

# CLAC CHANGES EVERYTHING:

Teaching, Thinking, and Learning  
with a Global Perspective



Results 2012 Meeting – NYC, 26 October 2012

H Stephen Straight, Binghamton University (SUNY)  
Cultures and Languages Across the Curriculum (CLAC)

# Authors

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- **H Stephen Straight** (PhD in linguistics), founding director of LxC (1991-99), professor emeritus and former vice provost for international affairs (1999-2009)
  - With help from **Diana K Davies**, former LxC associate director and director (1997-2000), vice provost for international initiatives, Princeton University

# I'll describe:

- Binghamton University's CLAC program: LxC.
- How LxC transformed (many of) our curriculum.

Ways for CLAC and  
Flagship to partner?



# CLAC's Guiding Principles

- **Key words:**
  - **Connections** (CLAC's primary focus among the 5 ACTFL Standards: 1)
    - Cultures (2), Comparisons (3), Communication (4), Communities (5)
  - **Meaningful use** (rather than further language instruction)
    - CLAC is not a mere exercise in translation or vocabulary-building.
  - **Content-enriching** (esp. with regard to cross-cultural perspectives)
    - CLAC doesn't simply present the same content in a different language.
  - **Student-empowering**
    - The CLAC course instructor need not know the language.
- **What CLAC is not:**
  - **Content-Based Language Instruction**
    - Language-learning outcomes, though likely, do not motivate CLAC.

# How does CLAC work?

Type	Minimum Lg Proficiency and Use	Who Delivers	Frequency of Meetings	Academic Credit	Examples
Linked	Intermediate-high, FL only	Faculty (FL or FL-fluent non-FL)	3-4 hrs/week	Full (3-4 credits): counts for lg rqmt	St Olaf, U Conn, U Richmond
Modularized (FL trailer to non-FL class)	Typically intermed-low, FL only	FL faculty or FL teaching assistant	1-2 hrs/week (or longer but less often)	Partial (1-2 credits): counts for lg rqmt	Appalachian State, Auburn, Wittenberg U
Immersed (free-standing)	Intermediate-high or higher, FL only	Team-taught by FL and non-FL faculty	3-4 hrs/week	Full (3-4 credits): counts toward lg and non-lg rqmts	Trinity U, Baldwin-Wallace
Infused	Highly variable	Non-FL fac, with FL fac assistance	No separate meetings	No credit	B-W, Earlham
Empowered	Highly variable	Non-FL grad Ss, with non-FL fac approval	12-15 hrs/sem	0-1 credit: counts toward BU minor in Global Studies	Binghamton U, UNC-Chapel Hill
Dual-degree	Endpoint: Advanced-mid	Bilingual faculty (CBLI → CLAC → full immersion abroad in work context)	Better part of 8-10 semesters (including industrial internship)	90-120 credits (half or more taught in FL) of 120-150 required for degree	U of Rhode Island, U Conn, Georgia Tech

after DKD

# CLAC in Action – “Empowered”

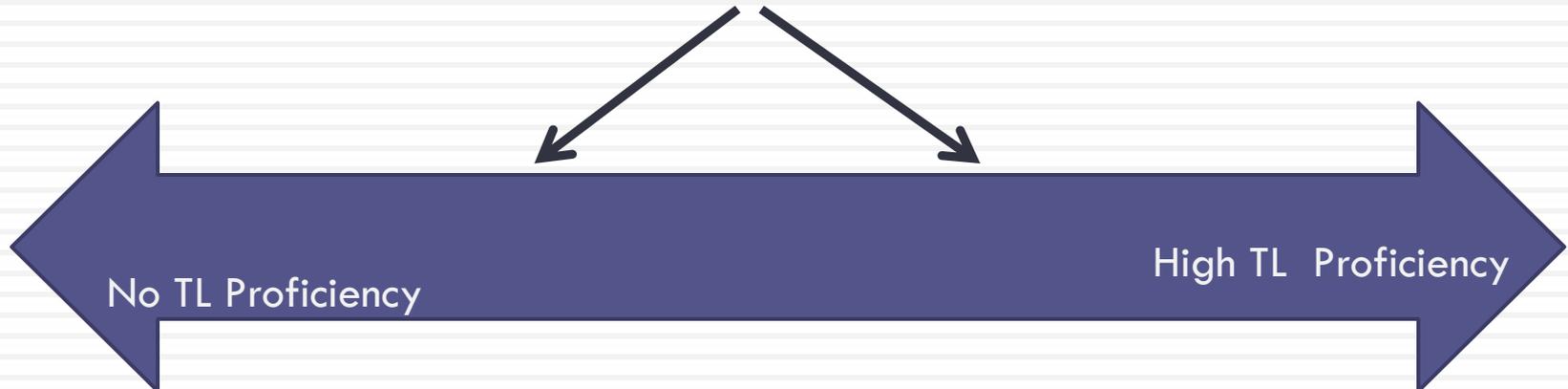
## Binghamton University

Collaborative effort by faculty and staff in Anthropology (Straight), International Student and Scholar Services (Ellen H. Badger), and Comparative Literature (Marilyn Gaddis Rose), with support from the provost’s office

