International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education

IASCE

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Dear Colleagues,

IASCE is pleased to bring you the second member newsletter of 2014.

I will begin by welcoming three new board members. We are delighted that Wendy Joliffe, Jill Clark, and Celine Buchs have joined us. We first met Wendy and Jill in Torino and Celine in Brisbane. All three were active in Scarborough and Wendy was one of the primary planners for the Scarborough event. In upcoming editions of the newsletter we will introduce each of them in greater detail. Their contact information and brief biographical sketches are on our website.

While we welcome Wendy, Jill, and Celine we say goodbye to Pasi Sahlberg, who will leave the board after serving for ten years. Pasi is currently a visiting professor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education (USA) and, when I recently asked him about his current projects and interests, he told me that he was working "to incorporate CL as much as I can into my own work here [at Harvard] and share that with others." He mentioned that *Finnish Lessons 2.0* will be published later this year and will continue to emphasize the key role CL has played to make Finnish schools good places for all children to learn and grow. In his "spare time," Pasi is co-authoring a Finnish-language book about cooperative learning.

Our board is a "working board." This means we volunteer our time to further the mission of the organization and to support cooperative learning locally, regionally, and internationally. We will all work in various ways to help ensure that the 2015 conference in Odense Denmark is a rich and rewarding event. Our planning team has already assumed a variety of "jobs" in preparation for the conference and Maureen Breeze and I have had regular conversations with our Danish colleagues via SKYPE. During the next six months, our board will be working on three major initiatives re-lated to the conference. These include:

- The IASCE Awards: Nominations for the Achievement Awards and the Elizabeth Cohen Award for Outstanding Thesis or Dissertation are due 15 October 2014. See an announcement later in this issue. Full details are on our website. We will introduce the award recipients in Odense.
- Pre-submission Proposal Assistance: Two IASCE board members have volunteered to support those who would like assistance in writing a proposal for the Odense conference. The deadline to request help is 15 November 2014. See an announcement later in this issue. Full details are included in the *Call for Proposals* on our website.
- Proposal Review: The deadline to submit a proposal for Odense is 2 January 2015. While you might be in the mood to relax after clicking the "submit" button, we will spend several weeks working in teams to conduct a blind review of all submissions. We expect to notify all those who submit no later than 1 April 2015. See a brief description of the conference strands later in this issue. Full details are included in the *Call for Proposals* on our website.

**How to
Subscribe to the
CL List**

Want to dialogue with others about your use of CL? Then, you might wish to join the CL List, an internet discussion group about cooperative learning.

Well-known CL experts as well as "just folks" belong. Currently, the CL List isn't a busy group, but when discussions do take place, they are often enlightening.

Furthermore, you can receive updates on CL related events.

To subscribe, send an email to CL_Listsubscribe@yahoogroups.com. You should very quickly receive an email reply with simple instructions. If that fails, just send an email to george.jacobs@gmail.com and he'll do the necessary.

Talk to you soon!

As we have all come to expect, this issue of the newsletter includes a variety of abstracts that describe work from multiple continents and contexts. Identifying and publishing abstracts is one way IASCE supports its membership and the study of cooperation in education. Another way is to provide periodic descriptions of how cooperative learning has developed in different parts of the world. In this issue, Yael Sharan provides us with a fascinating glimpse of how educators in Mexico are implementing cooperative learning. A third way IASCE supports the study of cooperation is through supporting periodic publications of journal and book-length manuscripts. In this issue, Yael Sharan reviews a publication with direct links to our 2013 Scarborough conference. Co-president Maureen Breeze is the guest editor of this special issue of the *Journal of Co-operative Studies*. I enjoyed reading both the journal and Yael's review, as I enjoyed meeting many of the authors in Scarborough. I think Yael's review provides an interesting snapshot of the kinds of ideas and projects one might learn about while participating in an IASCE conference. Thank you Yael for this review and special thanks to Maureen Breeze for your dedication in developing this education issue "Linking Theory to Practice" of the *Journal of Co-operative Studies*. I hope that this snapshot will inspire some of you to join us in Odense.

If you need more inspiration about the power and breadth of our conferences, take a few moments to read the *Reflections on the Scarborough Conference* that have been compiled by Maureen Breeze. What she did was both simple and illuminating. One year after the conference, she asked people to reflect on their experiences and to describe where these experiences have taken them. Some of the responses are stunning.

We are pleased to bring you this newsletter as a member benefit. Please share it with colleagues and please consider submitting a proposal for Odense Denmark, 1-3 October 2015.

As always, thank you for your support.

Lynda Baloche

IASCE Achievement Awards and the IASCE Award for Outstanding Thesis or Dissertation

The IASCE Achievement Awards are intended to recognize individuals or groups who have made outstanding contributions to the field of cooperative learning. The categories include Research, Original Materials, and Service and Activism.

The IASCE Elizabeth Cohen Award for Outstanding Thesis or Dissertation recognizes researchers in the early stages of their careers, who demonstrate strong potential for contributions to the field of cooperative learning and education through the completion of a recent thesis or dissertation for a master's or doctorate degree.

Full details about these awards and nominating procedures are available at www.iasce.net

The deadline for nominations is 15 October 2014.

Cooperative Learning: Meeting the Challenges of the 21st Century

The IASCE, in cooperation with our hosts, the University College Lillebaelt, Denmark,
is pleased to invite you to participate in the 2015 International Conference

Odense, Denmark
1-3 October 2015

The 2015 conference provides an opportunity to participate in an event based on cooperative models and values that foster dialogue, respect, and reflection through intentional engagement.

The conference seeks to:
- explore the role of cooperative learning as an effective pedagogy for the 21st Century;
- deepen understanding of how cooperative learning can be effectively implemented and expanded to encourage learning in differing contexts;
- examine the essential nature of cooperation in developing and sustaining responsible citizenship.

