Annexe A

Interview with a Director of the FSIIS, Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies on the ELISA project, Monday April 24, 2006 at the Stanford University, California, USA

Question 1: At the beginning of the International Distance Learning program, what were your thoughts about it?

Answer: It came out of an existing program at Stanford whereby we had brought a number of PhD students in the Social Sciences from the Soviet Union and the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe to Stanford for training in Political Sciences, Sociology and Anthropology. That turned out to be a very costly program because Stanford is an expensive place to go to school so every student basically every year cost us about $50 000. So after five or six years of this, longer I guess, eight years, we thought about using a different model and that model would focus not on graduate students but on undergraduates and not bringing them here, but bringing Stanford Social Science courses to students there. And the idea was to help both students and their faculty to think more critically than they had during the Soviet period because the damage done to the Social Sciences in the Soviet Union as a consequence of the communist regime was extraordinary. So we thought this would be probably a more viable model, we could probably reach more students at a lower, much lower per student cost. So that was the inspiration for it.

Question 2: Do you think that critical thinking skills would be an important aspect of an international learning program?

Answer: I think critical thinking skills is terribly important and by trying to export some of this we were not meaning to suggest that we had all the answers. In fact, what we are doing is adapting the way we teach courses at Stanford and then trying to see how those techniques or how those methodologies transfer because arguably the most important skill set which we are trying to provide our own undergraduates with in a large context is that they learn to think critically.

Question 3: We are about half way through the first year of the program that the Stanford team leader is doing with us. Do you think it is too early to see whether the expectations are being met?

Answer: I think it probably is too early. I don't think we are going to know how this has all been worked out until we have gone through the process once and then to reflect on it by talking to the faculty, talking to the students and find out what worked and what did not work and then we would have to adapt it.

Question 4: Did the programs in Russia work well?

Answer: Yes but they were continually being adapted and revised with feedback from the students and from the local instructors. The pedagogy was being adapted, some fine tuning of the content but that wasn't really the issue. It was how to think about the writing assignments, how to try to improve their writing skills, a lot of hands-on work with Stanford-based teaching assistants where we would evaluate

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not only the quality of the content that we were getting from the students but how they expressed themselves, how they organise arguments. And then we did the same thing with the instructors and in the last several years we have built teacher training into the program as an integral part of it. So the Stanford team leader runs either in Moscow or here, a week-long seminar for all of the instructors and we take faculty from Stanford School of Education who specialise in teacher training, we bring them to the Russian instructors and just talk about ways of teaching. So in that sense changes to the program have been continuous.

Question 5: What are your thoughts on the effect of globalisation on education?

Answer: It's a very good question. What we are finding certainly in terms of our own students at Stanford, but also the Russian students and I suspect the South African students as well, is that in addition to whatever guidance we give them with respect to source material, they have the access of going on to the Internet which is great. The problem with the internet is it is unfiltered in a sense, so students will google in the title of something, they will get 400-500 entries but in some cases, like many cases, they are not equipped with the skills to distinguish between what is quality research that's available on the internet, and what is the opposite. The much broader availability of information is great but learning how to work one's way through it in a critical fashion, is a skill we have not really developed yet. And this is true of students in South Africa or students in Russia or students here. The problem is not the lack of stimulation or the lack of information, it is knowing how to filter through it in order to determine what is useful and what is not. When I think of the impact of globalisation on education, that's the first thing that I think about.

Question 6: What are your thoughts on the cross-cultural transfer of learning materials?

Answer: With respect to the program with the Russian universities we, most of us involved at the Stanford end, have spent a lot of time in Russia and have at least a good superficial command of Russian culture. So we did our best going into the process to make sure that we identified readings to support the lectures that were balanced between American scholars and Russian scholars; or US scholars, European scholars and Russian scholars with reference to a particular issue. We did not adapt the content of the course specifically, that is we didn't pull out some lectures and substitute them with other lectures. But we tried - very subconsciously - to provide supporting material that would be sensitive to the fact that these were courses being taught in Russian regional universities to Russian students because none of the people on the Stanford side, with one exception, are specialists on Africa. We have tried to take our cue from our South African partners and one thing I know that we were trying to think through is how to put together an environmentally-oriented course that would be much more specific to South Africa. So I think this first year is a kind of a testing year, we are moving forward with what we have but we are very open to coming up with a curricular unit that is as fully integrated into South African life and culture as it can be. Otherwise it would just be a extremely limited value. So we are just trying to maximize the value of this exercise. So it's not easy.

Question 7: What are your thoughts on the Digital Divide?

Answer: One of the things that I find really interesting, with respect to the Digital Divide question, and part of the reason why we are using these handheld devices instead of computer- based access, is that in those places for whatever reason access to the internet over wireless networks is less available than it is in the US. We have to figure out technically and technologically how to minimise the Digital Divide in places where we are trying to have an impact. So when the Stanford team leader first came to me and said we are thinking of using handheld devices pedagogically and methodologically we are not sure what this entails but we are told that this is how young people in South Africa communicate. Not only in South Africa but also in many parts of the world. So we need to figure out how to use the technology that the students use in order to improve their educational prospects. The sense I have is that for all of us this is learning by doing, it is not as though any other sense, or clear sense, or how to do this - but there is at the same time a strong sense that we need to figure out how. The kind of local/global balance is extremely tricky. People have to feel contextually comfortable, so if it is completely disconnected from life as they know it, it's not going to register, it's not going to penetrate. On the other hand if it is exclusively local without the global link-up then the relevance of what one is doing is lost.

Signature……..

Director of the Freeman Spogli Institute

Signed at …………………………………………………..on this…………………day of June 2006.

Annexe B

Interview with a Director of the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies on the ELISA Project, Monday April 24, 2006 at the Stanford University, California, USA

Question 1: What is your role in the ELISA project?

Answer: I direct the Initiative on Distance Learning which is a program that offers Stanford's courses in International Security to Russian regional universities with the goal of helping rejuvenating the study of Social Sciences in Russia and also to help develop higher order thinking skills. So far this program has been in the works running for six years. We have just been finishing our sixth year and that also incorporates not only offering courses to students but teacher training in terms of working with our local Russian instructors on the ground and student conferences. So, we try to incorporate face to face mechanisms in addition to the distant component. I also co-direct an international outreach program with the Co-director of the FSIIS, my colleague from the Stanford Center for Innovations in Learning and this IOP program falls under the rubric of the International Initiative. And I believe you spoke with a Director of the FSIIS about that this morning and you have also read about the International Initiative. The idea is to find not necessarily only distance learning programs but other educational programs at Stanford that would benefit and would enjoy working in a more international environment, either bringing and collaborating in research ways with foreign institutions or finding ways to deliver Stanford courses to other institutions and vice versa, bringing foreign courses to Stanford. So, in this kind of educational outreach realm I am working on the ELISA programme which is what you are involved in as well on the South African side. Reinhold is working on a teacher training project in Chili and then we have also jointly been working on a third kind of interest which is taking a web-based learning tool designed for pre-med students studying Anatomy and Physiology, a web-based tool that helps them learn Anatomy and Physiology and bringing that into China. So we are working with the medical school at the Peking University and doing very similar research. Some of the research questions are very similar to yours. What does it take to adapt an existing Stanford program to work in a different environment? What would it take to make this program, developed for Stanford medical students, available for Chinese medical students? Is it just simply a question of translating it into Chinese, or does there have to be more cultural adaptation involved? So we are kind of involved in similar issues in a way with this. I have come to know you through the e-learning initiative in South Africa or ELISA as we are calling it.

Question 2: You mentioned the critical thinking skills. Do you regard it as important?

Answer: Of course. I mentioned that in the context of the Russian situation which is very different from other countries' situation. In the Russian context everything was so influenced by Communist ideologies in many respects, so particularly in the Social Sciences it is this ability to think beyond the bounds set by ideology which became very difficult. And when the Soviet Union fell apart you had universities and in particular the regional universities, which is why we are working with them, who we are desperately trying to recreate these new departments of Social Sciences. And we stepped in and trying to help fill the curriculum void, but more importantly, as you can imagine, we believed that part of the learning process

in Social Sciences is through interaction and learning critical thinking skills and you do that through interaction and discussion and many other ways. So we do feel that that is important and what we have tried to do in our IDL program in Russia is to try and incorporate the ability to teach and to learn critical thinking skills and also dispositions. The skill set is different from the dispositions. The dispositions is how a person is able and willing to use critical thinking skills. So, is a person willing to look at a question from different angles or are they willing to take something just that they read at face value? That's very different from just critical thinking skills. Some of them might have the skills, but they might not always want to employ them. And we are actually finishing a two and a half year study of the ideal program as studying the outcome of critical thinking, learning were we successful and helping teaching the students critical thinking skills? And we are still waiting for some of the results to come in. Hopefully it will be helpful.

