

Course Development and Enhancement Grant Proposal 2013-14

- 1. Proposal Title:** Reacting to the Past Summer Institute, Barnard College
- 2. Name of Proposer:** Judy Walden, Assistant Professor of History
- 3. Course Description:** HIST 111/112: Western Civilization I & II-RTTP
(This proposal covers both halves of the Western Civilization survey.)
HIST 111 and 112: This course is an introduction to the western tradition through reading, discussion, lecture, and historical simulation games. Students will play one or more multi-week historical simulations as part of the course. Cornerstone 1A/1B , COLLABLDR and ORALCOM.
HIST 111: The course will cover the ancient Middle East, the classical civilizations of Greece and Rome, the development of Christianity, medieval Europe, and the Renaissance and Reformation.
HIST 112: Beginning with the early modern era, the survey of Western civilization continues during the second semester with a consideration of the changes wrought by the Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment, the French Revolution, and the growth of modern industry and nationalism. The course concludes with an examination of the great world upheavals of the twentieth century.
- 4. Frequency:** These courses are taught every semester; I usually teach 1 section of HIST 111 in the fall, and 1-2 sections of HIST 112 in the spring.
- 5. Intended Use of Funding:** I would like to attend the Reacting to the Past Summer Institute at Barnard College, New York City, June 6-9, 2013. Reacting to the Past (RTTP) is a series of historical simulations that Simpson history faculty have frequently used in their classes. I am currently using RTTP in HIST 111/112 (Western Civilization I & I-RTTP, which are specifically-designated RTTP classes), HIST 275 (History of India), and HIST 276 (History of China). The Summer Institute is an intensive four-day conference: conference participants play at least two RTTP simulations, in addition to attending more traditional conference presentations on pedagogy.

Attending the Summer Institute will enhance HIST 111/112 in several ways:

- I will be able to participate in the French Revolution simulation that I usually use in HIST 112. While I have run the simulation several times, I have never had an opportunity to play it, which is a very different experience from running the simulation as an instructor. Playing the simulation will allow me to experience it as my students do, which should give me insights into how to structure and run the game more effectively.
- In addition to historical simulations, the Summer Institute will also have multiple sessions devoted to using RTTP effectively, which will probably include attention

to oral communication, student collaboration and leadership, effective teaching strategies, and assessment. (The final schedule has not been posted yet, so this list is based on topics from the past few years.) These sessions should be directly relevant to the embedded skills (OC & CL) that I am teaching in HIST 111 and 112.

The Course Development and Enhancement Grant will help cover airfare and lodging for the Institute (see attached budget); I plan on using my \$500 professional travel money to pay for the remainder of the expenses. Because of the need to register for the conference and purchase a plane ticket, I would like to be able to spend the grant money before June 1, 2013.

6. Learning Outcomes and Assessment:

Below please find the learning outcomes for HIST 111/112:

- *Historical Content:*
 - HIST 111: Students will have an understanding of some the more important events, people, ideas, and movements that have shaped western civilization from early history through the Renaissance.
 - HIST 112: Students will have an understanding of some the more important events, people, ideas, and movements that have shaped western civilization from the 16th-20th centuries.
- *Historical Thinking.* Students will demonstrate critical thinking as practiced by historians, making effective use of primary sources for historical analysis, and demonstrating historical analysis by writing several papers.
- *Reflective Thinking:* Students will have an understanding of the ongoing political, social, and ethical relevance – both in the classical and medieval traditions, and in their own lives today – of issues illuminated by ideas and events in western civilization.
- *Effective Communication.* Students will demonstrate college-level communication abilities:
 - Students will demonstrate their written communication skills by writing several papers in a variety of formats.
 - Students will demonstrate their oral communication skills through participation in class discussion and an historical simulation. <OC>
- *Collaborative Leadership.* Through participation in an historical simulation, students will develop skills and dispositions essential to collaborative leadership, such as team-building, delegation, conflict resolution, and effective communication. <CL>

