



Community Studies Center

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What is a Mosaic?

[The American and Global Mosaics](#) are intensive, interdisciplinary, semester-long research programs designed around ethnographic fieldwork and immersion in domestic and global communities. Their objective is to encourage students to think reflexively about the diverse world in which they live as they engage in collaborative work with local, transnational, and international communities. The Mosaics provide opportunities for students to meaningfully apply what they are learning in the classroom, both theoretically and methodologically, to the world beyond – and to bring their experiences in the world back into the classroom. The Mosaics challenge students to ask significant and relevant questions of the people and communities with which they are working; to actively listen to what others say about their lives and realities; to reflect on their own lives, worlds, and perspectives; to design research that addresses the needs and interests of their partner communities; and finally to present what they have discovered in thoughtful, effective, and ethical ways to multiple audiences. Students learn not only how to design and conduct research but also how to produce their findings and analyses in various forms: written research papers and reports; conference presentations, video documentaries, audio podcasts, and multi-media websites.

The design of a specific Mosaic program is driven by pedagogical and research concerns, and faculty interest and availability. A number of different models have emerged, from a full semester of coursework taken by students with 2-3 faculty from different disciplines- to cluster courses-to a one credit course that integrates a winterim research trip. Examples of various models are outlined below. For more detailed information see the Community Studies website:

<http://www.dickinson.edu/departments/commstud/index.html>

Mosaic Models

*Full-Semester Mosaics: Students take all of their coursework (at Dickinson 4 credits) with 2-3 faculty.**

American Mosaic



During the 1996 Steelton Mosaic, 23 students and three faculty members met with workers, teachers, local business people, and residents of the multi-ethnic community of Steelton, Pennsylvania to explore questions of mutual interest: how to raise a family, earn a living, and sustain faith in a community hit hard by deindustrialization. This research later continued in the 2001 Steelton Mosaic with 18 students who focused on work, family, and migration narratives with members of the African-American community, and mentored young people in the elementary and secondary schools to conduct their own video-taped oral histories.

(1996, Faculty: American Studies, Economics, and Sociology; 2001, Faculty: English, History, and Sociology – in both cases, the 3rd faculty member teaching literature contributed only one course to the Mosaic that was open to all students).

[The Mexican Migration Mosaics](#) (1998, 2003)



The 1998 Mexican Mosaic focused on migrant labor in Adams County, Pennsylvania, just South of Carlisle. The 2003 Mexican Migration Mosaic worked with communities in Adams County, Pennsylvania and Peribán in Michoacán, Mexico--communities which lie on opposite ends of the continent, but stand closely connected through family, work and circular migration. Through intensive fieldwork and internships, students came to better understand the economy and culture, living and labor conditions, and lives of people in both regions. Students had the opportunity to pick apples in the Adams County orchards, visit migrant worker camps, teach ESL in school classes and after-school programs, intern in migrant Headstart programs and day care centers, work with health clinics, and interview growers and advocacy groups in Adams County. In Peribán, students were involved in ethnographic fieldwork and interviewing families of migrant workers and people who have settled in Adams County. Both were full-semester Mosaics involving 18 and 23 students respectively taking 4 courses with either 2 - 3 faculty. (Faculty 1998, Anthropology and American Studies; 2001, Anthropology, History, and Sociology; coursework counted in Latin American Studies, Spanish, History, Anthropology, Sociology, and American Studies)



The 2008 [Black Liberation Movements](#)



Mosaic examined two of the most internationally significant Black Liberation Movements of the 20th century: the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa from the 1950s through the 1990s, and the African-American civil rights movement of the 1950s-1980s. Mosaic participants conducted field research in South Africa and Coahoma County, Mississippi with their local counterparts. Their research,



primarily conducted through the collection of oral histories, explored how African and African-American people in small communities responded to and eventually defeated white supremacy in two of its most infamous manifestations: apartheid South Africa and Jim Crow Mississippi. Students took all of their coursework with 2 core faculty (one a South African historian and the other an African-American historian) and a third who taught a course on Protest and Liberation Music. The Mosaic started at the end of July-August in South Africa; the 8 students then returned to campus for the fall and spent 3 weeks in Mississippi in November. (Faculty represented History and Music; coursework counted in History, Music, Africana Studies, Sociology, Anthropology, American Studies).

