

A VIRTUAL EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE: A NORTH-SOUTH VIRTUALLY-SHARED CLASS ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Augusta Abrahamse, Carla Quiroga, Mathew Johnson y Ruth Scipione

ABSTRACT

Increasingly international competence is considered an important skill to be acquired from an undergraduate education. Because international exchange presents a challenge to many students, there is a need to develop and implement alternative means for incorporating international and cross-cultural experiences into the undergraduate classroom. We report on a program to create a semester long virtually-shared course offering between a US and a Bolivian university. This modality enables intercultural experience without the need to travel. This class sought to provide a multidisciplinary experience that could be relevant to both hard and social science majors. Furthermore, to increase the both the relevance and learning impact, this class incorporated a service-learning component in conjunction with a rural partner organization, the Unidad Académica Campesina Carmen Pampa. The results of this effort show that such virtually shared classes can successfully provide international experiences to undergraduates.

Keywords: International Education, Virtual Learning, Intercultural Collaboration, Global Competence, Active Learning.