Inaugurated 1991 (with \$5K from NAFSA), developed 1992-95 (with \$180K from FIPSE), funded since then by Binghamton’s provost/Ofc of Int’l Progs

To date: 600+ courses -- 6,000+ students -- 14+ languages (many heritage)

Graduate students (mostly international, some heritage) lead study groups





# LxC in Action

Making “Empowered” model successful:

- Courses large enough to engage students in CLAC option in a variety of languages
- Strong support from non-FL faculty -- integration of CLAC into course
- Good match between languages of international graduate students and undergraduate language interests, thanks to heritage learners
- Creating opportunities for those with highly varying ability in the target language (TL)

# Binghamton & CLAC Principles

## Goals of CLAC Movement\*

critical thinking, meaningful language use, a place for culture

- Inter- and cross-disciplinary: the opportunity to apply TL & cultural skills in any discipline
- Experiential (even subversive?): broadens the definition of a “legitimate” source, with undergrads in driver’s seat
- Reflective (interconnectivity of the curriculum)
- Life-long: provides skills to use beyond classroom and undergraduate studies

\*Based on Kinsella & Gonzalez presentation, U of Minnesota, CLAC 2012

# Suronda's Path to CLAC

Born and raised in a Spanish-language heritage community.

Understood much, spoke little.

Professionals with her heritage language = Spanish teachers.

International Studies/Spanish major at WVU. 

Cross-disciplinary background

(MA Liberal Studies WVU - immigration labor, social policy, ethnography).

**BINGHAMTON**  
UNIVERSITY  
STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK



Graduate student in U.S. History.  
History and Language? '94

Led study groups in Spanish for  
"Immigration and Ethnicity in the  
U.S." taught by Thomas Dublin

LxC: Asst Dir (1999-2000), Acting  
Dir (2000-01), Dir 2001-present

# Suronda: Getting Rooted in LAC

- **10+ yrs working with LxC**
  - integrated language use across the disciplines
  - Student-centered curriculum with opportunities to investigate concepts from different cultural/linguistic perspectives
  
- **Grounded in scholarship on internationalizing teaching of U.S. history**
  - La Pietra Report, 2000
  - ACE “Where Faculty Live: Internationalizing the Disciplines,” 2006
  
- **U.S. History course supported by LxC program**
  - Students working in a variety of languages to look at history of U.S. immigration
    - Using Spanish language resource materials to examine the immigrant experience (Puerto Rico & Mexico)
    - Attention to specific circumstances of sending region, relationship to the U.S., build vocabulary related to content in both English and target language; boost knowledge of course content (not CBI)

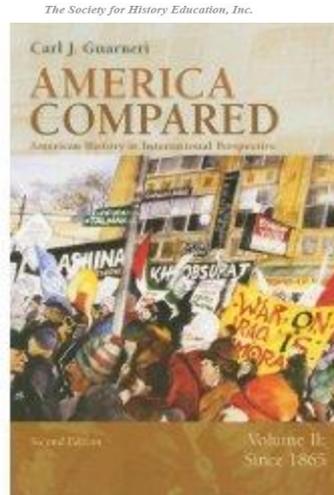
# The Historical Record

## La Pietra Report: A Report to the Profession (2000)

<http://www.oah.org/activities/lapietra/#Anchor-20246>

- **Rethinking U.S. History in a Global Context**
  - “serious language study” and meaningful use of LOTEs
    - *In course work, training, and research*
  - International experiences \*even\* for “Americanists”
    - *Study abroad & exchange (graduate students & faculty)*
  - Incorporating alternative narratives into national one
    - *How others interpret U.S. history*

# Transforming U.S. History



**2006**

How can CLAC build on and expand the thinking of this work in U.S. History to take a more global approach to the teaching of the nation's history?

# LxC interrupted by “culture?”

Do Americans consider slavery [or treatment of native Americans – HSS] “genocide?”

