches have emerged in the contemporary planning efforts of research universities. First, several institutions have advanced “interdisciplinary initiatives” that span organizational boundaries. The aim of such initiatives is not to strengthen one particular department as a “steeple of excellence,” but rather to focus resources on interdisciplinary areas that may have ramifications for various academic units. Such investments are expected to heighten the visibility and distinction of the university in prestigious and well-funded fields. This study extended previous findings by describing the various means through which universities implement them, allowing for readers to appreciate a range of routes universities have taken. Interdisciplinary initiatives are usually spearheaded by “campus-wide” institutes that may control new facilities, seed funding, research support services, and even funds to support faculty and joint faculty recruitment.

Duke, for example, invested in 13 initiatives in various areas, supporting them with significant internal and external funds. This process was initiated in Duke’s 2000/2001 strategic planning exercise, during which initiatives were selected and resources allocated. These initiatives are expected to make intellectual contributions that would not be possible otherwise, and succeed in securing external sponsorship for research. As the other centers on campus, the initiatives undergo a review process after five years whose expected

outcome is termination. Duke’s office of interdisciplinary studies, one of the few such units and rather unique in its extensive portfolio of activities, coordinates the review process. The notion is that interdisciplinary structures should form and dissolve, in an ebb and flow of innovation that emerges from and reinvigorates the schools and departments. A few of Duke’s initiatives have turned into major institutes and continue to thrive, such as the Institute of Genome Sciences and Policy.

Second, universities have invested in building innovative facilities for interdisciplinary research, particularly in the natural and physical sciences. While universities constantly invest in constructing and renovating laboratories, these facilities have been designed to stimulate interdisciplinary collaborations and have been promoted as such. It is rather suggestive that in most cases these interdisciplinary spaces are dedicated to collaborative research involving the Life Sciences, where the perception of scientific advancements making traditional departmental divisions meaningless is stronger.

Stanford’s Clark Center is an example of these new interdisciplinary spaces. Its organizational arrangements are still highly experimental and expectations are set on inducing long-term cultural changes. It is too soon to evaluate the opportunities and constraints generated by its new way of organizing scientists, although it is easy to get enthusiastic about the *avant-garde* nature of this enterprise. Built in 2003, the Clark Center is a 245,000-square-foot facility that houses Bio-X, a “multidisciplinary initiative” that aims at forging interactions among scientists in biology and colleagues in several other disciplines. One explicit assumption in the concept of the Clark Center is that interdisciplinarity is best achieved through spontaneous faculty collaborations, but that those can be bred. Workspace sharing is perhaps the most direct example of the attempt to

orchestrate associations among faculty and students with different backgrounds. Resident faculty were grouped in clusters according to the potential synergism among their research agendas to create novel lines of research, in an attempt to avoid the familiar webs of departmental relations and topical affinities. Workspaces are large and accommodate several faculty labs contiguously.

Third, universities continue their long history of creating major centers and institutes for interdisciplinary research. Centers follow distinct logics from colleges and departments and thrive on the resources they acquire and make available to the university. Burton Clark (2004) has argued that such units are central elements of university entrepreneurship, arising at what he calls the “developmental periphery” of the campus to serve new purposes. Some universities have greatly emphasized centers and institutes in their institutional strategies, indeed raising the question of whether they are part of the periphery or of a reconfigured academic core.

The leadership at Arizona State University envisions the formation of a “new American university,” which connects academic research more closely to regional needs and economic development agendas through interdisciplinary and boundary-crossing units. The BioDesign Institute is one of Arizona State’s bets for the realization of its aspirations. The new institute includes a projected four-building complex on the Tempe campus, two of which are operational and presented as a “world class facility,” an asset for the university to attract and retain distinguished scientists. BioDesign concentrates university resources in a field with high prospects for the production of economically relevant research. High expectations of returns are reflected in the institute’s entrepreneurial management style. BioDesign has aggressive goals for increasing sponsored research, tightly managed infrastructure, and a focus

on areas leading to industrial and clinical applications. Moreover, it boasts partnerships with the private sector and an emphasis on technology transfer. As it actively participates in faculty recruitment and starts structuring educational activities, BioDesign plays a more central role in the institution than most centers would.

Fourth, universities have also taken deliberate action to stimulate collaborative research at large. Numerous campuses have established centralized seed funding programs, others have enhanced support services to faculty. On some campuses, these mechanisms relate to the sometimes-formal goal of obtaining large interdisciplinary research awards. These seed funding schemes aim at identifying and nurturing high quality research groups across departmental or college boundaries. Obtaining major external grants and achieving self-sustainability is usually an expected outcome of these projects.