Question 3: Do you regard it necessary for education to be adjusted to new and changing requirements?
Answer: Yes absolutely. I mean that is why Stanford always tends to maintain its number two, number one status in the world for university rankings. Because it is always at the cutting edge and trying to do something new and different in terms of not only content but also pedagogy. So that is why you will see the Wallenburg Hall on Wednesday which is designed to help bring technology into the classroom. Do these things help in the learning process? And if so, what is the best way to use technology? What kinds of technology would be the best? There are so many questions they deal with and Stanford was at the forefront of distance learning really when it began so many years ago when it was beginning employing technology. Not correspondence courses which some people do, or do not, consider as distance education, but when you started looking more at the technology based stuff, Stanford was really at the forefront of that. I think there always has to be changing styles because you not only have a changing student population, you also have changing economies. So many people nowadays say that we are going into more of a knowledge-based economy and that is why you see it rise and people in the United States and elsewhere going on to get further higher education degrees beyond just a Bachelors, but then onto Masters and PhD level. If we are turning into a knowledge-based society, then knowledge is the key, then the more knowledge you have, the better. Well it reminds me of conversations that I had while at TUT in terms of "Do you then open up higher education to everyone, do you make a PhD accessible to anyone, (or even a Bachelors degree for that matter) or do you still try and place merit-based restrictions on who can go into these programs?" In the US it has changed very much since the sixties where even a Bachelors degree was very specialised in the fifties. And then after the fifties' and sixties' turmoil you then wanted to have it for equity reasons, you wanted to open it up for more people. So now Bachelor's degrees have become very standard, and Masters degrees are more of a different situation. So also you have to look at the economic base, how many higher education graduates can be supported by the new economy? So, just a wide range of issues but education always has to keep up with it. I am looking at it from a very American perspective where you look at the Institution of Higher Education in particular as being very market driven in a way. We are not as bound by Government

restrictions as other countries are, so we try and respond to market forces as best as we can. If there is a demand for right now nurses then everyone starts looking at creating nursing programs and so we can be more flexible. Is that a good or a bad thing? I don't know, but I think you need to maintain the ability to be flexible to adapt. I think we are also coming up on mid-term examinations. Any time of the day or night you will see students in the library working. I think it is standard in all of the residences on campus they have internet connections. So students can connect any time. One of the differences is that we are so tied to our laptops and computers where you all have the mobile phones. It is just a different way of allocating resources. Everyone at TUT, I think 98%, has a phone. Maybe they are not the high end phones but they can sms and share information. Just imagine if they had the ability to access those high tech phones? In a couple of years costs will always come down.

Question 4: When was the ELISA project launched?

Answer: Officially it was launched in January 2006 but discussions had been ongoing on since November 2004. So we had a very long, one year of discussion phase until fall of 2005 and then we really got it started on the planning phases in the fall. We launched it in 2006 in terms of programmatic effort. So I think that is a fair chronology of what has happened.

Question 5: Do you think that technology has the potential to shift the emphasis from the traditional classroom to the virtual classroom? Do you think that it is a possibility?

Answer: That is the great debate now, isn't it? They have been debating it particularly at Stanford because five years ago everyone was talking about distance education and how virtual education was going to be panacea. It was going to make it more open to all kinds of people. I don't know if you are familiar with the success story of the University of Phoenix? They have an extensive website. What it is a for-profit only online school, college I guess, and I think they have been accredited, at least for certain like management courses where you can get a Bachelors and a Masters in certain specialities. I have heard them talk about actually beginning to offer PhD's. This is all in a virtual online setting. Now, they have a success story. They have a very good business model and they are basically targeting a specific audience, they feel the business, certain market sphere in the US has a demand for certain people and the University of Phoenix saw a business opening and came in and created this institution to train people specifically for this labour market. And now they have been able to expand because as people see its successful to a certain degree, it is extremely effective for continuing adults who are already working, who need another degree for work and want to go on and get certified, whatever. So, in a business model like that it works out very well but if you look at traditional universities, they use the term here "bricks and mortar", meaning an on-campus university versus virtual. You see some prevalence that have been somewhat successful, and some that have been not. One of the successful cases I can talk about at Stanford is our School of Engineering. Some fifteen years ago they launched the Stanford Center for Professional Development (SCPD). They offer for the first time degrees for Stanford students who only take courses through this system. What they do is they offer a Stanford class that has been taught on

campus and they film it, they produce it and they stream it out on the web to people all over, usually business companies, people in the military, traveling people in the UN and other places. And they have been successful because I think the content that they are offering lends itself well to that type of situation. The other program I wanted to mention was Duke University that has a local School of Business. They offer a business degree as well and I think they are one of the few top schools to do something like that. You see a lot of smaller less renowned schools that put out distance education programs, and they might or might not be accredited. But you do wonder about the standards. But then again for someone who is not interested in the prestigious name of an institution, someone like that might be fine if they just need additional knowledge. It is all about what the end consumer wants or needs. To get back to your original question in a very roundabout way I think many institutions such as Stanford and Harvard are not convinced that you are going to see "brick and mortar" universities disappear. The private learning process, for at least the BA degree, the Bachelors, is part of bringing young people together to learn to become socialised outside of the family units on campus and that is extremely important in terms of personal development. And I think most people will argue that that still has a very important role to play. And to socialise people effectively you do need to bring them together in educational institutions. Not to mention all the benefits that come from being in an educational institution visiting lectures and that you have to mingle with other people from other countries that have different backgrounds. It's a wonderful learning experience. Some people say that where you can see virtual universities coming more into their own would be at the Master's level or specialised training level where you have people who are already adults, already in the workplace, already have a degree, they just need a second degree. They need specialised training and they can do it while they continue working. In the United States this is very important now for economic reasons. Most people don't have the luxury, if they need to go back to get retrained, to quit their job and go back to school. So many of them have families and they need to continue working. So there are all these considerations and if you look at when a lot of these people were writing about virtual universities being these wonderful things, about five or six years ago, the market was still kind of high and things were jumping aboard. You begin to see less and less enthusiasm now a little bit, and lots of joint veterans have gone under, they don't have the market. So there are some successful cases as well but in my personal opinion because they have found niche markets they can really turn cost effective and satisfy certain labour demands. So that's my opinion.

Question 6:   What is your perspective on the effect of globalisation on education?
Answer: I guess looking at one facet of that would be if you looked at the way US education has changed over the last several years, you do see an emphasis placed on an understanding of the need for say language programs. And you have also seen a growth during the last ten years of interdisciplinary country studies programs. Here we have a centre for East Asian studies which allows students to get degrees in a country or region that gives them backgrounds not only in the language but the culture, the economics, the political situation. So you have people who specialise in that region on a variety of different levels and then they can specialise. So you can have this growth in interdisciplinary programs.

The recognition of the need for better and more intensive language studies programs, the need to encourage students even if they are going into graduate level, if they are going to get an engineering degree, they still have to take two years of a foreign language. I think that is extremely important, you do see things like that. And I think you see it also in the recognition of needing to be more aware and to go back to your question earlier about how education changes, and again focusing at the level Higher Education, part of why Stanford initiated this new International Initiative is simply because the university recognises the need to change the way Stanford engages and looks at and considers the rest of the world apart from how institutions of higher education have traditionally looked at that. So really now Stanford is at the forefront of that, having other people come and visit us and ask us about why we are doing this, how is this important? But you know what, part of the reason why Stanford did this, is because they got feedback from people who are on the advisory board at Stanford, who primarily come from business and they say: "You know what? We are seeing people coming out of these colleges that don't really understand different cultures. They might know engineering, they might know business, they can tell you the first thing about where Cattmandoo is", which is very much in the news these days. So, there's got to be a better way that we can train students and particularly if you really agree with what Thomas Friedman says: "The world is flat", it is more and more important that you can engage with people from other cultures. And that is something that the US has always been lacking in a bit, just given our isolation from where we are regionally. In my opinion, I don't think historically enough emphasis has been placed on looking beyond our borders. And then if you wanted to study in an international relations field, that was one thing, but it was always done from a very Amero-centre perspective. And so the growth of these interdisciplinary country studies programs are very helpful to get people to think outside of the American centre. A due point which I think is important, particularly nowadays.

