

SOAR Project Proposal, Summer 2017
“Peace Education in PA Liberal Arts,
and Moravian College Student Visions for Peace”

Application Part 2: Project Description

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Students: Erika Salus, Art and Sociology Major, 2019
Molly Lokitis, Political Science, 2018
Date: June 1 -- Aug 10

Overview

This multidisciplinary project will support research focusing on peace education and cultures, and film. It grows out of a final project from IDIS 294 “What IS Peace?” taught by Denton-Borhaug, in which students were required to develop and present their own visions of peace at the conclusion of a semester studying many diverse resources on theoretical concepts of peace, peace cultures and case studies. The SOAR project we are envisioning will further influence this course at Moravian, and the research/learning agendas of Denton-Borhaug, Salus and Lokitis. Erika and Molly will: 1) draw from an existing body of student audio tape and Powerpoint slides from course presentations created by students in fall 2016; 2) research other short films produced by college students in PA and beyond focusing on questions of peace; 3) further research the extent and nature of peace education in higher education as it currently exists in PA liberal arts settings; 4) pursue further learning/training in filmmaking technology. The final product imagined for this SOAR project is a 5-7-minute short film that the two students will present at relevant undergraduate research conferences, and make available for future iterations of the IDIS course. It will investigate the values, impacts and outcomes of peace education in the lives of individual students, and institutionally in colleges such as Moravian. Following the conclusion of SOAR, the film also may be used to highlight research findings regarding the significance of Peace and Justice Studies, InFocus, and additional peace-oriented curricula at Moravian College for prospective and current students.

History and Contributions of this Project

The course, IDIS 294: “What IS Peace?” now has been offered at Moravian College four times, alternately by Bernie Cantens (philosophy) and Denton-Borhaug. This is an interdisciplinary course that was developed for Moravian College with the support of an NEH (National Endowment of the Humanities) “Enduring Questions Program” grant awarded to Denton-Borhaug and Bernie Cantens (Dept. of Philosophy). Through this program the NEH enables development of new courses for undergraduates that address “enduring questions”.

At this juncture the NEH grant cycle is coming to an end. Following the initial development of the course, each of the professors has taught the course twice, and it will be added permanently to the Philosophy, Religion, and Peace and Justice Studies curricula. Moreover, from the beginning of this project, the professors knew that encouraging students to develop their own visions of peace would be a very important culminating part of the course.

Over the semester, the course is divided into the following modules: I. Visions of Peace (in which we focus on select influential and historic understandings of peace); II. Theoretical Issues and Questions of Peace (here we delve into various philosophical and theological theories and sub-questions related to peace); III. Case Studies of Peace (including study of Thich Nhat Hanh and Cesar Chavez’ lives, philosophies, activism and legacies); IV. The Future of Peace (students build their own visions and work toward presenting them for the class). In the last iteration of teaching the course, Denton-Borhaug used the proper paperwork to document students’ consent for the use of audiotape and their Powerpoints for this future project, to a) encourage further student research in the areas of peace and film studies; b) promote better understanding of the

potential of peace studies at Moravian College; and c) further her own peace research for this specific course, and her research agenda beyond this course.

Roles and Responsibilities

Student responsibilities during the summer will include:

- Research on short films created by college students that focus on questions of peace;
- Research on the extent and content of peace education in PA liberal arts colleges (we will decide how broad a radius to investigate as we begin this project);
- Review of the existing data from Moravian College student visions of peace;
- Creation of an annotated bibliography for this project to include resources for study/research about a) peace education, and cultures; b) short films about peace; filmmaking applications and learning;
- With guidance from Denton-Borhaug, students will make decisions about the thrust and creation of this short film; they will pursue additional sources of filmmaking advice/help from members of our IT and beyond;
- Their final product will be a short film of 5-7 minutes.
- They will take initiative to show the final product in a number of different venues, including Scholarship Day, InFocus events, and undergraduate conferences, both local and regional.

Denton-Borhaug's responsibilities will include:

- Meeting with the students on a weekly basis;
- Providing resources and other guidance in the creation of their annotated bibliography for this project;
- Being available for the inevitable questions and struggles that will occur; encouraging the students to deepen their questions, research and learning about the nature of peace and the impact of Peace and Justice Studies personally, locally and globally.
- Assisting the students to identify other human resources as appropriate to provide guidance and support for this project; Britt Wilczewski, the Assistant Director of Media Services, already has conferenced with Denton-Borhaug regarding filmmaking applications and training;
- Helping to create venues where the final product may be shown, discussed and evaluated by others;
- Oversight of the timeline so that the project proceeds in a timely fashion toward completion.