Finally, a few universities have changed policies and practices in key areas such as faculty recruitment and evaluation to accommodate researchers with interdisciplinary interests. These strategies are noteworthy for changing institutionalized norms and procedures, always a difficult and sensitive task.

The University of Wisconsin-Madison implemented in the late 1990s the Cluster Hiring Initiative, as a response to the state budget cuts that caused faculty attrition. The university raised private and state funds to support new hires into interdisciplinary “clusters,” proposed by the faculty and selected competitively. Five rounds of competitions took place between 1997 and 2001, whereby more than 140 faculty members were recruited into 49 clusters. The cluster positions are fully funded and owned by the central administration, but faculty at the time of hiring are allocated into an academic department. The cluster itself is a virtual entity that is not part of any governance framework, and faculty

members are free to shape their activities as they wish. UW-Madison has set a “natural experiment” with the clusters, and has attempted to take hold of their experience through internal assessments and conferences.

A different approach has been taken at the Pennsylvania State University to foster inter-college collaborations. Penn State has centrally-funded “umbrella” institutes in broad areas of research (life sciences, environment, materials research, and social science). The institutes administer a faculty co-funding scheme, through which they support half the cost of a new faculty position proposed by a department. This is different from the dual-appointment of faculty to a research center and a department, whereby researchers split their time between departmental and center duties. The novelty lies in the way the positions are created and in the expectation that co-funded faculty will behave as boundary-spanning individuals, contributing to a collaborative research culture. The institutes review co-funded positions periodically to assess the continuity of co-funding, in relation to the established goals for the positions.

Overall, the detailed examination of the interdisciplinary strategies reveals a nuanced and complex picture of why and how they came about. Universities adopt such strategies for multiple reasons, such as enhancing organizational flexibility and adaptability, promoting leadership agendas, and absorbing and reacting to competitive pressures. Interdisciplinarity provides a rationale for redistributive mechanisms that senior administrators view as optimizing the university’s use of resources, whether to deal with scarcity or to maximize institutional investments in pursuit of academic leadership. Intellectually, interdisciplinarity is usually equated with “innovation” (Weingart, 2000), justifying reallocation of resources and university commitments to structures

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Research-intensive universities ... (continued from page 3)

that span or lie outside the colleges and departments. Organizational legitimacy to the interdisciplinary approaches has been gained through the involvement of faculty and administrators in boundary-crossing committee structures.

Caution is needed with prescriptive reports that simplify particular university initiatives as unambiguous solutions to the problem of facilitating interdisciplinary research. As discussed extensively in this study, the design and implementation of the strategies analyzed were highly contingent upon contextual factors, in long processes of trial-and-error and incremental adjustments. Most of these are still tentative, emergent models, awaiting the test of time and systematic evaluation. Nonetheless, competitive pressures and mimetic forces are likely to keep disseminating variants of interdisciplinary initiatives, campus-wide institutes, collaborative facilities, and cluster-type faculty recruitment schemes. Such approaches are already evident on many campuses.

Nevertheless, overcoming structural, cultural, and political barriers to boundary-crossing work is a lengthy task given the nature of the university as an organization. Interdisciplinarity advocates are likely to be frustrated by the pace and style of organizational change in the university; it never seems as responsive, prompt, and neat as desired. The university is deeply embedded in traditions, values, and practices that have a normative character, a "rule-like status." Change processes often blend strategic and political considerations, and require sensitivity not to alienate key stakeholders. The cases demonstrate how universities have dealt with this to advance significant change. The case study of Duke in particular suggests that this university is noteworthy in the scale and scope of its efforts to remove structural obstacles, create incentives for collaboration, and instill a favorable

culture to interdisciplinarity. While resources do make a difference and Duke benefits from its relative wealth, strong leadership is necessary to implement a "steady state of change" (Clark, 2004) to facilitate interdisciplinary research.

The challenge remains for both the university actors and external analysts to document effective changes in research processes and outcomes that can be attributable to the changed organizational conditions. A longitudinal perspective is essential, as is the search and refinement of relevant outcome indicators, beyond the often-used "bottom line" of research funding. Given the scale of the resources at stake, universities can only benefit from scrutinizing what results from the inputs allocated to interdisciplinary research.

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Job Postings

More information on these and other job postings can be found on the AIS Web site, www.muohio.edu/ais, by clicking on Jobs in Interdisciplinarity from the home page.