The conference is appropriate for academics, educators at all levels or phases of formal and non-formal education, educational policy makers, educational managers and administrators, and others with an interest in exploring cooperative learning and the application of cooperation in all aspects of education—local, national and global.

The six conference strands have been developed to encourage stimulating conversations on the conference theme across a wide variety of topics and perspectives.

Strand 1: Classroom Practice and Teacher Education
This strand focuses on (a) the practical implementation of cooperative learning in a wide variety of educational settings and (b) teacher education and teacher professional development at all levels.

Strand 2: Social and Educational Inclusion in Learning
This strand focuses on the role of cooperative learning and cooperative strategies in supporting (a) teaching and learning for diversity and inclusion and (b) the development of social integration, social justice, and equity in schools and communities.

Strand 3: Cooperative Leadership and School Development
This strand focuses on the use of cooperative learning and cooperative strategies in whole school/institutional contexts, or in large-scale district, regional or national programs. It highlights the impact of innovative applications of cooperative principles and approaches on policies for educational improvement and management.

Strand 4: Creativity, Innovation, and Problem Solving
This strand focuses on the intersections of creativity, innovation, entrepreneurship, and problem solving.

Strand 5: Cooperative Approaches to Technology-Enhanced Learning
This strand focuses on the modern realities of technology and its impact on collaboration, communication, the availability of information, and the heightened need for information literacy.

Strand 6: Responsible Citizenship
This strand focuses on developing a cooperative context and the knowledge, skills, and values needed to (a) facilitate active local and global engagement and (b) shift from individual consumerism towards mutual responsibility and sustainability.

A detailed Request for Proposals and submission procedures are available at www.iasce.net

The deadline for proposal submission is 2 January 2015.

We look forward to seeing you in Denmark!

Designing Interactive Paper Sessions

So many of us are good at using cooperative learning when we "teach." But how about a 20-minute paper session or a panel discussion? Is it possible to avoid "death by PowerPoint"? We think it is!

The IASCE Board has prepared a short document that we hope will help all of us think about ways to engage "the audience" even during short "presentations."

It's available at www.iasce.net through our homepage and on our *Conference and Events* page.

Check it out!

Support for the Odense Proposal Submission Process

Thinking of submitting a proposal and not sure how to proceed?

- Maybe you haven't been to an IASCE conference before and don't know what to expect.
- Maybe you haven't written many conference proposals.
- Maybe you aren't sure how to structure an interactive talk at a conference.

Two IASCE Board Members—Yael Sharan and Kumiko Fushino—are available for guidance regarding clarity of writing, appropriateness of content to theme, relationship of content to the "study of cooperation in education," or presentation design to ensure interaction.

If you would like to utilize this opportunity, please contact the IASCE Secretary, Yael Sharan, at yael@iasce.net.

Proposals must be submitted for pre-review by 15 November 2014.

Education Special Edition: Linking Theory and Practice
Journal of Co-operative Studies, 46(2) Autumn 2013: 13-14 ISSN 0961 5784
Reviewed by Yael Sharan

If you attended the 2013 IASCE conference at the University of Hull, Scarborough[1], you surely remember the display of flags of most of the 23 countries that delegates came from. Among the delegates were veteran researchers and educators involved in cooperative learning (CL) over the last forty years, and others, new to CL, just as dedicated. If you missed the conference, or if you want to be reminded of some of the sessions, read the special issue of the *Journal of Co-operative Studies*, compiled and edited by Maureen Breeze, IASCE co-president and a member of the conference organizing team. Begin with her editorial to get a taste of the vibrant and creative spirit that delegates brought to the conference and read on to learn of the diverse ways contributors to this issue view and apply CL.

The ten articles and two book reviews included in this issue were written by delegates from seven different countries, (the USA, England, Italy, Singapore, South Africa, Australia and Scotland), and as such serve as a relatively small but nonetheless vivid reminder of the global reach of CL and related issues. Several articles report on studies of the various aspects of the application of CL in classrooms and educational systems at the elementary and postgraduate levels, and in professional development. Other contributions reflect the growing effect that CL has on personal and institutional philosophies, social movements, cultural and educational diversity, and struggles for social justice.

The two articles from Italian educators demonstrate how CL has expanded: academic interest in the effect of specific CL models on students and teachers continues, as evidenced in the article "Enhancing Intercultural Sensitivity through Group Investigation," by Marialuisa Damini and Alession Surian. The authors not only trained teachers to use GI and studied its implementation, they also investigated the effect of this model on teachers' and students' attitudes towards cultural diversity. An even broader application of the potential benefits of CL is presented by Daniela Pavan and Fabrizio Santini. In their article "Co-operative Learning and Education for Sustainable Development" they highlight CL's contribution to educational processes based on authentic cooperation, connected to life inside and outside the classroom and school. In their own words, these processes "require(s) that people learn to critically evaluate situations, are creative, solve problems, make decisions, think about the acquisition of knowledge, consider the limits of personal and collective responsibility and use social skills and competences in mediating potential conflicts" (p. 58).

Several articles add to the exploration of how CL, cultural contexts, and social justice merge, albeit in different ways and in various educational contexts. Rachael Jesika Singh from South Africa writes about an experimental effort to introduce CL procedures as an alternative to the typical large-group lectures in a postgraduate research development program at Limpopo University, a rural university in South Africa. In her article "Co-operative Learning – An Alternative Approach to Large Group Lectures with Postgraduate Students," Singh reports that her findings indicate that students enjoyed small group discussions and the opportunity to share ideas and opinions that they found compatible with the principle of Ubuntu (working together), which is characteristic of African culture and formerly ignored by the apartheid government. Singh also emphasizes how important it is for the facilitator to be thoroughly prepared to organize classes in this way.