Question 7:   What are your perceptions of cross-cultural transfer of learning material?
Answer: I guess it depends on the type of courses and the types of interactions you are speaking about. I think in general, obviously based on my experience in Russia and what I have been learning and working with TUT, is that I think it goes beyond just simply a language issue. I have met with people who say that: "Well you know, we can take your course and just translate it into this language and offer it as it is". And that just doesn't work that way because I think it depends on the types of courses really. If you look at any type of discipline or any type of content there is specific language that is very, very specific and native to that content and many cases are difficult to translate. We found that in the Russian context and that is why, after speaking in great lengths with our Russian colleagues we were thinking about this, we decided not to translate the courses into Russian. The reason being, they said you know, as much as we hate to admit it, English is becoming the lingua franca of political science and global diplomacy. It has been for a while but if you really want to be able to understand the issues of the nuclear-nonproliferation treaty or a lot of these things, you need to understand English because there is so many words now. I think you see that to a degree also in technology. There is so many words now that began and originated in English that have become cognates in other languages, but still the meaning and the life behind the

word came from the English context. It is very hard to take some of these words and translate them because you do loose the meaning behind it and you lose the cultural setting. The Russian students came out with this: "We want to learn about America and the American perspective. We want to be able to learn that and translate it and compare it with the Russian perspective. So we want to study this in English because that's how we understand American culture". So much of learning about a culture's language. So that's the one side of it in terms of language. It goes beyond just simply translating something. I think what was interesting to me when we came to South Africa the first time and I was talking to Johannes and others, is that content matters a great deal as well. I understand the history of South Africa at a very high level. I don't understand a lot of the specifics and so I understand how, when I am approaching this, saying: "We have these wonderful courses in International Security" I now can see how some people would say:" You know, this is not what we need right now, we need to focus on content that benefits us". So I think that is important looking at content, particularly if you are talking about it in a more of a social science discipline. In Engineering, Mathematics, Physics, things like that, you don't really have to worry so much about cultural adaptation. I guess I am focusing more on courses that do have very much of a cultural component build into them. Mathematics or Physics are kind of boundless in a way. When you talk about History or International Relations, it comes from a cultural perspective cultural component build into them. One thing that is really necessary is that it depends on the model. If we were developing these courses for commercial purposes, and we were advertising, saying: "Here it is. This is a Stanford course in this content, buy it, take it or leave it, whatever" that has different sort of expectations. But when you want to work closer with another organisation and you want to meet the needs of the students which would be learning about, in this case, International Environmental Politics, you need very much to take into consideration what their needs are and their expectations are. So in this case I think the choice of the environmental course was very appropriate. What was fascinating was being able to work with the environmental specialist and others to find out what are the areas of interest to you all. I think that it is really crucial having a local person on the ground to contextualise it further. In this type of situation you have one perspective that we are giving and then to have someone who can say: "Ok, what you have heard at this level, how do you apply it to South Africa or to you as individual", and then further individualise it that way. I think it is extremely helpful. I don't think a course could be successful if you were just going to do it for the for-profit model, say: "Here is the course, take it", because people might not necessarily understand some of the case studies or some of the expressions because everything would be couched in American terms, and those are not necessarily applicable to other countries. So that is extremely important. I have learned the value of really having someone on the ground to help tie in whatever the content is, into that local and individual perspective and then meet those needs. And then of course the technology has to be appropriate and as we are finding in our case, a CD-ROM is not the most appropriate mechanism. It works well in Russia, that's what we are finding and here at Stanford we use streaming video for the same course. So, what do we need to do to make it accessible to the students? That's the question, right? So if a high percentage of the students aren't able to do the readings or the videos, we don't know for certain, but what they say is not because of the lack of interest but simply

because they don't have access? And that's pretty amazing. So that leaves me to think that we didn't do our homework, collectively to say: "Okay is this going to work or not?" We had assumed all of us that they would have access at work. So okay now you really have to really think how you are going to access? Another thing is to know your audience. What we are finding is even though we did our best in this winter to find readings that would be appropriate for the students, what we are finding is that they are still too theoretical, they are very academic. We again are coming from a very political science background. If you look at all the people on the team, I am a political scientist, A Consulting Associate Professor is a political scientist, second teaching assistant is a political scientist, so that's our background. And what we thought would be very appropriate turns out not to be very appropriate. What I should have done is to find a student in Journalism who had an interest in the environment and have them look at it from a journalism perspective: "Ok, what would be your needs?" From that perspective it is very different. It is very important to know your audience. I just find it fascinating.

Question 8: What are your thoughts on the effect of the Digital Divide in education? What can be done to minimise the effect of the Digital Divide in education?

Answer: I am just beginning to learn about what is happening in Africa but it fascinates me to learn that the cell phone is really coming to its own, also in Asia, and also in ways that the creator of the cell phone never would have imagined. It's being used for political purposes like to sign petitions, to mobilise people for political action which is fascinating. I have read about riots in China were peasant farmers who were protesting against the government coming and taking some of their land and building a power plant that would have polluted their farms. And they protested and they actually blocked people coming in and a couple of people died because the police came in and opened fire. What I noticed in several of these articles from the New York Times is that people came out to protest because they got a sms. And that is how local I would be willing to bet that that in some way happened here at Stanford campus. People found out at the last minute that Bush is coming to town. In our case we sent out emails, but also some people have sms, so you send sms. And that is how we get the word in. Look how quickly they could mobilise people. The Bush administration kept it to the last minute, they didn't want protestors and you can't keep information under wraps anymore. It is very difficult. So this tied us into the whole question of the Digital Divide. There is Digital Divides in many different directions. So may be the developed world, Europe, the US and Canada have a divide in them in terms of, maybe not the technology production capability, but the technology creativity, the technology use. Many countries have the edge over us. Why can't we do this type of study that we wanted to do in South Africa, here? Because Sarah said she can't find a service provider to give us the service that we need for the phone that we have. Because no provider can service all of the aspects of the phone. Where as in South Africa, that was kind of standard and understood that the service provider would provide all these bells and whistles. But we can't do all that here, which says a lot. So there are different Divides and it is always changing. I hope we can learn from those countries that are using cell phone technologies in a much more interesting manner. That is how technology is always developed and you continue growing. I just hope that technology can be in

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some way the great equaliser. Because there has in the past been this huge Divide, computers versus non computers, and that was always the big thing. But now that you get into the more wireless technologies can you imagine what is going to happen in the next fifteen years? I hope that you might really see it levelling off so that even if we might still use computers and other people would use sms's and cell phones, the result might be the same. That's my hope and there's so much potential there. The whole human tendency is just to have something as small as possible. And not only for politics or education but also for economics as well. It is just amazing what people, entrepreneurial people are finding. New ways to use this technology that we, and certain countries say like Finland who developed Nokia, never would have found, this possible application for these phones. It is just purely communication devices, it is fascinating.

Question 9:   What were your expectations at the beginning of the ELISA project?

Answer: We are about half way through the first year of the pilot study. I really don't think I had concrete expectations. I had hopes which I would categorise as different. I really wanted to create a good product because I am not a technologist per se, my goal was really to give the students a great educational experience. I really wanted them to come away, not only learning from the technology side but coming away from the content knowledge, a new way of looking at the world they wouldn't have thought of before. And also just to give them access to different types of thinking. And I'm saddened to see that despite our best efforts we were not able to give readings that would really reach the student. I think it is reaching some of them but it is not reaching all of them. And so, to make this a better experience we have to be able to reach all the students. And I'm saddened by the fact that they can't view the lectures and do the readings because they don't have access to it. I think it is wonderful to have the opportunity to do a pilot, and now I can fully appreciate it why the TUT team leader was always calling it a pilot, a pilot, a pilot, and the Head of the Department of Journalism at TUT as well. Because even though in my mind I said yes, it's a pilot, I really had hoped it to be a product that could really benefit the student. My first concern is reaching the students and having them have an experience that they would walk away from, that they would say: "I am really glad I did that". The last thing that I would want is them to walk away and say: "That was a waste of my time".

Signature……………………………………………………………………………………………..

Director, Freeman Spogli Institute

Signed at …………………………………………..on this……………….day of June 2006.

Interview with a teaching assistant of the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies on the ELISA Project, Tuesday April 25, 2006 at the Stanford University, California, USA

Question1: I noticed that you are interested in Sub-Saharan Africa. Why is that?

Answer: I think just from my personal experiences of having lived there I became very interested in the challenges to education in that part of the world. So for me to be here in California but then have the chance to be involved remotely with the project in South Africa, was very interesting.

Question 2: You mentioned that you visited numerous places in South Africa. When was that and would you like to visit South Africa again.

Answer: That would have been around early 2000 and I would love to.

Question 3: How did your role in the ELISA project start?

Answer: The Stanford team leader contacted me last year over our winter break about this project and told me a bit about it and I saw some of the background materials and she told me a bit about the position, the teaching assistant that they needed. That is a very standard thing for a graduate student to be a teaching assistant for other classes. So she talked a bit about the design of the project because it is very unique, even at Stanford. It is an unusual type of course so, and the fact that I could be involved with South African students was really appealing. She showed me that this project was also operating in Russia before. Here I was able to look through that material and it seemed like something that would be fun to be involved in.

Question 4: Do you think that it is necessary for education to be adjusted to new and changing requirements?

Answer: I think you have to adapt, especially in a case of a course like this because our goal is not only the substance, it's not only the environmental substance but it's really how can we best use this technology to enhance learning, and actually a lifelong skill. The idea is not just only for this short period of time. So I think it's important that the learning environment create a place where the students can experiment and grow in that way. Fifty years ago that was unforeseen.

Question 5: You are involved with the grading of the assignments. Were you also involved with the selection of the prescribed readings?