One-Course, Globally Integrated Mosaics with Winterim Research Trip (students pay a comprehensive program fee that covers expenses, eligible for financial aid)

The [Patagonia Mosaics](#) (2001, 2003, 2005) examined trans-Atlantic migration, ethnic and labor relations, and community development among various ethnic groups in Comodoro Rivadavia,



Argentina and the oil company towns surrounding it. Twelve students and two core faculty worked in multi-lingual research teams to examine and archive documents and photos, and conduct video-taped oral history interviews with people who lived and worked in the oil company towns owned and managed by the German, British, Dutch, and later Argentine

State. The project also focused on more recent (im)migration to the area, and from neighboring countries and the NW of Argentina. One course Mosaic starting at the beginning of January and running through the spring semester (Faculty: History, Sociology; coursework counted in Latin American Studies, History, Sociology, Spanish, Anthropology, American Studies)

[The Venezuelan Mosaic](#) (2007) provided a group of 19 Dickinson students both the historical background and a hands-on exposure to the new model of participatory democracy, endogenous development, and regional integration that is developing in Venezuela today. The course, “Venezuela: Democracy, Development, and the Bolivarian Revolution” focused on social issues, including poverty, education, health care, and empowerment. Readings, lectures, and films during a 1/2 credit course in the fall semester 2006 prepared students to do their own research projects in Venezuela during January 2007. In Venezuela, the students engaged in field work, oral history, and video documentary projects. To complete the second 1/2 credit course in the spring 2007, students returned to campus to integrate, analyze, and present their research (co-taught by an economist and sociologist; coursework counted in



Economics, International Studies, International Business and Management, Latin American Studies, Spanish, Sociology, and Anthropology). In 2008-2009, using a similar model, the course focused on “Sustainable Agro-Ecosystems and Cooperative Movements in both Venezuela and the United States.” Thirteen students conducted comparative research that linked Dickinson College’s Organic Farm with La Alianza, a 30-year-old organic farm and food cooperative in Monte Carmelo, Venezuela. The *intercambio* included seed exchanges, and sharing of solar water heating installations and vermiculture techniques. (Co-taught by the Director of the Organic Farm who teaches Sustainable Agriculture and a sociologist; coursework counted in Environmental Studies, Sociology, Anthropology, and Latin American Studies). Total of one course credit with 1/2 credit in fall and 1/2 credit for winterim into spring course.



Two Course Clusters and globally integrated winterim trip:



The 2005 [Montserrat Mosaic](#), focused on individual and collective trauma and the geology of cataclysmic events. Volcanic activity has devastated parts of the island and dislocated one-third of the island’s population. This Mosaic involved a (two-course cluster that began with a globally integrated research field study on the island of Montserrat in January. The 16 students and two faculty then returned to campus to complete coursework in Geology (a lab science) and sociology (for a total of 30 course credits). (Faculty: Geology and Sociology).

List of faculty who have been involved in teaching the Mosaics:

Chuck Barone (Economics)
Sharon O’Brien (American Studies and English, 2)
Susan Rose (Sociology, 8)
Kim Rogers (History, 2)
Tyra Seldon (English)
Kjell Enge (Anthropology, 3)
John Bloom (American Studies)
Marcelo Borges (History, 4)

Dan Schubert (Sociology)
Ben Edwards (Geology)
Candie Wilderman (Environmental Science and Envi Studies – Luce Watershed 3)
Mike Heiman (Envrionmental Science and Envi Studies – Luce Watershed 3)
Jim Ellison (Anthropology 3)
Kate McGurn (Anthropology)
John Osborne (History 2)
Jeremy Ball (History)
Amy Wlordarski (Music)
Karen Weinstein (Anthropology)
Sinan Koont (Economics 2)
Jenn Halpin (Organic Farm and Envi Studies)