Just as using small groups to help graduate students develop research projects is still rare in Limpopo, so is combining cooperative community-based research (CBR) with doctoral leadership studies rare in US universities, as reported by Laurie Stevahn (a former IASCE board member) in her article "Integrating Co-Operative Community-Based Research (CBR) with Doctoral Leadership Studies." Her study demonstrates how CL easily merged with other principles in CBR student teams that sought to involve "a cohort of graduate students in authentic inquiry . . . toward developing highly effective leaders with hearts for social justice and tools for sound research to inform constructive change" (p. 32).

From the article "Professional Learning Communities in Singapore Schools," by Daphnee Lee, Helen Hong, Wanying Tay, and Wing On Lee, we learn of yet another application of CL principles and procedures: the facilitating of teachers' professional development by means of Professional Learning Communities (PLC). PLCs create collaborative teacher communities to develop reflective practitioners. It comes as no surprise that teachers who were previously "exposed to cooperative learning approaches and who actively reflected upon the conversations that had occurred during PLC time reported higher levels of PLC engagement than those who reported otherwise" (p. 55).

Christine Schmalenbach takes readers to elementary schools in El Salvador, the setting for her ethnographic study of cooperation. In her article, "Learning Co-Operatively under Challenging Circumstances," Schmalenbach explains that she did not approach her study with any particular view or definition of CL; instead she observed the ways adults and pupils worked together, helped each other or shared something, and how they understood that interaction. She presents preliminary conclusions and we look forward to final findings that may determine how cooperation and collaboration are viewed and experienced in this specific cultural context so that CL can be applied successfully.

Three articles in this issue open a window to the world of CL in England and Scotland. Julie Thorpe's article "Co-operative Schools: A Quiet Revolution," tells about the network of schools that have banded together to form a new model of school governance, the Co-operative Trust, as a challenge to the opposing trend towards privatization of schools. As Thorpe describes, the Trust is enjoying rapid growth and already numbers over 600 cooperative schools, with many more currently "in the process of conversion." Cooperative principles are applied in varied ways in each cluster of Trust schools, so that "implementing the co-operative ethos may be seen vividly in the classroom practices in one co-operative school and more strongly in the engagement with the local community in another" (p.7).

There is a Co-operative Education Trust in Scotland and in his article "Co-operative Education in an Independent Scotland?" Hugh Donnelly explains how it differs from the Co-operative Trust in England. One difference is that the Scottish approach has been to place cooperation at the heart of the curriculum rather than remove the school from the control of the local authorities. Donnelly presents the various concerns regarding the establishment of cooperative schools in Scotland.

The articles mentioned above deal with efforts to enlist cooperation for acceptance of diversity and for social justice and change in educational institutions at all levels and in diverse communities. Ellen Gibson, in her personal reflection on the conference, "Co-operative Education — A Perspective from a Woodcraft Folk Volunteer," takes us farther afield (no pun intended). She makes the case for the outdoors as an informal setting in which "children can engage in and understand how cooperation can work to benefit all" (p. 13). No doubt all practitioners of CL, in whatever setting, join Gibson and the Woodcraft Folk in England in their hope that education continues to promote the principles and values of cooperation in their broadest sense.

George Jacobs and Peter Seow of Singapore take us back to a more formal educational setting. In their contribution to this volume Jacobs, an IASCE board member and veteran workshop facilitator, and Seow present the theoretical foundations and practicalities of conducting co-facilitated workshops for professional development for CL ("The Many Co-operative Roles Available to Workshop Co-Facilitators"). They suggest twelve roles for co-facilitators who, in this article, are seen as understudies of the lead, more experienced facilitator. The twelve roles range from planning to assessment of the workshop's effectiveness and finally, assessing the understudy's role; they encourage understudies to actually lead some of the activities in a workshop.

For those who participated in the conference in Scarborough I hope that my short review of this special issue of the *Journal of Co-operative Studies* evokes meaningful memories. And for those who weren't there I hope that it gives you a small but substantial idea of the wide scope of CL and the energy and imagination various researchers and educators invest in exploring the diverse range of contributions CL can make.

[1] In partnership with the University's Education Department, the UK-based Co-operative Learning & Development Associates (CLADA) and the International Association for Intercultural Education (IAIE).

Reflections on the IASCE Conference, Scarborough, England; July 2013
Compiled by Maureen Breeze

As a year passes since the IASCE conference in Scarborough, England in July 2013 and we turn our focus to the next conference in Denmark in 2015, Maureen Breeze Co-President of IASCE has been in contact with some of the Scarborough participants and asked them to reflect on their experience and where it has taken them. She has captured some of their responses below.

What are your memories now?

- ☆ "I made lifelong friends during this conference. This was no ordinary conference – it was a warm an intimate experience of Cooperative Learning and is not easily forgotten".
- ☆ "The warmth of the people who attended the conference continues as a strong memory, as well as their willingness to share and accept new ideas as part of their professional growth".
- ☆ "A wonderful opportunity to meet with so many practitioners and researchers working in the field of Cooperative Learning".
- ☆ "I have very fond memories of the conference in Scarborough. What has stayed with me, apart from the inspiring talks and presentations, is the sheer friendliness of the conference".
- ☆ "One of my lasting impressions is the relatively large number of educators from India who attended. They added a unique element to the discussion of how to implement Cooperative Learning and how to blend it in a culture that has cooperative elements but not in schooling".
- ☆ The IASCE conference in Scarborough was an emotional and professional recharge for me. When I think again of those days, I feel myself full of hope because I saw a lot of people who had trust in changing themselves to change the world in order to be more just, more equal and spontaneous. There was a strong human and interpersonal energy - we were linked for action and for learning".
- ☆ "I have very fond memories of the conference with regards to the people I met, workshops I participated in and the vibrant interaction I had on the topic that has grown so close to my heart. Coming from a city where Cooperative Learning techniques in education are practically non-existent I was thrilled to meet some of the leading practitioners in the world today".
- ☆ "It has been a year but the memories are still fresh in my mind. Besides the friends that I have made, the sessions were amazing".
- ☆ "Just good ones! A highly productive and well organized conference, small enough to get to know people well!"