- Why are **they** asking this question?
- What does it mean?  
When in doubt – do nothing.

- Why are **they** refusing to answer our question?

# Growing Pains?

- Changing student body at Binghamton University
  - Increasing number of int'l students (over half of BU's out-of-state Ss)
- Student-centered model that fosters critical thinking and student contributions
- Safe environment to explore meanings – even of own language



# Outcomes

- Suronda reconsidered the audience.
  - ▣ More internationals necessitates a shift that is also enriching U.S.-educated understanding of history.
- Suronda drew out those with low-level language skills.
  - ▣ How can culture and low-level language engagement help us better understand content?
- Suronda questioned the ways U.S. history looks from outside the pre/post 1877 framework.

# More outcomes of CLAC

- Students enhance their research abilities.
  - ▣ Foreign language or at least non-U.S. sources
- Students sharpen their critical thinking skills.
  - ▣ New questions for old stories
- Discussions become internationally infused.
  - ▣ U.S. students aren't always the voice of authority, and internationals have something to contribute.
- LxC created a “Global English” option.
  - ▣ Study groups use non-U.S. publications in English.

# Side-by-Side = New Ideas!



WIKIPEDIA  
The Free Encyclopedia

Article **Talk**

## Mexican–American War

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

The **Mexican–American War**, also known as the **Mexican War**, or the **U.S.–Mexican War** was an armed conflict between the **United States of America** and **Mexico** from 1846 to 1848 in the wake of the 1845 U.S. **annexation of Texas**, which Mexico considered part of its territory despite the 1836 Texas Revolution.



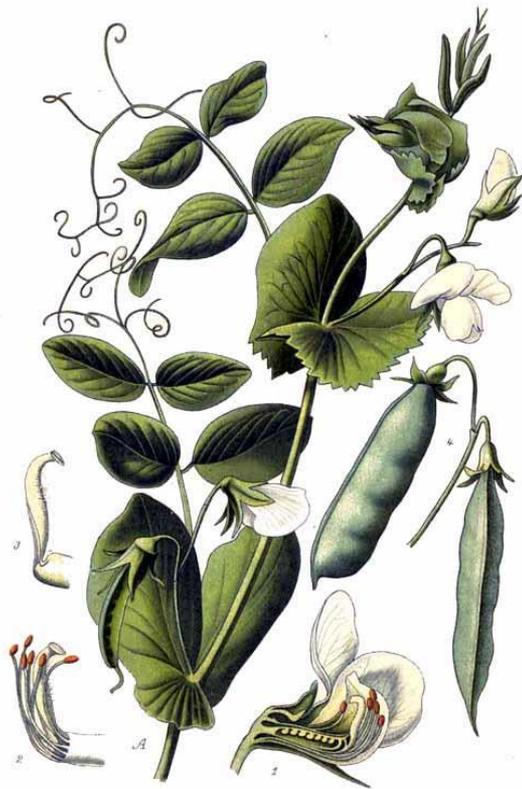
WIKIPEDIA  
La enciclopedia libre

Artículo **Discusión**

## Intervención estadounidense en México

La **intervención estadounidense en México** o **guerra Estados Unidos-México** fue un conflicto bélico que enfrentó a **México** y a los **Estados Unidos** entre 1846 y 1848. Este conflicto ~~armado se~~ **inició por las pretensiones expansionistas de los Estados Unidos de América**, cuyo primer paso fue la creación de la **República de Texas** —a la **que el gobierno mexicano consideraba un territorio rebelde que podía reconquistar**—, sobre una parte del territorio de **Coahuila, Tamaulipas, Chihuahua y Nuevo México**; este hecho, sumado a la demanda de indemnización al gobierno mexicano por los daños causados en **Texas** durante la guerra de independencia de ese antiguo territorio **coahuilense** y los intereses estadounidenses en adquirir los territorios de **Alta California y Nuevo México**, provocaron la invasión al territorio mexicano por parte del ejército estadounidense.

# Geographer Fiona M. Smith on using a FL to do research:



Pl. 88. *Pois cultivé*. *Pisum sativum* L.

“...between the two languages, two cultures, researcher and researched an in-between space, a space of hybrids is created. **Hybrid spaces of research between the ‘home’ language and the ‘foreign’ language can open new spaces of insight**, of meaning which dis-place, de-centre the researcher’s assumption that their own language is clear in its meaning.” (p. 163)

# Transformation through CLAC

- **Connections** (CLAC's primary focus among the 5 ACTFL Standards: 1)
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