Answer: Yeah, the second teaching assistant more so. She and I worked in consultation to select some of the readings and that was challenging because we didn't know at the time exactly what the academic background was of all of the students. And it is also challenging when you have a range of backgrounds; where do you place the reading? You want them to be challenging enough for your more advanced students but not so challenging that they overwhelm the others and they feel discouraged. So that was sort of a constant give and take and I think we learned a lot. Even just in the first half of the

project after the team came back and they gave us some feedback about that. Being so far apart is very challenging I think for the design and selecting the proper readings and also access. "Can the students quickly get stuff on the Internet or do we really need to make sure the materials are in their hands?" There are all sorts of complications like that that need to be worked out.

Question 6: What are your perceptions on the role of technology in education?

Answer: I must say in part I feel like it's sort of a black box to me. I'm trying to understand how much access the students have because if like me, they can get on the Internet as much as they want, it's a very fast connection, then technology can play a very different role in their education.

But if they have very limited Internet access and the server is very slow then the curriculum and the content need to be adjusted accordingly. So the role that technology plays is in part dependant on those things. I'm finding that some of the logistical concerns at this stage are some of our biggest hurdles right now, things like making sure that on their device they have the sms, mms capabilities and that sort of thing. So from here it's sort of hard to know what to expect from them in terms of their capabilities with the technology. Because I think it could have potentially very strong implications because they would have access to so much. I know when we were designing the courses one of the problems was that the South African environmentalist specialist could not get access to some of the South African journals. But if the technology was up and running very smoothly that could improve and the implications for education from the technological side could be greatly enhanced.

Question 7: What are your perspectives on the effect of globalization on education?

Answer: It is interesting. Some of my perceptions are being shaped by what the students are choosing to write in the essays. So, two things. One is that when we think of the design of this course it's a matter of how much should it be strictly South African, how much should the sources be South African, how much should the content, the case study be South African, and how much should it be the rest of the world? And what can we learn from the rest of the world? What do we need to know about India and China when we think about South Africa? Globalization certainly played a role in the selection of the readings. And from reading the students' essays it is clear that they are also thinking about globalization in terms of the South African context and what the implications are for their own country. So it's certainly an issue that's up the forefront.

Question 8: Do you think that technology shifted the focus from a traditional classroom to a virtual classroom?

Answer: My concern is that we haven't necessarily created a virtual classroom because I don't know if it's a function of the WebCT6 interface. But I'm not sure how much students are communicating with each other. May be they are on their devices, and that's something that I not necessarily know. The technology has certainly allowed me to communicate with them and for them to communicate with me. But in a classroom situation there's collaboration with each other and I'm not sure that it could be happening and

I'm not aware of it. But I think some of the students are even friends with each other and so I imagine they are talking on their cell phones and communicating in that way perhaps. So maybe in that sense it has created a virtual classroom. There is a chat room on WebCT6 and I tried to have a time when we used it but I think people's schedules are all over the place. So I think it's possible to create more of a virtual classroom particularly if the students are full time students and the class meets at a certain time. Then I think that potential is much greater.

Question 9: How do you think can the effect of the Digital Divide be minimized?

Answer: Something I think that's important to talk about is to understand the issues around the Digital Divide between South Africa and the United States in general. In some ways you could say that each place is more advanced in certain dimensions. In the US Internet access is much easier, it's much faster, there's wireless all over campus. I can take my laptop and be anywhere and be online very fast. I can upload enormous documents and that's something our South African students cannot do. However, if you look at the local technology, the cell phone and what people are doing there, that's much more advanced than what your average Stanford student is doing. I for example, sent my first text message less than a year ago. People don't do that kind of thing so much. I have never connected to the Internet on my phone before this project. I didn't realise that you could really do that on a phone. And I know that in South Africa that is a much more developed technology. I heard that when our team came back they were talking about the students who were zapping each other. I could figure it out but it is not something that people do so much here. So each place has different enhanced abilities. There are a couple of different divides going on and that is particularly relevant for this project because we are relying on Internet technology and incorporating this mobile technology. It's more complicated than a situation where you have a very rural village and for the first time you expose people to cell phones and for the first time you expose people to the Internet. Some of the South African students are quite capable of these devices. In some ways it's a matter of learning from each other in some instances, this side of the project is trying to help that side.

Question 10: What were your expectations at the beginning of the project?

Answer: I tried to go into it with a very open mind because the Stanford team leader, as much background as she gave me, also wasn't sure about the exact background of the students. For example, how old are they? We knew they weren't undergraduates, like eighteen years, we knew they were working adults. But we didn't know are they fifty years old, or are they thirty years old? There was a lot that we didn't know but I tried to keep an open mind and that makes it much more difficult, particularly with the technology. I'm not sure of how it is in South Africa but here, for example, I know people who are my age, and I am thirty, are generally much more capable of using technology than our parents are. So I wasn't quite sure what I could expect from the student capability. I didn't know whether I would need to teach or do any explanation about the technology? With the cell phones, the devices, I knew that they would know more than I did, because in South Africa, that's the technology. That's what people do. Here

it is very expensive and people just don't do it, there are other ways that people communicate. So I tried to keep an open mind. I was hoping that this project would be a great learning experience, that the content would be something new. I knew that TUT selected this course because they didn't offer something of the exact type. So I was hoping that it would be a new exposure. And I know that Professors involved here are fairly reputable and are good resources. So I was hoping that it would be an exciting thing for the students to have access to different Professors. I know when we have visiting Professors here it is very exciting to have access to someone from another country. So I was hoping that it would do that.

Question 11: Do you feel that your expectations are being met?

Answer: I would like to think that I am a resource for the students. My expectations are really their expectations. I don't know if it is part of the South African culture for Professors to ask feedback from their students? Here it is very common. So in some ways I will only know how good a job I'm doing based on what the students say. And sometimes that is very hard. I think one of the challenges of an online programme is building that kind of rapport. If you see a professor or a teaching assistant every day, you get to know him or her, and you talk. But online is much more difficult to foster. I hope that my comments to the students and my availability are something that is meeting their needs. And to the extent that I am meeting their needs, is the extent to which my expectations are being met.

Question 12: Do you think that cultural diversity is important in the adaptation of the course?

Answer: It is obviously a very complicated thing to think about. A lot of what you are talking about happens in the United States as well for example in the online classes where groups of the same ethnocity would sit together. That's human nature. But obviously, South Africa has a unique history. It's interesting being on my side because I don't see the students. My cues into some of the dynamics are that I see in the essays that people certainly have a couple of different levels. It's a mix. And you can sort of try and figure out from names if someone is from Indian descent. And you can think that maybe that means that they have this sort of opportunity. But again, I don't know for certain. One of the great things about this programme is that it tries to meet the students where they are. So if you have both an advanced student and a student who had less exposure to the technology, they can both benefit and learn from each other. I think maintaining diversity is a nice thing for the students themselves because they can learn more from each other and also learn about their countries. My experience in Southern Africa is that some of the students, when they were growing up in their earlier years, went to schools where most of the students were like them. So a mixed group may actually be good for the students to see that maybe these people didn't have this. Everyone had a different experience going to school in South Africa. As a journalist and a South African adult, it is important to enhance that experience.

Signature……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Teaching assistant, Freeman Spogli Institute

Signed at ……………………………………………..on this…………………day of June 2006.

Interview with a Co-director of the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies on the ELISA Project, Wednesday April 26, 2006 at the Stanford University, California, USA

Question1: You were part of the initial program but you are not part of it at this moment. What was your role in the ELISA project?

Answer: I met the TUT team leader at a conference in Cuba and that is how I actually got connected to the University of Pretoria. Then we started talking in concrete terms about a potential research collaboration. We have always wanted to do some research looking at the potential use of mobile technologies and I knew that mobile technologies are very popular in South Africa. So that's how ELISA kind of started building upon the distance learning model that the Stanford team leader and others built up for Russian universities. We kind of used that but really looked more at potential use of mobile technology to support the kind of interaction aspect of a distance learning program. When I went to South Africa last year and met with the Director of the Distance Learning Programme of the School of Education I was happy to learn about their distance learning programme, how they started using mobile phones to support the programmatic aspect of the learning programme and were thinking about providing feedback in a kind of formative assessment way, that is really where it clicked. If it's OK I can just tell you a little about a project that we did here at Stanford that focused on aspects of a learning community that I thought might be of benefit for a distributed community, especially if you look at mobile technologies. So what we did here at Stanford was to have a couple of large lecture classes with 300 students attending. One of these classes is a three quarter one year program called Human Biology. Students have four lectures during the week and then the following week they meet in small seminar groups and with a teaching assistant they go over the content that was introduced during the lectures in the previous week. Then that seminar is an opportunity for the students to clarify any misconceptions and for the teaching assistant to get some feedback from the students on how they are doing. It allows in general terms to increase the communication between the teaching team and the students. That was the design of that program, large lecture classes and seminar groups. The Professors then met with the teaching assistants and asked them what the key challenges of the program were. The teaching assistants said firstly that there was not a lot of communication going on because there was not a lot of personal motivation. Secondly there was not enough feedback for the teaching team to really understand where the students were in terms of the curriculum. Thirdly there was not a lot of feedback to the student in terms of how they were doing. In the past some of the Professors introduced weekly problem sets, a list of questions that students were given on Thursdays and then on Mondays the teaching assistants or the Professors would collect them and try to go through them to kind of see how the students were doing. But of course with 300 students it was really hard to keep on top of things. So we actually developed a web-based problem set or system where students were able to go to a website on Thursday evening and answer questions related to the content that was introduced during that week. We used a combination of multiple choice and open-rationale questions. I am not a big fan of multiple-choice questions but what it allows you to do is to have a computer system quickly grade and analyse them because it is all multiple choice. What an open