Did the conference send you off in a new direction?

- ☆ "Yes it did, above all for a wider and manifold vision of my work of trainer/teacher as a 'gardener' of a future world".
- ☆ "Yes it most certainly did. Although I had started some work in this direction, attending the conference not only gave me a lot of insight into Cooperative Learning as a pedagogy but also gave me confidence and direction to look into and gather more information and understanding".
- ☆ "Yes, in international cooperation in distance learning".

Have you further developed your understanding and practice of Cooperative Learning since the conference?

☆ "Since the conference I have implemented Cooperative Learning principles in group work and in the tasks within Storyline[1] which my students work on intensively for two weeks. I have also asked my student teachers to reflect from a Cooperative Learning perspective on their own learning - how the group Contributes to that learning or not and the importance of themselves as an individual to the group effort. This is so valuable for them to know when they design group work in their own future classes, of course. I am thinking about a presentation for the next international Storyline conference in March, where I am going to be doing a workshop on Cooperative Learning tasks within a Storyline framework".

☆ "We took plenty of ideas with us and have been incorporating these in our teacher training. We will be focusing more on Cooperative Learning applications in the coming year, particularly in preparing teachers for our revised Junior Cycle Curriculum and approach".

☆ "Yes, we have developed an international cooperative online class".

☆ "In India the Central Board of Secondary Education has introduced Life Skills Education as an integral part of the curricula for classes - VI to X. They have been advocating CCE (Continuous Comprehensive Evaluation) pattern. With the emerging trend of CCE wherein young people acquire Knowledge, Attitudes, Value Enhanced Life Skills (KAVELS), I have tried to study the effectiveness of CL in achievement in Science and also in development of communication and interpersonal skills in students and how CL can become pedagogy for CCE based Indian Classrooms".

Are you still in contact with anyone you met in Scarborough? What are you talking about?

☆ "Partnerships established at the conference are being further developed with a possible EU research funded project, so the legacy lives on".

☆ "We have been in contact with Pasi Sahlberg and are setting up a partnership with a University in Finland".

☆ "I am in touch with some I met at the conference. I exchanged emails regarding their research work and methodology. I received some articles from them too which have been useful".

☆ "It has led to an application for Erasmus funding for a project on Cooperative Learning between the universities of Hull, Kristianstad, Sweden and Lillebaelt, Odense. We will be working with two partner schools each and implementing Cooperative Learning"

☆ "Yes, the three of us have formed a group that has continuously kept cooperating via Skype, Eluminate, etc. developing a common core curriculum for Distance learning. We have also met twice so far face to face, the first time in London, England and the second time in Heidelberg, Germany. We are evaluating the results of the course in winter 2013/14 and planning the new course for winter 2014/15".

How has the conference impacted you?

☆ "In December, my school was engaged as mentor to observe Cooperative Learning in the classrooms in Brunei Darussalam. It is such a pleasure to see Cooperative Learning implemented in Islamic schools in Brunei".

☆ I also shared on Cooperative Learning in many Islamic schools in Indonesia between December 2013 and May 2014 too and what excites me are my plans to bring some teachers from Brunei and Indonesia to attend the next IASCE conference in Denmark!"

☆ "One of the most important things that I learnt by meeting people from all over the world on this conference is that cultural factors of the country are of paramount significance in the implementation of Cooperative Learning. How education per se is conceived in a country? How does a teacher perceive it and prepare her or himself for it? I therefore always keep in mind the Indian cultural context and diverse cultural classrooms at various educational levels".

☆ Huge! And not just on us, also on our students. We have developed a course, 'Research in Distance Learning: Forming a Cyberspace Community with Students from Arab and Jewish Colleges in Israel'. A thesis and a few papers are being written on the online exchange and we want to publish a paper".

[1] See http://www.storyline.sc

Discovering Cooperative Learning in Mexico
By Yael Sharan

When I first met Clotilde Lomeli Agruel and Jitka Crhova at the IASCE conference in Brisbane in 2010 we chatted briefly but unfortunately I didn't take the opportunity to learn more about CL in Mexico. Little did I imagine that this brief encounter would lead to a journey of discovery, literally and figuratively, of the varied research projects and teacher training settings for CL that exist in several parts of Mexico.

My first stop on this journey was in 2012, when I facilitated CL workshops at three campuses of UABC (the Autonomous University of Baja California) that Clotilde organized. Participants in the workshops were professors from the campuses of Tijuana, Ensenada and Mexicali, as well as non-university level teachers. Clotilde is a member of an academic group, Innovación Educativa, that collaborates with a team at the University of Murcia in Spain, led by Professors Rosa Maria Pons and José Manuel Serrano, all of whom you may have met last year at the IASCE conference in Scarborough. The project focuses on training faculty members at UABC for CL. The team has published a book about the participants' experiences of applying CL in higher education, highlighting innovative practices in distance education.

I learned more about these efforts at the next stop on this journey of discovery in Xalapa, at an IAIE conference, where I coordinated the CL strand. There Clotilde presented her study of the state of cooperative learning in higher education in Mexico. The collaboration with the team at the University of Murcia, as well as the initiatives of the UABC team, will lead to slow but steady increase in the use of CL in higher education and will hopefully filter down to the school system.

At the conference I learned about the work of Ulrike Keyser, from the Universidad Pedagógica Nacional at Zamora, Michoacán. She took us out of the university world to an Indigenous Mexican community, where she had investigated the cultural meanings attached to various collaborative activities that are viewed as educational in family and community contexts. Ulrike's findings showed that children from families with limited schooling were more likely to initiate a range of extensive collaborative activities at home as well as in paid labor activities outside the home. The more schooled parents encouraged less collaboration in their children.