**Assistant Professor,
Interdisciplinary Studies Program,
School of Urban and Public Affairs,
University of Texas at Arlington**
Contact: 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.

**Assistant Professor, New College
Program, University of Alabama**
Contact: Dr. Catherine Roach,
Search Chair, New College
Program, Box 870229,
University of Alabama,
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487-0229.
Email: croach@nc.ua.edu

**Associate Dean, Interdisciplinary
Studies, Northern Kentucky
University**
Contact: Kevin Corcoran, Dean
of Arts and Sciences, Northern
Kentucky University, Highland
Heights, KY 41099. Email:
corcorank1@nku.edu.

**Assistant Professor,
Interdisciplinary Studies, Wayne
State University**
Web site: jobs.wayne.edu
(Posting No. 033475).

AIS Conference...

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was consensus that the presentations clustered on the “good-great-dazzling” end of the evaluation spectrum, with some 85% of those responding ranking them thus “on average.” And true, we had a similarly positive response to the plenary sessions and workshops. (All of which more below.) Nonetheless, the thing that most attendees praised the most, when asked what they particularly liked about the conference, was that utterly unquantifiable thing: the atmosphere. In person and on paper, attendees offering evaluations spoke/wrote at length about the atmosphere—so “friendly and generous,” so “relaxed and congenial.” People couldn’t say enough *about* the people there and their “wonderful collegiality.” They found one another “engaged” and “engaging”—both in formal sessions of one sort or another and in the informal get-togethers which so many so enjoyed, at the conference site itself and beyond it, too, at the restaurants of the Friday night dinner circles (remember the Queen of Sheba?) and the venues of the Saturday night entertainment options (how about Blind Willie’s?), not to mention the van rides to those various thithers and back again.

Perhaps because we’d gone out of our way to identify people new to the conference (with “first-timer” ribbons on their nametags)—and gone even further out of our way to identify “first-timers” who were also “students” (with yet another ribbon)—it was easy for us “old-timers” (no ribbon, thank heavens) to offer the welcomes that left “first-timers” feeling so “welcomed,” so “supported, and encouraged to contribute.” Students, who made up some 15% of those who presented at the conference and, also, some 15% of the total who attended, were particularly pleased with “how welcoming everyone at the conference was.” And, of course, they much appreciated the financial accommodation that enabled more of them to attend than ever before—without

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A Message from the AIS President

Our 28th annual conference was successful by most indicators that I can imagine. We had a rich variety of stimulating presentations, attendance at the sessions was excellent, and all those fascinating conversations in the halls spoke to our enthusiasm and our warm, collegial nature. I had one first-timer tell me that she was pleased with how willing our seasoned members were to share their time and expertise with new members. This was not surprising since one of the things that attracted me to AIS at my first conference was the genuine inclusiveness of the people in attendance. I hope that we will consciously perpetuate the tradition of being a welcoming community, especially as we see more participation in our activities by graduate students.

We owe a debt of gratitude to Gretchen Schulz and Kevin Corrigan and their colleagues at Oxford College of Emory and Emory University. In concert with our theme they reached out to other colleagues in Georgia to make this conference a success. Pauline Gagnon of the University of West Georgia deserves our special thanks for her assistance with the conference in general and for her work at the publications table. Pauline is now our President-Elect, and I look forward to her assuming the Presidency of AIS at the end of our conference in Arizona.

The theme of bridge building was evident in so many ways as we gathered in Atlanta. The interesting continuum of attendees, from new professionals to experienced interdisciplinarians, made me think about the relative maturities that our diverse programs have reached. As with many complex ideas that are put into action through programs, the recent discourse on interdisciplinarity has been characterized by issues and questions, well-developed responses to those issues and questions, and an ensuing critique of all things “settled.” I find this ongoing conversation particularly stimulating and think that this is an excellent environment for our newer members to construct a personal understanding of interdisciplinarity. Thus, I was delighted to observe a spectrum of people and of ideas at our conference. New members were hungry for answers. Experienced faculty and program directors who were maintaining an active intellectual agenda and promoting enriched student learning were eager to share their thoughts. Thoughtful members raised well-reasoned, respectful challenges to seemingly established ideas, and I was heartened to see the respect that we all paid each other in those discussions. This speaks well, I think, to our maturity as a profession and of our impact yet to come.