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E-learning Initiative in South Africa (ELISA)

rationale allows you to do is especially if you ask the students, OK of these five choices which ones are the correct choices and in the open box you have to say why. So the open rationale gives you an opportunity to look into the thinking of the student. So it's more than just multiple choice yes, and no, it's actually aha, this is your argumentation. And on Monday mornings at eight o'clock the teaching team meets, they go to the website, they logon as teaching team, they click on a button and they are able to actually get a breakdown. They could actually come up with a list of the most missed questions. So there was a list for the entire 300 students which said that 50% of all students did not get answer 5b of 5 correct. Then the teaching assistants could actually zoom in to their student groups of 20 students and that was much more manageable. They could say, "Well, Johnny in my group did not understand that question and Felicity did not get another question". So they could actually very easily and very quickly zoom in to an individual and to a group and get feedback on how the students were doing in terms of understanding the concepts that were introduced. That allowed them to customise and plan for the seminar group that was coming up. The students had to submit their answers to the problem sets on Sunday evening at midnight when the deadline was. They were able to get immediate feedback on whether they answered it correctly or not and also with the correct answers they were given an answer to the open rationale. So they were also getting some feedback. In addition to the feedback to the team and the feedback to the students the faculty member could actually each week pick a couple of students from each seminar group and could quickly zoom in because it's all web-based and send out an email to Johnny and say: "This is where your thinking went wrong". That was very motivational because usually in a large lecture class there is no personal contact between the professor and the students. So it was much more manageable for a faculty member to provide customised personal feedback to a select group of students which changed every week. So, what we were able to do by using technology in a large lecture class in a web-based environment is firstly to provide feedback, secondly to receive feedback and thirdly also support the communication aspect which ultimately made it a little bit more motivating for the students. Now, take that concept which is quite often used in traditional course management systems such as WebCT6 or Blackboard. Couldn't you take the same principles, meaning the same kind of technology to firstly get feedback on a more regular basis from the students, secondly to give feedback to the students on a more regular basis and thirdly also by having these targeted messages to students, increase motivation? Couldn't you apply that concept in a distributed distance learning class where 99% of students have access to capable telephones and basic sms's? So that's where the concept of or the technology part of ELISA started, really looked at how you can utilise mobile handheld devices to provide some kind of dialogue or feedback between the distributed students and the teaching teams. That was the original idea. I have not been engaged since the Stanford team leader and others started to refine that idea and actually designed the intervention. There have been some unique changes to make it possible with whatever course was available to do this with. But that is how it all started. So if you actually have some built-in interaction that is based on feedback on how the students are doing in terms of certain concepts then you have a tremendous motivational vehicle at your fingertips. And the big question of course is does it ultimately make a difference in the added value to the learning?

Question 2: What is your opinion on the role of technology in education?

Answer: I have been at Stanford for almost 13 years now. I took a break in between and went to the Apple Research Laboratories and worked with a program called the Apple Classrooms of Tomorrow (ACOT). This program facilitated by Apple computer studies was a longitudinal study that included research at universities in Europe, Australia and also in the United States. They were looking at a very simple question: "How does technology change the conversation around teaching and learning?" It is my firm belief that technology is no guarantor for added value to the teaching and learning process but technology combined with other tools, other pedagogical approaches, can act as a catalyst of change and can actually create a more active learning environment that engages the learner more in the learning process. It is not a guarantee that it will happen but I think it has the potential and there are a lot of ingredients that would need to be in place. I always talk about at least five factors. Number one is the design of the learning activities. You really have to think about how you would design a learning activity both from content and from a learning activity perspective. How would you engage a designer to really engage students in learning? Number two is student skills. The students need to have the skills to work in these kinds of environments. For example if you think that one promising strategy for this part of my course is small-group work, then you would want to make sure that students know how to work in small groups. Because just creating small groups is no guarantee that everyone in the group actually participates in learning. So you have to make sure that the students have the skills to really participate in certain activities. If they don't have the skills then introduce some skill builder or trainer. Number three is faculty or teacher development. Now if you go away from a traditional lecture then you really have to make sure that a teacher also understands his or her role as coach or facilitator rather than just the owner of facts and throwing these facts out. The fourth one is tools, including software tools. You really have to look at all these things, think about what you want to do, think about the skills that the students have and the teachers and then look at tools, including software tools that would really help you to achieve your learning goals. And then finally number five is assessment. If you use group work then you really need to think about how you can use student groups to help them give feedback to each other in the learning process. There's a big discussion between formative and summative assessment. Do you want to assess *for learning (for)* or do you want to do assessment *of learning? Of learning* happens at the end, which is not always inefficient to the student but the process of assessment *for learning* is this kind of formative feedback. Unfortunately most educational systems whether it is the university or K12 are so grade-driven, al that you need, all you can do is have a test at the end. But that is not always the best approach for the learning process. So, what are some innovative ways where you can still get some kind of a grade for a student, or an individual grade if you work in groups? I would rather focus on assessment *for learning* than *of learning.* I realise that there is no way, at least not yet, to get away from the summative assessment. But focus more on formative assessment.

Question 3: What is your perspective on the effect of globalisation on education, especially in the South African context?

Answer: My academic background is an international and cross-cultural educationalist. So I look at the potential of globalisation from various perspectives. The first aspect is that I think learning environments, classrooms, whether they are physical or virtual or any combination in between, are becoming more and more diverse. If you go to a high school here in California, and you have the same issues in South Africa, you have students from all kinds of socio-economic intellectual backgrounds. So, how do you create a learning environment that allows students from different perspectives, different backgrounds, to participate in the learning process? So globalisation has an impact on how you teach in your local classroom, that's one thing. The second aspect is going away from your group and looking more outside. I am a firm believer that if you are able to connect learners to learners from other countries, bringing to the discussion and the learning process different perspectives, you have a tremendous opportunity to add richness to the learning process. Because all of a sudden your perspective is challenged and if your perspective is challenged, that's where a lot of potential learning kicks in.

Signature……………………………………………………………………………………………………..

Co-director, Freeman Spogli Institute

Signed at …………………………………………………..on this……………….day of June 2006.

Interview with the UP Team Leader, ELISA Project Leader and Supervisor on the ELISA Project, Wednesday September 24, 2008, Pretoria

Question 1: What dialogue exists between First World universities and their counterparts in developing countries?

Answer: The abovementioned dialogue focused on the possibility of cooperation between the distinguished HEIs. The principle partnership involved Stanford and UP with the prospect to include other HEIs. The University of Limpopo (UL), formerly the University of the North, was identified as a possible collaborator to implement the programme. The initial discussions between the role players at UP and the University of Limpopo were not successful due to the fact that the UL were not interested in an outreach programme from Stanford. TUT, however, agreed to cooperate and implement a Political Science module in an existing journalism course. The TUT role players realised the potential of an International Security Course developed by Stanford and decided to adapt TUT's requirements to fit in with Stanford. Initially UP was sceptical and during the first negotiations wished to know what Stanford could offer that UP could not do itself. It all arose from the fact that overseas universities were eagerly seeking partners in the southern hemisphere so that the former may obtain additional funding. Previously there was the idea that the universities in the southern hemisphere were being exploited by their northern hemisphere counterparts for financial gain. Studies in higher education concerning Africa are very popular. A number of partnerships between universities in the north and those in the south, as well as in Africa generally, have already been concluded and these profit from such undertakings. An example is the collaboration between the University of Iowa and Nigeria. In the Republic of South Africa it is specifically the universities in need, such as TUT and the University of the Western Cape, that benefit from it. However, UP is not regarded as a university of need and does not collaborate with Iowa. There are various incentives to participate with HEIs in outreach programmes. Stanford had a financial incentive to support the ELISA programme in South Africa and for this they received a direct grant to fund it. UP's incentive was to make best use of the outreach initiative to empower the participants. The incentive for TUT was to make use of the opportunity of exposing the students to new perspectives.

Question 2: What did not work well in the ELISA programme?

Answer: The agreement with the University of Limpopo (UL) went off the rails from the start. From the dialogue it appeared that UL was under the impression that UP wanted to impose on them so as to get an opening to get to the Americans. They saw themselves as guinea pigs with no say in the matter. A Professor from UL, felt that he would not learn anything from such an outreach programme. The fact that he left the meeting after ten minutes underscored the suspicion that existed.The background dialogue is the dialogue of power. The South African role players were of the opinion that they were indeed working from a position of power. The South African did not wish to be under the exclusive influence of Stanford and could easily have turned down the offer of the outreach programme.