Another opportunity to learn about CL in higher education was at the IASCE conference in Scarborough, where both Clotilde and her colleague Aidee Espinosa Pulido (also a member of the UABC academic group) explained how they use group investigation in their teaching at the university. Aidee uses GI in classrooms and in distance education to teach literature. Clotilde finds GI "the fastest and most complete method to develop beginning students' self-confidence, initiative, group interaction and research skills."

The next stop on my journey of discovery was last May at the English Department of UAEH (Autonomous University of the State of Hidalgo), in Pachuca, headed by Prof, Bertha Guadalupe Paredes Zepeda. I had heard of UAEH in Xalapa, where Prof. Rosamary Selene Lara Villanueva had explained the development of teacher education for CL in accordance with the teaching guidelines of the Mexican Integral Reform in Basic Education in Hidalgo, but did not expect to actually go there.

Bertha Parades told me that all teachers of English at the university learn about CL, mainly from the Richards and Rodgers text "Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching," and from Bertha as well. To quote Bertha, "even if they 'knew' about this method (CL), after the workshops their perceptions or what they knew about the method changed." The workshops were experiential and involved participants in many different ways of organizing CL for a variety of purposes. We began with activities that called for minimal interaction and academic skills and slowly increased the complexity of both these aspects of learning cooperatively. At the end of each of the three days participants were invited to design activities for their classrooms. Here, in their own words, are a few participants' reflections on how this experience changed their perception of CL.

"…what it (CL) really means is to increase discussion and sharing different ideas among participants. If you let students share their ideas with their classmates they will realize that all of them have different ideas; as a result, students won´t have just one idea, they will have three or four or more than four ideas, because all of them have a different point of view." (Anakaren Cruz Pérez)

"I knew the basic concept: students work together towards the same goal. I had not seen this approach applied in a real class with real students though. I learned how to actually apply this approach in a real context. I liked the fact that it is an approach that can be used for different subjects and not only for ELT. I also learned that my teaching practice can always be improved." (Darinel Cortés Castañón)

"I believe that a person is able to do many things but working in groups can push people to extraordinary results. There are three necessary things to involve students in this method: Students need to feel safe; groups should be small so all can participate; the task must be clearly defined. CL provides a place where: learners actively participate, teachers can learn from students and vice versa, respect is given, projects are meaningful, tasks are diverse, students are invested in their own learning, students can share strengths, they learn to deal with conflict." (Patricia Pozo)

"We English teachers enable students to interact in order to communicate. We have a repertoire of activities in pairs, trios, groups, so that students may achieve communication through interaction. However, what I had not realised, until the course, was that one very important thing about having students interact is to teach students to listen! To enable a conversation to keep going is to learn to ask and answer questions. But of course, listening to the questions, enables the right responses! The other thing I liked and learned from your course was the aspect of sharing. I sometimes tell my students to 'share' their ideas with a partner or with the group, but the word share then was just an imperative command. Sharing now means more than just telling a classmate about his ideas. It is more about enabling others to learn. "(Eleanor Occeña)

From this short journey of discovery, it seems that in Mexico, as in many countries, (see the Forum series in newsletter issues of 2002-2006), CL had its initial thrust at the university level, trickled down to elementary schools and will rise back again to higher levels of education. I look forward to discovering more about CL in Mexico at the upcoming IASCE conference in Denmark in 2015, where many of the people mentioned above will present their latest work. *Hasta la vista*!

Note

Some publications by the UABC team:

1. (2010). Cooperative learning: a methodological answer to instructional design based on competences in the university environment. *Int. J. Information and Operations Management Education,* 3(3), 202-223. http://inderscience.metapress.com/content/y715501w2l367357/

2. (2012). Validación de un instrumento para analizar el parámetro de mutualidad en el proceso de interacción entre iguales. Revista Mexicana de Psicología, 29(1), 86-96. http://www.redalyc.org/articulo.oa?id=243030189008

3. (2010). School Community and Cooperative Work. http://promepca.sep.gob.mx/archivospdf/produccion/Producto1467171.PDF

4. Lomeli-Agruel, C., Espinosa, A., y Tejeda, J.M. (2012). La pedagogía del aprendizaje cooperativo en la educación superior en México. *Revista Iberoamericana para la Investigación y el Desarrollo Educativo*, 9. Recuperado de: http://www.ride.org.mx/docs/publicaciones/09/gestion_educativa/ Clotilde_Lomeli_Agruel-Aidee_Espinosa_Pulido-Juan_Manuel_Tejeda_Gutierrez.pdf

From the Journals
Contributed by George Jacobs, Lalita Agashe and Yael Sharan

Abedin, B., Daneshgar, F., & D'Ambra, J. (2014). Patterns of non-task interactions in
    asynchronous computer-supported collaborative learning courses. *Interactive
    Learning Environments*, *22* (1), 18-34. doi: 10.1080/10494820.2011.641676

Despite the importance of the non-task interactions in computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) environments as emphasized in the literature, few studies have investigated online behavior of people in the CSCL environments. This paper studies the pattern of non-task interactions among postgraduate students in an Australian university. The CSCL environment in this study includes separate online spaces called the Seminar Room and the Coffee Shop for pedagogical and non-pedagogical activities, respectively. The Transcript Analysis Tool (TAT) was used to code discussions in the above *two rooms for three* online courses. The findings indicate the presence of substantial number of non-task interactions among students in both the Seminar Rooms and the Coffee Shops. The results also indicate that a great portion of the non-task discussions fall into the categories of Reflections, Referential Statements, Horizontal Questions, and Salutations. Furthermore, the majority of students' non-task interactions occurred during the first few weeks of the semester and then decreased in the middle of the semester and slightly increased during the exam period. This indicates that facilitating students' non-task activities during the first few weeks of the semester is of prime importance. Based on the findings, this paper provides recommendations for enhancing future CSCL developments.