Our organizational future is bright. Membership is stable if not growing, and we have annual conference venues for the next four years. Roz Schindler, our AIS Conference Liaison, has done a remarkable job of helping us see the future, and she continues to seek hosts for the next decade. If your organization would like to host an AIS conference, please let Roz know. I assure you that she will follow up on your interest with her unique combination of grace and zeal. Our journal, *Issues in Integrative Studies*, is enjoying a sharp increase in quality submissions. Joan Fiscella and Fran Navakas have done a commendable job as co-editors with our journal, and I hope that we will continue to promote our discourse through *Issues*.

Our colleagues at Arizona State University have been working for more than a year now to prepare for our visit to Tempe late next September. They promise warm days, comfortable nights, great food, and an exciting interpretation of interdisciplinary teaching and learning. I look forward to seeing each of you there as we continue our work together.

Don Stowe
AIS President

AIS Conference...

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busting their typically tiny banks: the reduced registration fee, the grant money available from AIS itself, and the small stipend we provided those who were able to put in some time at the registration table. A win-win arrangement, for sure.

By the time the conference was over, “old-timers” and “first-timers” alike felt so connected with like-minded and (just as important) warm-hearted people, it was hard for some to go home! Those of us present at the wrap-up session on Sunday morning may never forget the woman who lingered in the door, her bags beside her, ready to leave but unwilling to do so before she confessed to suffering “separation anxiety.” She’d found a “family,” she said, a “family” of interdisciplinarians who knew what she was talking about when she talked the talk. And she was heading back to an institution where almost no one understood her and her passions and concerns—an institution that didn’t feel as much like “home” as the AIS conference had managed to do! I don’t think I was the only one who bid her good-bye with a bit of a lump in my throat. And I can tell you that a lot of the comments on the evaluation forms sound as though they’re deeply felt, as well. There are many responses that are positive for more than merely intellectual, merely academic reasons. Emotion seems to underlie most of the assertions that the conference was “wonderful,” “wonderful,” “wonderful.” And while many said it was “wonderful” because of the “networking” it allowed for (as indeed it was) others said that professional perk was just complementary to the relationships that formed in the process. As one person put it, in the end, “I really felt supported as a person, not just helped professionally.” And another made a similar point in a more poetic way when she said the whole experience was “like a warm bath.” Quite a compliment, considering the frigid temperature of most of the meeting rooms most of the time!

As I said at the start, you probably had to be there—to appreciate the fact that this *was* a conference with a heart. But, of course, it was a conference with a brain, as well. And this I probably *can* explain (to some extent) even to those who weren’t able to be there. The title of the conference, “Bridge-Building: Connecting Hearts and Minds, Arts and Sciences, Teaching and Research, Academy and Community,” like the call for proposals, still available for those who’d like to peruse it on the conference Web site at www.ais.oxford.emory.edu, attracted a plethora of presentations which addressed the themes and subthemes suggested by the title and articulated in the call. People proposed papers, panels, workshops, and roundtables dealing with theory and with practice in all of these areas—and in another area we simply called “continuing concerns of educators involved in integrative studies”—with remarkably comparable numbers of proposals developing topics related to each area. Perhaps because we’d actually mentioned “arts and sciences” in our title, we had more proposals involving integrative or interdisciplinary work in these two spheres (and in the two combined) than we’ve ever had before (some 20% of the total), and the evaluations show much appreciation of this fact. Many of those who took the time to comment on “sessions that stood out for you” spoke of sessions that addressed integrations involving science. And many urged us to seek more of the same in future AIS conferences.

Because specifics are always more informative than generalities, I’m going to quote a few of the comments on sessions that “stood out” for one attendee or another, like the session offered by our man from Amsterdam, Machiel Keestra, described as “an astounding example of how humanities can be combined with natural science “ in a way that “does justice to both and truly synthesizes the two approaches,” and the session offered by grad student Cindy Atha-Weldon, described as an “eye-opening presentation on ‘perspective-taking’ as a cognitive and affective heuristic for

course design,” and the session offered by Norman Bryan, described as “a breath-taking overview of one scholar’s journey . . . to an inspirational theoretical model for combining knowledge and concern (or action).” Then there was the session offered by Richard Carp and Jay Wentworth, described, in huge capital letters, as “A TRULY AMAZING ARTISTIC, CONCEPTUAL, AND INTELLECTUAL EXPERIENCE!” which should be “sent on the road as advertisement for the power of interdisciplinary studies and pedagogy.” And for two people, the standout was a session that wasn’t even on the schedule to start with, a session Emory professor Kirk Ziegler put together at the last moment (as a substitute for a cancellation) when he realized that the pedagogy he employs in the immunology course he teaches in the med school *is* interdisciplinary in ways that might be of interest. An “ah ha” experience. An “AIS moment.” And “The Art of Immunology: Drawing Science” was born.