Another problematic issue was the dismantling of the prejudice among the Stanford role players. At the beginning they argued from a mindset wherein they had doubts whether the project would be viable in South Africa. They were, however, surprised by the South African expertise. On the one hand, the South African role players were disappointed with the lack of sufficient sources and the prevailing impatience. For such reasons the South Africans wondered whether they shouldn't have run the programme themselves. Another aspect that caused problems was the joint long-term project development. The problem was the potential lack of ownership. One could argue that such a project is neither mine nor yours. A typical description of it might be: "Not made here".

Question 3: Which aspects worked well and why?

Answer: Joint projects of short duration. Exchange of personnel because it can be achieved without complications – the one person arrives, the other leaves. Successful interpersonal relationships were some of the positive aspects. The ELISA programme was noted for the fact that several role players withdrew during the running of the programme. A variety of reasons compelled the South African role players, such as the UP research assistant and the UP team leader, not to proceed with the programme. However, the UP team leader became involved again and managed the programme jointly with the Stanford team leader of Stanford to its end.

Another positive aspect was the phenomenon that the students could make the curriculum material their own. Ownership of the curriculum had a far-reaching effect on the students. Stable technology is essential but difficult to obtain. The initial enthusiasm when the students implemented the technology successfully was apparent. The "no significant difference phenomenon", as formulated by Russell and Clarke was applicable here.

Question 4: How is shared meaning created and why was it created?

Answer: Shared meaning is created through common purposes, common adversaries and common incentives. Cooperation and competition are often considered as dependent on each other. For example, cooperation and competition are necessary in a tennis match. It is inevitable that in a single tennis match, one of the players will win and one will lose. Anyone of the players, however, must be willing to run the risk of losing in order to continue playing and finish the match with the chance to be the winner.

Malone (1981) emphasises the important role that motivation plays. Interpersonal motivations such as cooperation, competition and recognition are relevant when people have mutual goals. Mutual goals create interdependence among the different members of a group. Positive interdependence (cooperation) is part of the interaction and supports the learning process. Shared meaning, in the ELISA project, was undoubtedly created between various role players. The initial mutual goal was to implement and complete the intervention. The academic and research teams wanted to promote the research as well as the outreach actions. Stanford wanted the financial support while the students wanted to complete the course. The mutual goal ceased to exist when Stanford decided to withdraw from the programme.

Signature...

UP team leader, ELISA project leader and Supervisor

Signed at.....................................on this ....day of October 2008

Annexe F

Interview with the Research Assistant for the ELISA Project, Wednesday October 22, 2008 at the University Of Pretoria

Question 1:   What was your role in the initial discussions of the project?

Answer: I acted as research collector as no researcher was available in this early stage of the project.

Question 2:   What were your instructions?

Answer: My instructions were to act as Assistant. As initially we did not know what they had in mind, we all functioned as a think tank, generating ideas and exploring possibilities. I had to record as accurately and objectively what was happening during the initial discussions, but I also asked questions and made comments.

Question 3:   Where and when did the initial discussions begin?

Answer: In November 2004 in Stanford, at Stanford University with the Stanford team leader and the Co-director of the FSIIS.

Question 4:   Who were the South African representatives?

Answer: The TUT team leader from the University of Pretoria initiated the outreach programme with Stanford, after having met the Co-director of the FSIIS at a conference in Cuba just before. She invited the UP team leader and me to accompany her to the US.

Question 5:   Did Stanford and the UP agree on basic terminology of the project?

Answer: We noted several different connotations of concepts. For example, concepts such as course, module, unit, programme and component varied. It took quite a while to figure out what the scope of the project would be, whether at module level or programme level, and to identify suitable courses in South Africa that would accommodate their material. Initially, we did not realise that they already had a lot of developed material that they wanted to deliver as is.

Question 6:   What did your duties involve once you were back in South Africa?

Answer: I co-arranged and invited possible partners from different departments at UP, the University of Limpopo and Tshwane University of Technology to participate in an information sharing session. They were identified as possible future partners to collaborate in the project, as they represented diverse teaching and learning scenarios with different access to technology. Making use of mobile technology was a high priority, as especially rural students do not have Internet access, or even electricity. Stanford wanted to some extent to replicate the Stanford team leader's project to teach critical thinking skills to rural Russian students. After attending this information session, the Universities of Limpopo and Pretoria were not interested, for different reasons. I acted as administrative, liaison and general support assistant.

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When the Stanford team leader and the Co-director of the FSIIS visited South Africa in March 2005, I arranged their accommodation, provided them with transport and took them on the tour of UP's campuses. The Co-director of the FSIIS looked for collaborators on another project concerning Medical Teaching, and I identified and arranged interviews with possible partners at all UP's campuses.

Question 7:   When and why did you withdraw from the project?

Answer: The TUT team leader resigned from UP and took up a position at TUT. I still took part in negotiations with the stakeholders at the Department of Journalism at TUT in the initial stages of the project. When it became clear that the whole project would reside at TUT, it made sense to move the logistic support to that side, as well. I continued with my duties as research assistant until the Stanford team leader informed me by email that my input was not required any more. At that stage I officially withdrew from the project where my involvement had been dwindling in any case. At no stage did Stanford University remunerate me for my participation or services.

Signature...
Research Assistant ELISA Project

Signed at.....................................on this .... day of October 2008

Annexe G

Discussion with a teaching assistant at the Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies on the ELISA Project, Tuesday April 25, 2006, at the Stanford University, California, USA

Question 1:   How long have you been involved in international experiences?

Answer: My first real international experience was in 1998 when I travelled to Latvia as part of the US luge team and was immersed in the culture. I also travelled to Mexico, the Caribbean and Canada. Academically I first travelled to Tanzania in 2003. Between 1998 and 2003 I was both professionally and academically involved in international issues but those two experiences were milestones.

Question 2:   Why are you specifically interested in the rural communities?

Answer: My home is very rural. It's in the mountains of New York in a town called Lake Placid and I think that personally what interest me most about both my professional life and personal life are connections with people and relationships with people. I think that in urban areas it is much more difficult to initiate and maintain relationships with people. It can be very distracting and busy and many people have very little time and the family unit in urban areas is not as strong as in rural areas where the family units are stronger. And I just think my professional academic interest in social economic development and I'm interested in the real contacts because that is where I see the greatest potential for a positive impact.

Question 3:   What are your perceptions of cross-cultural transfer of learning materials?

Answer: In terms of cross-cultural transfer of learning materials the most important component is transferring critical thinking skills. I don't like the word transfer but rather share because if resources are going to be transferred from Stanford to the University of Pretoria, one thing that I was very interested in at the beginning of the project is: "How can the students at the University of Pretoria share and transfer knowledge and learning materials back here to Stanford?" Many of my colleagues here at Stanford are interested in environmental issues in Africa but yet lack access to that kind of information or learning materials. But going back to the initial question I think that an important part of the transferring is that it is collaborative, the reasons for being transferred are also contributing something back. I think that is an important part and I think before you can transfer any kind of knowledge in either direction you need to share an understanding of critical thinking and the role that that plays because raw materials without a way of interpreting them, understanding them, extracting important points, I don't think will be effective.

Question 4:   How did you decide on the readings?

Answer: It was a very difficult task. I worked with the Stanford course author, the original course author largely, and as well as two Professors here at Stanford who teach a class called International Environmental Policy. One is Armand Rosenkranz and a Consulting Associate Professor and actually in working with her on the readings, that's how she got involved. She is my advisor. So I took Ron's initial syllabus and a couple of different factors came into play. What was the original syllabus that went along

with the lectures? We couldn't change the lectures because they were video-taped, so we needed something that was relevant to the lectures and in some cases in the lectures he refers to the readings often. It would have been difficult to stray very far from the initial readings because the lectures were based on readings. So that was an important component. A second component that I tried to bring to it was in the case where there were originally Russian writings, I tried to introduce some African related writings so either re-inviting some African authors which in my search was very difficult to find in the environmental policy realm, very few, authors writing and publishing in journals on this issue, on the issues that the Stanford course author lectures about going back to the initial course that were appropriate. So what I did try to do in some circumstances is refer to just similar topical issues that as a South African journalist would be interested in or need to know. So for example one of the readings was one of South African Government's Green Policy Papers and that was really to just introduce if these students had never read a policy paper I think as a journalist it would be really interesting to expose them to something because these White and Green Policy Papers are there for the public to respond to. And so as a journalist being able to read a Policy Paper and dissect some information from it and share with the public and inform them as to what was going on at a policy level. I think that would have been an interesting reading. So that was another factor that came in as how could I add some relevance specific to Africa, South Africa appropriate for the readings. And then the third was linked into level of theory and difficulty and that is a hard balance because I didn't want to underestimate the potential of students and reduce the level of readings for South African students that a Stanford student would do and that of course was not intended. So what I tried to do was we ended up using a taxed school of environmental politics. It's a cross between an academic, it's very well researched and very well supported by some of the top academics but it is very readable, I hope and I would like to get some feedback from you and the other students. I was just speaking on another point of including aspects of environmental journalism in the readings and this year there wasn't a lecture schedule on Environment Journalism. There wasn't a space to put readings on a particular folder. I don't know if you have been able to use WebCT6, but on WebCT6 I did create a folder of environmental issues in the news which is where I was hoping to create and collect similar very specific examples of good writing on environmental issues to address that need of the students. That was my goal on that. And I think that if the class is going to continue next year and I think it is going to be taught to journalism students I think it would be great to have a lecture or a couple of lectures addressing how to bring all these issues in and address them in the context of Environmental Journalism and that would be an appropriate place for more readings and more material on the field of Environmental Journalism.