Timetable

- Beginning June 1, the students will begin their research and review of existing data.
- By June 15 the students will submit their annotated bibliography to Denton-Borhaug.
- By June 25 they will submit a sheaf of notes about the significance of the research resources they have studied. We will discuss their research in depth and brainstorm about ways to use this research creatively with the existing data from earlier student presentations/visions.
- By June 30 students will have completed various tutorials/learning opportunities with CIT regarding appropriate training on iMovie (Denton-Borhaug has compiled resources from CIT regarding this aspect of student work).
- By July 5 they will submit a "storyboard" for the short film. The storyboard will include technical as well as content information and plans.
- By July 20 they will submit a "first draft" of the film.
- Between July 20 and July 30 they will show the draft film in different venues and to various scholars and leaders, to elicit feedback for redrafting and revising. They will submit notes about feedback to Denton-Borhaug for further discussion, thinking and joint brainstorming.

- By August 10 they will submit a final version of the film for further use as described above.

QPA Issues, and the Work of Two Students

From the beginning of imagining this project, Denton-Borhaug envisioned a team of two students working together. Two students spurring one another on in work that is challenging, collaborative and mutually engaging will enhance the unique creative process important to this project. Along the way, each of the students will be required to give specific progress reports regarding the individual work they are accomplishing. Erika's QPA is above a 3.0; while Molly's is a bit below, this is largely due to challenges early in her college career having to do with juggling studies and athletics, and learning issues. Since that time her grades show marked improvement, and she presently is in a Peace and Justice course with Denton-Borhaug in which she is one of the strongest students in the class.

Discipline-Appropriate Research

Both students already have taken introductory PJ courses. This beginning knowledge will deepen through this research project to expand their understandings of peace, and peace education. In addition, they will be researching and learning about how film has been used to investigate and communicate findings about peace in higher education. This project will provide both students with a wonderful opportunity to gain new skills, and discover new ideas pertinent to their college learning and career goals. They will practice leadership in a multidisciplinary area that is compelling, and of significance not only to Denton-Borhaug's research and teaching agenda, but also to Moravian College more broadly.

Application Part 3: Student Statements

“Peace Education in PA Higher Education, and Moravian College Student Visions for Peace”

Student 1: Erika Salus, Art and Sociology Major, 2019

Dr. Kelly Denton-Borhaug

In need of On-Campus housing

The SOAR research program will not only be beneficial to me but also future prospective students.

I began attending Moravian College as a prospective art major. Aside from being very skilled in studio art, I was interested in studying humanities but I was unsure how to combine the two subjects. My freshman year was spent trying classes with hope to find my nook. This year, my sophomore year, I decided to try out “Introduction to Peace and Justice Studies” with one of the professors being Kelly Denton- Borhaug. Through this decision with taking this course, I found my way with choosing a major and interest in continuing peace and justice studies.

Throughout the course we investigated our own individual philosophies, explored meditation and studied various social injustices. After hearing different student ideologies, I came to the realization that many students are on different levels of awareness. As we would discuss different topics it was evident that some individuals were not as open or conscious of things going on outside of their own lives. I believe that it’s important to have the will to discover and learn of things outside your own life. Along with that, it made me realize that the term ‘peace’ is used so heavily that the actual meaning is misunderstood. I believe that it is important that individuals are educated in its meaning and are shown that it is flexible. Personally, I formerly compared war and peace. War entails violence and horror; on the other hand, peace always made me think of harmony and individuals living in harmony. The Peace and Justice study course altered my vision of what peace meant. I began to think of peace more a frame of mind rather than an action or way of living. Through other students’ accounts in the final Visions of Peace presentations, it will be made evident that the term has many different meanings to different individuals.

I am drawn to take part in the research project because my studies have begun to lead me to understand diverse perspectives of the word ‘peace’. My current understanding will grow and be challenged by digging into the student data, and the research on peace cultures and education. In addition, the data from students’ projects will be an important resource for the film, which is the ultimate physical goal of the project. I especially am excited about studying both the similarities and differences among the students’ PowerPoint presentations. We will be able investigate what makes their opinions similar, and how these relate to additional resources on peace education that we explore in our research. Hopefully, we will be able to decipher what why their opinions may differ. We will be able to draw conclusions and add our own point of view as well. Neither my partner nor I have taken the course, “What is Peace?” though both of us have a background in Peace and Justice Studies through other courses. I think this is important because we both may have different views, which will become beneficial when we work of the project. We will be able to communicate our ideas, support one another, challenge one another’s thinking, and overcome issues that would not arise if we were working alone.