This grant application is directly relevant to the student learning outcomes *Effective Communication* and *Collaborative Leadership*. As indicated in #5 above, attending the Summer Institute will allow me to learn from other experienced faculty who are experienced in the areas of oral communication, collaboration and leadership. There will be sessions devoted to different aspects of RTTP pedagogy which should address these areas; a frequent feature of these sessions is a discussion and exchange of ideas and materials on best practices in teaching and evaluating oral communication, writing, class participation, and other skills that are central to RTTP. From my experience at the 2010 Summer Institute, and discussions

with faculty who attended in 2012, I am confident that I will learn more effective and engaging ways to teach my students these embedded skills.

These student learning outcomes are assessed in a variety of ways and, in fact, one of the things I hope to gain from attending the Summer Institute is greater knowledge of effective assessment of oral communication and collaborative leadership. Currently, students prepare two formal speeches in HIST 111/112; they are assessed on their preparation (an assignment that asks them a series of specific questions about their topic, their evidence, their argument, any counter-arguments) and on the speeches (a detailed rubric focusing on speaking skills that we have practiced in class and speech content). For collaborative leadership, students are assessed through several reflective exercises, including reflective writing and self- and group-evaluation assessments using a detailed rubric of collaborative leadership skills. I am interested in sharing ideas with other RTTP faculty on their methods of assessment and the kinds of rubrics or other assessment instruments that they use, which will help me improve those that I use in my own classes.

7. Support for Simpson’s Mission and Strategic Plan:

RTTP simulations are an example of Simpson’s goals of emphasizing innovative teaching approaches and student-centered learning: “Class sessions are run entirely by students; instructors advise and guide students and grade their oral and written work. [RTTP] seeks to draw students into the past, promote engagement with big ideas, and improve intellectual and academic skills.”¹ RTTP simulations also support several of the embedded skills of the Engaged Citizen Curriculum, particularly oral communication and collaborative leadership, and both classes supported by this grant proposal (HIST 111 and 112) carry OC and CL designations. RTTP simulations emphasize building collaborative relationships both inside and outside the classroom, as students work (and conspire) together to accomplish their victory objectives. As part of the HIST 111/112 simulations, students are required to give formal speeches and engage in debate in support of their victory objectives. In other words, RTTP simulations encourage engaged, enthusiastic, and thoughtful participation in learning, which is at the heart of liberal arts education.

Participation in the Summer Institute will allow me to enhance my use of RTTP to teach the CL and OC embedded skills in HIST 111/112. And, while this grant is connected to those specific classes, attending the RTTP Summer Institute will have an impact beyond HIST 111/112, as I use RTTP simulations in several other classes, including History of India and History of China. Improving my own understanding and use of RTTP will contribute to the History department’s commitment to engaged and innovative teaching and learning.

8. Budget: See below. Please note that the lodging and registration costs are estimated based on information from previous years – Barnard College has not yet posted registration and lodging rates for June 2013.

9. Proposal may be shared.

¹ Reacting to the Past, “The Concept” (<http://www.barnard.edu/reacting/index.html>).

**SIMPSON COLLEGE
BUDGET PROPOSAL FORM
Course Development and Enhancement Grant
2013-2014**

**Course Development for HIST 111/112: Western Civilization I & II-RTTP
Judy Walden, Assistant Professor of History**

ITEM		AMOUNT
Equipment		\$
1:	Cost:	
2:	Cost:	
3:	Cost:	
Materials		\$
1:	Cost:	
2:	Cost:	
3:	Cost:	
Travel Costs		\$440
Airfare: Roundtrip Des Moines-New York City: \$400		
Transportation from airport to/from conference site: \$40		
Lodging		\$260
Number of days 4 @ \$ 65/day		
Other Expenses		\$575
1: Conference Fee	Cost: \$475	
2: Meals	Cost:\$100	
3:	Cost:	
TOTAL EXPENSES		\$1275
AMOUNT REQUEST (not to exceed \$500)		\$500