Alrushiedat, N., & Olfman, L. (2013). Aiding participation and engagement in a blended learning environment.
    Journal of Information Systems Education, 24(2), 133-145. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/
    docview/1462046927

This research was conducted as a field experiment that explored the potential benefits of anchoring in asynchronous online discussions for business statistics classes required for information systems majors. These classes are usually taught using traditional methods with emphasis on lecturing, knowledge reproduction, and treatment of students as dependent learners. Course activities are typically centered on the teacher as the source of all knowledge and understanding. Moreover, student interactions are often limited to face-to-face meetings in the classroom, where students have exerted little effort towards engaging themselves. Online discussions show promise for improving students' learning in business statistics classes. We examined and compared the impact of anchored asynchronous online discussions (AAODs) and standard asynchronous online discussions (AODs) on students' participation and engagement in a blended learning environment. The findings show that AAODs facilitated more and better quality participation and engagement for undergraduates. AAODs were more likely to be perceived as helping increase students' efforts. The findings provide useful insights for improving student interaction and aiding learning.

Anaya, A. R., Luque, M., & García-Saiz, T. (2013). Recommender system in collaborative learning environment
    using an influence diagram. *Expert Systems with Applications*, *40*(18), 7193-7202.

Giving useful recommendations to students to improve collaboration in a learning experience requires tracking and analyzing student team interactions, identifying the problems and the target student. Previously, we proposed an approach to track students and assess their collaboration, but it did not perform any decision analysis to choose a recommendation for the student. In this paper, we propose an influence diagram, which includes the observable variables relevant for assessing collaboration, and the variable representing whether the student collaborates or not. We have analyzed the influence diagram with two machine learning techniques: an attribute selector, indicating the most important attributes that the model uses to recommend, and a decision tree algorithm revealing four different scenarios of recommendation. These analyses provide two useful outputs: (a) an automatic recommender, which can warn of problematic circumstances, and (b) a pedagogical support system (decision tree) that provides a visual explanation of the recommendation suggested.

Arendale D. (2014). arendale@umn.edu . Annotated Bibliography for Postsecondary Peer Cooperative Learning
Programs, available at http://www.arendale.org/peer-learning-bib/

The six student peer learning programs included in this bibliography meet the following characteristics: (a) the program must have been implemented at the postsecondary or tertiary level; (b) the program has a clear set of systematic procedures for its implementation that could be replicated by another institution; (c) program evaluation studies have been conducted and are available for review; (d) the program intentionally embeds learning strategy practice along with review of the academic content material; (e) the program outcomes include increased content knowledge, higher final course grades, higher pass rates, and higher college persistence rates; and (f) the program has been replicated at another institution with similar positive student outcomes. From a review of the professional literature, six programs emerged: (a) Accelerated Learning Groups (ALGs), (b) Emerging Scholars Program (ESP), (c) Peer-Led Team Learning (PLTL), (d) Structured Learning Assistance (SLA),
(e) Supplemental Instruction (SI), and (f) Video-based Supplemental Instruction (VSI).

Berry, S. L., & Cerulli, A. (2013). Mad scientists, narrative, and social power: A collaborative learning
activity. *Journal of Medical Humanities*, *34*(4), 451-454.

Nathaniel Hawthorne's short stories "The Birthmark" (1843) and "Rappaccini's Daughter" (1844) encourage critical thinking about science and scientific research as forms of social power. In this collaborative activity, students work in small groups to discuss the ways in which these stories address questions of human experimentation, gender, manipulation of bodies, and the role of narrative in mediating perceptions about bodies. Students collectively adduce textual evidence from the stories to construct claims and present a mini-argument to the class, thereby strengthening their skills in communication and cooperative interpretation of ethical dilemmas. This exercise is adaptable to shorter and longer periods of instruction, and it is ideal for instructors who collaborate across areas of expertise.

Boon, A., Raes, E., Kyndt, E., & Dochy, F. (2013). Team learning beliefs and behaviours in response teams. *European
Journal of Training and Development, 37*(4), 357-379. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/03090591311319771

Teams, teamwork and team learning have been the subject of many research studies over the last decades. This article aims at investigating and confirming the Team Learning Beliefs and Behaviours (TLB&B) model within a very specific population, i.e. police and firemen teams. Within this context, the paper asks whether the team's beliefs about the interpersonal context and the occurrence of three team learning behaviours (construction, co-construction and constructive conflict) play a role in building and maintaining mutually shared cognition in a collaborative learning environment leading to a higher effectiveness. Self-efficacy was added to the original model. Furthermore, the effect of team meeting frequency on the TLB&B model was investigated. Design methodology/approach - All constructs were measured using the validated Team Learning Beliefs and Behaviours Questionaire completed with the self-efficacy scale. Data were collected from 126 teams (individuals=769) and analysed using stepwise multi-level regression analyses and analyses of variance. Findings - The results show that the examined model generally applies to the data. Furthermore, self-efficacy was found to be a valuable addition to the model. Originality/value - This article validates an existing team learning model in a new context, namely that of response teams. Furthermore, it adds self-efficacy as a predictor for team learning behaviours and team effectiveness. A multilevel-approach was used as a valuable alternative of aggregating individual perceptions to team constructs.

Harris, A., Jones, M., & Baba, S. (2013). Distributed leadership and digital collaborative learning: A synergistic relationship? *British Journal of Educational Technology*, *44*(6), 926-939.