Question 5:   How do you experience the input of the students?

Answer: In terms of my observations from the video conferences I think an important aspect of distant learning that I am just learning myself is the logistics of how do you set up a conference call so that everybody is engaged. It can be a very difficult thing to do and so to be honest I think the technology and circumstances has prevented optimal input from the students or limited the potential of some student

input. Because I do think if we were all sitting face to face in a classroom and had more time there would be a lot more input from a greater number of the students at the table. What was interesting to me was a couple people that felt very comfortable talking would speak often and others didn't speak as much but, and maybe this is relevant to your study, I don't think that is very different at Stanford. I think that if you come into a class at Stanford 74.0% of students would even say that if I don't speak in the first one or two classes, I am shy or very quiet and reserved the rest of the entire course, where as if I become someone who is known as speaking and more likely to participate and engage later. So I have been trying to reflect on the video conferencing and think if the level of participation and observations I made were due to technology or whether that's a natural process in a classroom that one or two students kind of take a lead and other students observe and more take it in. When I think of my experiences at Stanford I do think without real close attention to engaging every student, that's usually what happens. So in terms of the video conferences I would say that I think for next year, and this is something that I'm very interested in general academia, is how do you bring everybody into the conversation. I think that would be worth the Stanford team and the TUT team sitting together and talking about how we can improve video conferences so that we are really engaging everybody.

I do want to comment also on the energy and interest from the students. That is one thing that being in the United States has always been frustrating is that a lot of times the people here in the United States take education for granted. And that is one thing that I like about working in the rural areas, East Africa for example, as well is this desire to learn and being exposed to many things. It's not an everyday day occasion, in the rural areas there is less education, there is less opportunities to experience new things and so their appreciation is so much greater. And just the students in this class, reading their papers and looking at the video conferences, their interest and real desire to learn about these environmental issues was really visible.

Question 6:   Is recycling import in California?

Answer: To give you a little background about New York City, when I was living in New York City in 2002, the mayor of New York City, completely got rid of recycling because it cost more money to recycle than to process recycling. He didn't see that as a worthy investment where as some people say this is an important investment we are making into our future. He said that in the short term it is not in the budget. So he just cancelled our recycling programs so NYC, the largest city probably creates the most wasting. It is interesting that California is definitely a different culture and a different place than the United States. So when you are looking at your research I would even think about that, because California is much more progressive in terms of trying new things. I think you will probably see a lot more progressive forms of education or attitudes about education here than you will at a more conservative institution like Princeton and Harvard. In terms of separate types of recycling in California it is not even a question, everybody here is very in tune with the environment and very in tune with recycling where as you can go to New York and you don't see that same commitment or culture.

Annexe H

Focus-group interview: Friday June 9, 2006 at Telematic Education, Tshwane University of Technology

Participant observer:

I want to welcome you here – it's our final session and I think it went very well, I don't know what you think? I would like to welcome the facilitator here today. He is our facilitator for this session and you will be in his hands completely and also welcome to the technical assistant over there. She is responsible for all the video clips. I am really grateful that they could be here to help us out this afternoon. Please feel free to say whatever is on your mind.

Facilitator:

I don't know if you know that we have a focus group about your programme? If you look on the piece of paper in front of you, you will see what we really would try to find out tonight. Just for your information the camera there is really just to record what it is what you are saying. Have a look at the camera – now it's there and now just forget about it. What I've done is I have given you each two pieces of paper, one with your name on it and the other one without your name and it's got the same question on it. The reason why I am doing that is to know what are your perceptions of the programme?

The reason why I am doing that is just so that you can drop down thoughts, while you are busy chatting. I would like to have those papers back when you are done. Just as a record for myself. So if there is something that you want to say, anonymously, you can do it on the one without your names. If you want to say it on record use the paper with your name on it, otherwise on the one without your name on it. I just want to give you the choice.

Also then on your WebCT6 Course, I've put a survey on there, it's like a little test. You could also down post stuff – with the same question again – if you want to say it there. Make your choice – the one with your name or anonymously. You see with that survey I give you the opportunity to write in your name, but if you don't write in your name it is an anonymous survey. Then we don't know who said what or anything.

Ok I'm going to start. What I'll do – we are going to start from a basic question – what are your perceptions of the programme? What you need to say is your thoughts of your experiences of this programme since you started. Then I will ask some volunteers to think and just to tell us what is the first thing if you think of this programme. I will give you a minute.

Students:

- I don't think the workload was that heavy!
- I am glad you didn't!
- The problem I had with the workload is that the assignments were posted about two days before it was due. That gave us just too little research time.
- Especially if you work during the day and the high speed Internet connection that you need to get all the information at work, then you cannot scamp off your work and do your study there.
- I am studying at Unisa – they've got a myUnisa online – if you do Unisa subjects, they've got all the modules and all the assignments at the beginning of the year already posted so that you know how to space everything through the year. It was different with the TUT one.
- I don't think the research might have taken us some time, but talking about a 600 word assignment really was not a lot of work. I think if maybe the questions were posted a bit before the time it would be better, because I mean there will obviously be a couple of days that you might have not logged on to WebCT6 and have a look at it and suddenly you do and then you see there that an assignment is due and you have to do it today or tonight. Sometimes there is no assignment so you are wondering if it has been updated or is something wrong with the system, but I think doing a 600 words assignment is really not that tough – it's very easy to do and it is very quick. The thing that takes the time is the research. So you kind of need access to quite a good Internet connection in order to do that effectively.
- Not only an Internet connection at work but at home as well.
- The time is in the research.
- A good idea is as soon as we can do this assignment, you should get a sms note or get an email, because everyone is looking at their emails everyday and if there is a note that says there is an assignment, go to WebCT6, everyone will go.
- Or phone, I mean we have all got the same phones.
- What is cool though is that the Internet is on the phones, it is wireless and that's quite fast.
- If WebCT6 does not work that's a problem.
- We've got to download all the Java software and stuff to get it to work.
- Assignment 5 was posted early and we think – yes it was posted early, and then I started doing research on it immediately on that and then we don't logon – we think ok we've got Assignment 5 and when we logon, we see oh, it's been changed. And then you have to start all over.
- I think that happened last week – Assignment 5 and everyone thought Assignment 5 is it. We got back on and there was two more.
- It wasn't that bad, because I mean we all did the assignment. We all coped and it wasn't that hectic anyway. Retrospectively of course.
- I did not do all the assignments.

- Then it also depends on your Internet access, because for me most of the research is done on the Internet. You don't even go to the libraries anymore to look for the books, so it's like someone said, we've been working all day, you can't sit there and do research during work hours, because there is no time. So every time I had to stay after work and do the research – to do the assignment, everything had to be done after work, my only Internet access is at work. I don't have Internet at home. That was also a problem.
- I've got two subjects on WebCT6, one is Mass Communication and the other one Environmental Studies. The Environmental Studies takes up to one minute to load on the modem, where as Mass Communication takes only twenty seconds.
- It is because of that big picture of the buffalo.

Participant observer:

If you would like to substitute the picture of the buffalo, what would you choose?

Students:

- Nothing – just a plain background.
- Simple pattern, but not the image.
- The smaller the files the better.

Students:

- I don't think that WebCT6 anyway was designed for broad banding. You know you logon with a dialogue – that really takes long – and then you have all these sort of other things slowing it down.
- To just keep checking for the system.
- What is that thing that you need the Java for? I don't understand that.
- I think the whole programme is built on Java.
- Can't they use the cobalt programme?
- No, Java, that's why we can't logon with our i-mates because it's not Java enabled.
- What does Java roam time do?
- It makes the Java work.
- I think a great thing will be that if it did not work on WebCT6, if it was possible for future reference, not to use WebCT6 as a platform, but maybe just a normal FTP site or a normal website where you can actually use your i-mate for logging on.

Just sort of integratable, because we have to use one computer with a fast Internet connection to logon to WebCT6 and then you got your PDA, which can't logon to WebCT6 and then you can't integrate your email, because WebCT6 has got its own email – everything is a bit of staggered and fragmented.

Facilitator:

Tell me something about the relevance of the course to your work?

