CONNECTING THROUGH CULTURAL DIVERSITY:
Leveraging campus initiatives in the creation of library-embedded curriculum

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• Inspiration and context
• Structure of exhibit
• Integration of Framework
• Lessons learned
• **Connecting** the library to campus initiatives & faculty research
• **Designing** library-embedded curriculum to promote library resources and connect with users
• **Integrating** the Framework for Information Literacy into exhibit space and related course materials
UNIVERSITY INITIATIVE:
First-year read @ UVM
“Their polychromatic presence is evident every day in Chittenden County’s supermarkets, schools and streets: Somali women in kaleidoscopic kargas brightening the Old North End; Vietnamese and Tibetan entrepreneurs selling banh mi or momo at food shops in Winooski; Bhutanese becoming suburban homeowners in Essex, Williston and South Burlington.”
Approved Refugee Settlement Capacity versus City Population

Notes: 7 of the 8 cities that approve more than 3.0% of their population fall below 5.6%, with Colchester, VT approving the highest of the seven at 5.53%. Stone Mountain, GA approves a significantly larger percentage at 37.45% of their total population.

Sources: WRAPS Data on Refugee Placements, Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration 2012-2014 and 2010 US Census
Authorship: Lucas Griggi and Alex Rosenberg, Refugees in Vermont Project, NSF Award#1359895, August 3, 2015
CURRENT EVENTS
Inherent, pre-established STAKEHOLDER BUY-IN
Networks of interested parties
University communication sources
Student exposure
“We think of culture clashes as grand things, this is my religion and language. And that’s true, but just the day-to-day things of life are equally confusing.”

Professor Bose, Geography
THE EXHIBIT

Medicine
Anthropology
Geography
Social Work
UVM Extension
Psychological Science
Nutrition & Food Science
Special Education
Secondary Education
Middle School Education
Multi-layered, Multimodal Exhibit
As part of the New American Farmer Program, we work with about one hundred different farmers and gardeners throughout the Burlington area. Our role is basically one of technical assistance provider. We help farmers in business with everything from production to marketing, and we help gardeners who are just growing food for their households. [We also] address social issues like, what are the ways to access land? What are different ways to work with stores in the area? How do you approach a store if you need some fertilizer? How do you interpret all the different labels of all the different kinds of products in the stores?

This is not about us teaching farmers how to grow local food, it’s really all about the culturally-important crops that the resettled refugee farmers and gardeners are bringing to this area, and this is really just a way to share the tremendous knowledge and agricultural history and legacy that the farmers are bringing to the rest of the state and established farmers and gardeners.
Layer 2: THE VIRTUAL EXHIBIT
Layer 3: EMBEDDED CURRICULUM
FRAMEWORK for information literacy
AUTHORITY is constructed and contextual
AUTHORITY, BIAS & CURRENT EVENTS

Upon completing this assignment, students will be able to:

• Consider different forms and constructions of authority
• Develop awareness of biases and develop a skeptical stance when evaluating resources
• Recognize the value of diverse perspectives when conducting research
VARIOUS AUTHORITIES
CONFLICTING OPINIONS
“Culture is like an onion you peel back layer after layer… Early on we received a donation of 5000 lengths of sarong… My boss, said to me, at 22 years old, for a camp of 300,000, ‘You make sure every one of those sarongs is accounted for. I don’t want any slippage.’

She was a 60 year old nun who was really kind of tough, and… I had an inspiration… On one staff there were Thai, Indian, Canadian, Cambodian, American… I asked them to sit down at our table… and I said, ‘This is what we have to do. We have to deliver these; how should we do it?’

I gave everybody 15 minutes to come up with their plan, and I watched culture unfold… All of their plans were predicated on underlying assumptions that you can tie right back to culture, that’s the easy part. The hard part is: What do we do with this? How do we decide? Whose values come to the fore?

So being the young chicken that I was I said, ‘What do you guys think about this?’ I wasn’t about to make that decision, and among the group they came to the conclusion that this was a Cambodian refugee camp and the Cambodian plan should be the one that we go with.”

-Professor Comerford, Social Work
Research as Inquiry
CULTURAL SELF-REFLECTION

Upon completing this assignment, students will be able to:

• Recognize, consider and define their own culture
• Formulate strategies for communicating and working across cultural differences
“I hear my students say a lot of the time, I just don’t have a culture…I’m from South Burlington...That’s just not true at all. And you have to realize that you do have a culture, and that’s just a really important step in realizing and connecting with other people and other people’s cultures.”

-Professor Haines, Special Education
“When I moved to Burlington, I became really interested... First of all, I thought 'Where am I going to find immigrants? Everybody says that Vermont is very white.' Now, it’s true that Vermont actually has had a long immigrant history. It’s just that immigrants here [consist of] lots of French-Canadians and European immigrants, etc. Over the last forty years, we’ve had a Refugee Resettlement Program and that has been one of the biggest pipelines for bringing in New American/refugees.”
SCHOLARSHIP as conversation
INTERACT WITH THE EXHIBIT

Upon completing this assignment, students will be able to:

• Compare different perspectives surrounding refugee and immigrant issues
• Recognize scholarly conversations taking place within their field of study or interest
• Integrate cross-disciplinary approaches to information seeking
PANEL DISCUSSION as visual representation
LESSONS LEARNED
#1. Pick a topic of interest
#2. Attend information sessions & connect with others doing similar work
#3. Complete the core pieces of your project at the beginning
#4. Think about how you want the exhibit to look
#5. Plan how to ask faculty to engage with the project
#6. Be mindful about Intellectual Property Rights and consent
#7. Use social media to promote your work
Shorter videos are more likely to be watched.
#9. Use technology to track interest & engagement
Questions?


**Images (In Order of Appearance)**


Crist, Emily (Photographer). (No Date). Various authorities, conflicting opinions [Photograph of statue].


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MAGES (CONTINUED)


Allison, Megan. (2016). *Use technology to track interest and engagement* [View Statistics].
**Images (continued)**