This paper explores the synergy between distributed leadership and digital collaborative learning. It argues that distributed leadership offers an important theoretical lens for understanding and explaining how digital collaboration is best supported and led. Drawing upon evidence from two online educational platforms, the paper explores the challenges of leading and facilitating digital collaborative learning. The paper concludes that distributed leadership is integral to effective digital collaboration and is an important determinant of productive collaboration in a virtual environment.

Hennessey, A., & Dionigi, R. A. (2013). Implementing cooperative learning in Australian primary schools: Generalist teachers' perspectives. *Issues in Educational Research*, *23*(1), 52-68.

To implement cooperative learning successfully in practice, teachers require knowledge of cooperative learning, its features and terms, and how it functions in classrooms. This qualitative study examined 12 Australian generalist primary teachers', understandings of cooperative learning and perceived factors affecting its implementation. Using Johnson and Johnson's (1994) features of cooperative learning and Bain, Lancaster Zundans' (2009) list of cooperative learning terms as a framework for analysis, we found that teachers' level of cooperative learning knowledge shaped their perceptions of the factors affecting its implementation in the class room. The study supports the need for a deep embedding of cooperative learning pattern language in teacher training and professional development courses, and highlights the ongoing challenges.

Hsiung, C.-M., Lou, S.-J., Lin, C.-C., & Wang, P.-L. (2014), Identification of dysfunctional cooperative learning teams and troubled individuals. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 45*, 125–135. doi: 10.1111/bjet.12004

In cooperative learning, students work together as a team to maximize the academic success of all the team members. The failure of even a single member can compromise the success of the entire team. Thus, to evaluate the functioning of the team reliably, it is necessary to consider both the performance of the individual team members and the interactions among them. In this study, a method was developed for identifying dysfunctional teams and troubled individuals by examining the correlation between the team scores obtained in sequential tests and the correlation between the scores obtained by the different team members. The effectiveness of the proposed method was evaluated via field experiments. Forty-eight students were randomly assigned to cooperative learning teams and their learning performance assessed by four-unit tests. The results indicated that the proposed method can identify the most troubled individuals in a team even when the team performance/grouping information is not taken explicitly into account. Furthermore, when the team information is considered, the method can identify both the dysfunctional teams and the troubled individuals within the teams. Therefore, the proposed method provides a useful basis for the development of computer-assisted solutions for assessing the performance of cooperative learning teams.

Ibáñez, M. B., García Rueda, J. J., Maroto, D., & Kloos, C. D. (2013). Collaborative learning in multi-user virtual environments. *Journal of Network and Computer Applications*, *36*(6), 1566-1576.

Multi-user virtual environments (MUVEs) have captured the attention and interest of educators as remote collaborative learning environments due to their immersion, interaction and communication capabilities. However, productive learning interactions cannot be considered a given and careful consideration of the design of learning activities and organizational support must be provided to foster collaboration. In this paper, a model to support collaborative learning in MUVEs is presented. This model enables the scaffolding of learning workflows and organizes collaborative learning activities by regulating interactions. Software architecture is developed to support the model, and to deploy and enact collaborative learning modules. A user-centered design has been followed to identify successful strategies for modeling collaborative learning activities in a case study. The results show how interactions with elements of 3D virtual worlds can enforce collaboration in MUVEs.

Janneke, M., Frambacha, Erik W., Driessena, Beh, Philip, & van der Vleuten, Cees P.M. (2014). Quiet or questioning? Students' discussion behaviors in student-centered education across cultures. *Studies in Higher Education*, *39*(6), 1001-1021.doi:10.1080/03075079.2012.754

A tool used in student-centered education is discussion among students in small learning groups. The Western origin of student-centered education, coupled with cross-cultural differences in communication styles, may detract from its cross-cultural applicability. This study investigates how in student-centered education, students' cultural backgrounds are expressed in discussions and shape students' discussion behaviors and skills. A comparative case study using problem-based learning as a student-centered model was conducted in three medical schools located in East Asia, Western Europe and the Middle East. Four cultural factors were found to potentially cause students, especially those in the non-Western schools, to refrain from speaking up, asking questions, and challenging others in discussions. Six contextual factors mediated the influence of the cultural factors. The findings were incorporated in a conceptual model. The conclusion seems justified that student-centered education is feasible in different cultural contexts, but across these contexts, processes and outcomes are likely to differ.

Kyndt, E., Raes, E., Lismont, B., Timmers, F., Dochy, F., & Cascallar, E. (2013). A meta-analysis of the effects of face-to-face cooperative learning. Do recent studies falsify or verify earlier findings? *Educational Research Review, 10*, 133-149.

One of the major conclusive results of the research on learning in formal learning settings of the past decades is that cooperative learning has shown to evoke clear positive effects on different variables. Therefore this meta-analysis has two principal aims. First, it tries to replicate, based on recent studies, the research about the main effects of cooperative learning on three categories of outcomes: achievement, attitudes and perceptions. The second aim is to address potential moderators of the effect of cooperative learning. In total, 65 articles met the criteria for inclusion: studies from 1995 onwards on cooperative learning in primary, secondary or tertiary education conducted in real-life classrooms. This meta-analysis reveals a positive effect of cooperative learning on achievement and attitudes. In the second part of the analysis, the method of cooperative learning, study domain, age level and culture were investigated as possible moderators for achievement. Results show that the study domain, the age level of the students and the culture in which the study took place are associated with variations in effect size.

Lin, C.P., Chen, W., Yang, S.J., Xie, W. & Lin, C.C. (2014). Exploring students' learning effectiveness and attitude in Group Scribbles-supported collaborative reading activities: A study in the primary classroom. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning, 30*, 68–81. doi: 10.1111/jcal.12022

Improving students' reading comprehension is of significance. In this study, collaborative learning supported by Group Scribbles (GS), a networked technology, was integrated into a primary reading class. Forty seven 10-year-old students from two *4th grade classes* participated in the study. Experimental and control groups were established to investigate the effectiveness of GS-supported collaborative learning in enhancing students' reading comprehension. The results affirmed the effectiveness of the intervention designed. In the experiment group, students' learning attitudes, motivation and interest were enhanced as well. Further analyses were done to probe students' interaction processes in the networked collaborative classroom and different collaboration patterns and behaviours were identified. Based on the findings obtained, implications for future learning design to empower L1 learning were elaborated.