This project will be immensely beneficial to me because I have decided to combine the disciplines of art and sociology/ peace and justice studies in my career at Moravian. My goal within my major is to be able to capture social peace and justice issues and ideas, and be able to portray them through different media of art. This project combines both of those subjects perfectly. I have been photographing rallies pertaining to the current local and national events, and I believe that it would be very beneficial to develop stronger skills for the creation of the short film this project envisions. I already have a lot of experience with studio arts such as

painting, drawing, and photography, but I have not yet experienced filmmaking. Learning the ins and outs of filmmaking and exploring how to use this as a mechanism for critically expressing and thinking about this research will add a wonderful element to my educational journey, and likely influence further investigation and curiosity into continuing to explore this discipline.

Finally, other students beside myself will benefit from the film, because it will give them a glimpse into the course and research that furthers what students already have accomplished. I discovered, when I took my Introduction to Peace and Justice Studies course, that many students did not know why they were there. They had never been exposed to Peace and Justice Studies, and they had very little in the way of any framework with which to think about it. I believe that showing a glimpse of what the course focuses on will draw students in and show the area of study in a different and helpful light.

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Student 2: Molly Lokitis, Political Science, 2018
Dr. Kelly Denton-Borhaug
On campus housing is requested

I am a junior at Moravian College and a political science major. I strive for a chance at law school to pursue a future career in civil rights law. Along with being a Law and Society minor at Moravian College in the sociology department, I am also an Africana Studies minor which led me to become interested and enrolled in Dr. Denton-Borhaug class, Civil Rights and the Moral Life. From a young age, I felt passionately about making a change in any positive way that I can that would hopefully lead to creating a better life for those who are discriminated against on the basis of race, religion, or social class. I feel this project will help me grow toward these life goals. My passion towards a fight for equality has led me to become extremely interested to learn about the Civil Rights Movement, and I have become inspired by the notable leaders from that time who stood with courage with the aim to create a just society. Therefore, this summer SOAR project focusing on peace will greatly benefit me as it will expand my knowledge within an area that I am most passionate about, and because of that, I will be an influential asset to the project, as I will bring different ideas to the table, such as viewing peace within the arena of politics, and making peace education more prominent in our criminal justice system, the community, and our overall everyday lives.

When it comes to researching questions of peace, I believe that with my participation in this project, I can bring current issues to the forefront that we see in the media today, such as Black Lives Matter, and LGBT struggles for rights. I want to explore the roots and dynamics of peace within these organizations, but also identify non-peaceful actions. At the same time I will research and analyze the intersection between peace and justice groups such as mentioned above, peace education and opportunities in higher education at liberal arts colleges. I will focus on an analytical thinking process to explore what exactly led to non-peaceful actions, and further bring attention to various forms of positive, peace-oriented expression for protest and change. In addition to my interest in better understanding nonviolent forms of protest to create change, my research also will help me identify systemic causes behind the lack of peace we experience, such as within our government and criminal justice systems, through the creation of various laws, and within social systems such as law enforcement. Using specific examples will help to shine light on important questions that are central to the topic of peace, I will draw from the existing data from student visions, and make connections between what I discover in this data, and my further research in peace education and culture.

In addition, I will work to uncover research that helps our team to compare and contrast forms and ideologies of peace from the past as well as present. Important events in history from the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, to now The March for Women's Lives, and the election of Donald Trump to the presidency, all can be important examples for exploring how different groups organize and protest for peace in nonviolent ways. For example, it has been argued that Donald Trump's has been the most protested presidency in American history, with a stress on violent protest that has occurred. However, violence tends to attract more media and news attention than peace does, so a positive objective within the project would be to build an understanding of why that is, and then how to bring more attention to what the world is hiding us from seeing.

My goal for the outcome of this project is to exceed all expectations and to truly overall give those who will view this project a new outlook on identifying peaceful actions; and to educate others on the positive influence peace as a whole can have on creating a stronger community. Our end project is a 5-7 minute short film. I am extremely passionate about this creative product, because I believe when you visually see something, you are more likely to relate to it and connect emotionally. I believe the outcome of this project should show visuals comparing and contrasting clips of peaceful and non peaceful actions to promote deeper thinking about the world we live in and how moving just a couple miles in one direction, we can encourage a completely different world. Overall, I aim to emotionally connect to an audience and inspire a larger group of people in the idea that small actions of peace, one day at a time, can lead to powerful movements. My hope for this research is to develop my own understanding of peace, to bring greater attention to the importance of peace in higher education, and discourage any tendency to merely succumb to the focus of negative or apathetic actions or attitudes.