Put innumerable top-notch presentations together with two top-notch conference-sponsored workshops, one on “Integrating Hearts and Minds: The Cognitive-Affective Connections in Teaching and Learning” and one on “The Nuts and Bolts of Integrative Syllabus Design,” and three top-notch plenary sessions, one a Book Conversation with Julie Thompson Klein, focused on her newest work, *Humanities, Culture, and Interdisciplinarity: The Changing American Academy*, one an address by Louis Dupré, Emeritus Professor of Religion and Philosophy from Yale University, speaking on “Symbolic Variety, Philosophical Unity,” and one a panel presentation by J. Scott Lee, Executive Director, and other educators representing the Association for Core Texts and Courses, reporting on the ACTC/NEH-sponsored project “Bridging the Gap Between the Humanities and the Sciences,” and you have the aforesaid conference with a brain as big as its heart, a conference substantive in fulfilling the promise of its title, in dealing with

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CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Association for Integrative Studies 29th Annual Conference
 Hosted by the School of Interdisciplinary Studies
September 27–30, 2007; Tempe, Arizona

Interdisciplinarity at the Border: Creating, Thinking and Living New Knowledge

We are all at the border, a place and time where knowledge is created, thought and lived through interdisciplinary processes. In this call for proposals we challenge participants to engage in interconnected movements of creation, thought, and life by imagining new knowledge that would change the ways we understand the many worlds in which we live.

In the context of the field of integrative study and practice, we welcome proposals for papers, panels, workshops, roundtables and posters that address issues such as the following:

Creating New Knowledge: theorizing interdisciplinarity; integrating knowledge; questioning the assumptions of disciplines; critiquing the boundaries between the arts, sciences, social sciences and humanities; translating the languages of disciplines and interdisciplinarity; engaging in transdisciplinary thinking;

Thinking New Knowledge: teaching; engaging interdisciplinarity in terms of the affective, ethical, cultural, and physical; facilitating new knowledge through creative program and institutional planning, assessment and entrepreneurial initiatives; reimagining institutions of higher learning; learning how to think and live at the border; exploring the effects of technology on knowledge and knowledge transference; re-centering the student in education;

Living New Knowledge: integrating the academy and the community; activating learners through experience and service; globalizing knowledge by studying abroad; engaging students in their civic and social worlds.

Graduate students are encouraged to submit proposals. See the AIS website (<http://www.units.muohio.edu/aisorg/conf/travel.htm>) for information on travel funds for graduate students.

Proposal Deadline: MARCH 19, 2007

See conference website for proposal submission form

<http://uc.asu.edu/ais2007>

Notification of Acceptance by MAY 15

AIS Conference...

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the multiplicity of ways in which integration of human capacities, academic disciplines, career practices, and social institutions increasingly characterizes higher education in the United States and around the world. All this—and a pilot project, too—and one that was particularly well-received: during breakfast on Saturday, AIS Board members sat at designated tables to act as GUIDEs or G(uides) to an U(nderstanding) of I(nter)D(isciplinary) E(ducation), facilitating discussion in areas of special interest to all involved in integrative work.

No wonder, then, that so many spoke so well of the 2006 conference—and vowed to attend the conference again next year. As one respondent wrote: “What did I particularly like about the Atlanta conference? What didn’t I like! It was a revelation to me as a first-timer to discover such a warm, sharing, practical but at the same time theoretically and conceptually sophisticated group. You will see me again for sure.” Me, too. For sure. Though I’ve got to confess I was happy to “pass the torch,” the tube containing the AIS banner, to next year’s team captain, Kelly Nelson (running up to do so while others in the wrap-up room helpfully hummed the theme song from *Chariots of Fire*—another classic AIS moment). I have full faith that she and her colleagues at Arizona State will do the organization as proud as it deserves. Tempe, here we come!

Gretchen Schulz, Associate Professor of English/Humanities, Oxford College of Emory, and Kevin Corrigan, Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies and Director of Medieval Studies in the Institute of Liberal Arts, Emory University, were the conference coordinators for the 28th Annual Conference of the Association for Integrative Studies. ■■■



Association for Integrative Studies
School of Interdisciplinary Studies
Miami University
Oxford, OH 45056

Association for Integrative Studies 29th Annual Conference

September 27-30, 2007, Tempe, Arizona

**Interdisciplinarity
at the Border:
Creating, Thinking
and Living New
Knowledge**



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