Smith, D. (2014). Collaboration between rural school and public youth services librarians. *New Library World*, *115*(3), 160-174. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/NLW-01-2014-0014

The purpose of this article is to determine the types of collaborative activities public youth services and school librarians in rural locations engage in and to ascertain whether there are methods that youth service librarians believe can be employed to improve collaborative activities with public school librarians. A mixed method design was implemented with an online self-administered survey. The survey contained open and closed-ended questions. The findings indicate that many public librarians serving youth in rural locations find it important to collaborate with school librarians. Yet, they struggle to build strong collaborative relationships. Factors such as time, a lack of school librarian administrative support, and a lack of understanding about the roles of school librarians and public librarians, are collaborative barriers. The study was limited to a purposive sample of 80 public librarians serving youth in rural areas in the United States. Librarianship training programs can help school librarians and youth services librarians learn how to form collaborative partnerships through mentorship programs, requiring pre-service school and youth to collaborate on projects, and educating them about the similarities in their goals. School and public librarians can also benefit from training to teach them how to build community partnerships. The results provide evidence that public librarians serving youth in rural areas favor building stronger collaborative relationships with school librarians. Building these relationships can improve the quality of education for youth in these locations. This article also includes proposed strategies for improving these relationships.

Soetanto, R., Childs, M., Poh, P., Austin, S., & Hao, J. (2014). Virtual collaborative learning for building de-sign. *Proceedings of the ICE-Management, Procurement and Law*, *167*(1), 25-34.

A building design project that requires civil engineering students in the UK and architectural students in Canada to collaborate virtually has been implemented at universities in the two countries. The aims were to obtain a greater understanding of the process, strategies and expected outcomes for a more effective implementation of problem-based learning to hone communication and teamwork skills. Data were obtained from a series of interviews with 23 students from seven groups, assessment results of 249 participating and non-participating students, and student evaluation. The findings suggest that the professional ethos of the groups and the consequent building of trust is the greatest factor in supporting successful collaborations. This has been found to be able to overcome many barriers related to technology and differences of culture, language, time zone and tasks. However, the activity did not seem to have any impact on student performance, but has improved the project management skills of participating students. The activity has also contributed positively to increasing student satisfaction. Several lessons for future implementation are presented, before limitations and further research are described.

Soprano, K., & Yang, L. L. (2012). Inquiring into my science teaching through action research: A case study on one pre-service teacher's inquiry-based science teaching and self-efficacy. *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, *11*(6), 351-1368.

This case study reports the effects of a cooperative learning field experience on a pre-service teacher's views of inquiry-based science and her science teaching self-efficacy. Framed by an action research model, this study examined (a) the pre-service teacher's developing understanding of inquiry-based science teaching and learning throughout the planning and implementation phases of the field experience and (b) the pre-service teacher's inquiry-based science teaching self-efficacy beliefs prior to and after the field experience. The pre-service teacher's self-reflections before and after the field experience, video reflections, and results from the Personal Science Teaching Efficacy, a subscale on the Science Teaching Expectancy Belief Instrument-form B, were analyzed in this study. The findings revealed that (a) the pre-service teacher's understanding of inquiry-based science teaching and learning was developed and enhanced through the planning and teaching phases of the field experience and (b) the pre-service teacher's science teaching self-efficacy beliefs were improved as a result of a stronger appreciation and understanding of inquiry-based science teaching and learning. Further, the significance of this study suggests the use of cooperative inquiry-based field experiences and pre-service teacher action research by teacher education programs as means to deepening understanding of inquiry-based science instruction and increasing self-efficacy for such teaching.

Wright, L. K., Zyto, S., Karger, D. R., & Newman, D. L. (2013). Online reading informs classroom instruction and promotes collaborative learning. *Journal of College Science Teaching, 43*(2), 44-53.

Web-based collaborative annotation tools can facilitate communication among students and their instructors through online reading and communication. Collaborative reading fosters peer interaction and is an innovative way to facilitate discussion and participation in larger enrollment courses. It can be especially powerful as it creates an environment where all students are able to ask questions and contribute to a discussion about science. An online annotation tool, Nota Bene (NB = 'note well'), was tested in two biology courses: intermediate-level Molecular Biology (89 students) and upper level Cancer Biology (26 students). Student participation in these graded reading assignments ranged from 79% to 93%. A typical reading assignment from the upper level course generated 105 student comments, 68% of which led to responses, and a typical assignment from the midlevel course generated 183 comments, 44.8% of which generated further discussion. NB also helped uncover misunderstandings and misconceptions about biological phenomena. Coded student responses revealed evidence of knowledge transfer and synthesis, especially in the upper level biology course. We suggest that this type of collaborative reading activity could be useful in a variety of postsecondary classroom settings as it encourages collaborative learning and promotes inclusion of students who might not participate otherwise.

Writing for This Newsletter

There are so many things happening world-wide related to cooperative learning! Help others find out about them by writing articles or short news items for inclusion in this newsletter, and by submitting abstracts of published work for inclusion in the *From the Journals* section of the newsletter. Short pieces (1000 words or less) are preferred.

The newsletter appears three times a year. Please email submissions or questions about them to the editor of the IASCE Newsletter, Lalita Agashe, at lalitaagashe@gmail.com. Put "IASCE Newsletter" on the subject line of the email, please.

Thank you for your submissions.

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