Students:

- I think it was pretty relevant.
- I am using it at the moment. I am working for an online website and we've got to go around and do stories about mine tenders and municipalities involved with the mining activities and everything and that's very relevant.
- Living in South Africa, we deal with a lot of environmental issues which ties in with health, which is also quite a touchy subject. So it's very relevant.
- I think regardless of whether you are actually working on an environmental beat or anything, the environment has to do with your job.
- This allows you to think about it. You think about so many other effects that a certain thing can have.
- When you read something you don't just take it at face value. Because personally I would say, most of us didn't care. But you know that is the way that we talk – it's the way we are doing it – that makes you think about it. This course really got us thinking more. Then it changes your perspective on the course. You see things in a very different light when you begin to write something.
- It was interesting to see or find out that in some cases no one stayed grouped or showed any responsibility where development and things were taking place.
- Like yesterday when I did housing, budget keeping and they didn't take the environment into account. So because I am doing this course, I thought about it. I asked the MEC and she answered me. It was a so-so answer but no one thought about it. That's where I was, a bit ahead.
- Currently I am with the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), you know I am based within that communication. I've just started and most of the things that come out you know, they all have these things and also I am asking a lot of questions. What does the industry do to protect the environment? Do you have a sort of policy within in the DTI that needs to regulate things? It's very interesting and challenging.

Facilitator:

How did the whole thing work with the fact that part of the course is presented from here and part of it was presented from Stanford. How did you experience that?

Student:

- The communication was that Assignment 5 was posted by the Stanford people. They posted their Assignment 5 and the Head: Journalism Department of TUT   then said, no ways this was supposed to be ours. That was a communication problem for us.
- But apart from that emailing the first teaching assistant who sort of oversized our assignments and marked it and everything, she was very punctual and she always got back to you very quick. I don't think there was any flaw in actually communicating with them, because they're in the States and I don't think that was a problem at all. One thing I was thinking of is that a sort of broadband wireless and stuff – you can actually watch television on your cell phone and that's actually great with something like this. I don't know of these are sort of broadband wireless enabled, but so if you can watch television on your cell phone, you will be able to sort of just get a direct feed from wherever. You know if they are, as opposed to then being able to eliminate computers, because not needing to get the CD and put in the CD to watch the lecturer, you can just actually watch it on your PDA, download it from a site, because the broadband like that is available as well.
- The World Bank Foreign Trade audio clips were great.
- Sorry I just want to ask, did anyone put an attachment with video parts or anything to their assignment?
- I did.
- I did not find that there was a real opportunity to use the technology, really, unless you go out of your way and you found a video clip or so.

Facilitator:

Will you say technology is only PDA technology?

Students:

- This was given to us to take video footage – or so – well of something happening. I tried to use it one day. There is a ferro-chrome mine close to us and they had a lot of air pollution**.** So I took the video option and I tried to record and the thing is that the texture of the pixels doesn't capture the air pollution. So I think it did not help.

Facilitator:

What applications did you actually find with your PDAs – something that you could actually use it for?

Students:

- Contacts.
- Practical Journalism.
- At the end of the day I didn't do really anything until I get something to do, so it was like an extra thing to carry around, in my case.
- I think they will – I think there are lots of stuff that you can do with the i-mate definitely and especially with this course, but and I think it would have been much more easier if we can logon to WebCT6 and via these and set them up to get our email which is directly concerned with the course – and we could download maybe video or music or audio files and things to use with these things and maybe if the assignments where geared. I saw the last assignment we had to do, which was for last night gave us the option – either you must write it as a 300 word editorial or you can just record yourself saying the same thing in about the same words, which is great and which you can do totally. But then also there is no way to submit it via the i-mate on to WebCT6. You have to connect the i-mate to your computer, download a file and upload it via your computer on to WebCT6. As opposed to just have to send it on the i-mate directly to the website.
- I think especially one thought that would be great if it was in a more simple website, was the foreign function. Because that way right from the i-mate we could have some of discussion forum on the latest readings or on the latest assignments. So integrating the phone.
- Then it will definitely become more useful. It is not a redundant thing, it can definitely work, I think there is so much stuff that you can use. You can even like integrate, properly the calendar with all of these assignments, when they are due, when you have to do the readings. It can just totally organise the whole course. It just needs to be integrated and set up to accommodate that.
- It took me about a month to get use to the i-mate. Of all the functions and everything.
- After a while it becomes second nature, but it takes a while for me.

Facilitator:

It is interesting when I hear you speak, I mean you're actually integrating the fact that you are using technology into the course itself that become an integral part of the course it seems like.

Student:

- What the i-mate?

Facilitator:

It's almost like you I don't want to say you wouldn't be able to do the course without technology, but you are looking for ways to use technology, or take technology into your learning experience.

Students:

- Yes, definitely, I mean you've got the i-mate – it would have been nice to be able to use it as much as you can. I think the course could have been set up to use it a lot better, because like I said I think there was only that one last assignment that gave us the option to this or that, but then that already, like I said again could help us a lot more, sort of logistical issues about then getting the video clip action to be uploaded on WebCT6.
- Maybe just from the cell phone, the i-mate. It is that the Internet feed is a bit really too slow.
- I didn't think it was slow.
- It wasn't up to standard.
- Like if I had to open up a Yahoo mail – just to check my emails it was way too slow.
- Mine was fast.
- Mine was quite fast.
- Mine was fast as well.
- I think it depends on your connection.
- Because I am out there at Hartebeespoort Dam so maybe that was the problem.
- When I am here it works perfectly, but if I am in Nelspruit, then I have problems.
- I never thought of that.

Facilitator:

What is it that the Americans brought to the course?

Students:

- There was this one thing that we call the SEJ, Society of Environmental Journalists. They are like bombarding us with emails.
- I only got this one email.

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- Be glad!

- I only got that package thing today and I thought they talk about all these emails and I was feeling quite hurt, you know.

- It is interesting to see that there is such a movement in America and the fact that there is on a daily basis new emails about new subjects, air pollution seems like a natural gas or whatever.

- They discuss it constantly.

- They are almost like an Environmental Journalist. You can join in, in what they make. It is valuable.

- Their expertise was exposed to us.

- I don't read every single email, but sometimes there are valuable things.

- I think that was their idea with this – that we can logon to some of the websites. You can actually go on to clips, video clips and photographs and just postings that normal people from the field submit on to this website. I think that was kind of a great idea if I can from heaven knows where, see a polluted dam or something.

- I am going to shut up now, I am not going to say anything anymore.

- I just admit that whatever – if I can take a video clip right now and submit it – and someone else can be able to access that information – it's like a small community of environmental journalists. I think because of the technology, problems we have been experiencing there hasn't been quite a practical option.

- If they can take our assignments and send it to SEJ to read some of our stuff as South Africans, because we have got quite a bit of writing that we are doing ourselves.

- But you can submit it yourself.

- I was just thinking that if Stanford can take some of the best writings and say that is from the South Africans – these are their issues.

- Also under normal circumstances I don't think we would have had the opportunity to work with the University of Stanford. It has opened the possibility of great opportunities. I mean, I know a lot of us enquired as to do post-graduate studies with them – doing a fellowship and those kind of things. I don't think under normal circumstances any of us would have thought of Stanford and to study there. That really helps.

- One thing I felt is that sometimes I got like praised in my assignments and that is so fantastic and the feedback was fantastic, but it was often a week when I had given nothing to that assignment, to be honest. And I think this is so great and I love the way you angled this and that – honestly they are easy on us.

- And you get 95% for the assignment.

- Maybe they're too easy on us.

- Definitely.

- I think that the assignments they gave us to do were great. They were right on the money, but I think a way too lenient when it comes to marking. You shouldn't be averaging 95% for a course, especially

when it comes to Stanford who is one of the top universities in the world. Here I don't think I have ever gotten 95% for an assignment. If you really work hard for an assignment, you should be getting 75-80%. That's an A. Getting 95% for an assignment you must have been a genius.

- Maybe you are a genius.
- It feels in general if this course is very heavy on quantity, but not on quality.
- We did not hand in crap, but we did not hand in stuff that is 95% worth.
- What about those many assignments that they also added to the work load, because we did that many assignments that not had been marked.
- The bio-sphere things hadn't been graded.
- I thought that was like quite hard work to get that assignment together. It was not only a little bit of research.
- I only want to say one thing about the assignments. I found especially the last three assignments – I mean the one question itself was actually 160 words. It is about nine different points they want us to address in 600 words. I really struggled with that – maybe I can't keep my thoughts concise enough. It's a bit jumping around – it doesn't flow enough.
- The first assignment from the UP guest lecturer was impossible for me.
- The bio-sphere type of thing? It was very un-understandable.
- Because the whole text that we were supposed to read was a summary already. How do you summarise on a summary?
- But another thing just adding on like the assignment we had to do for yesterday, like critically discuss a future policy issue for South Africa, involve all the major stakeholders – what their viewpoints are? What your viewpoints are and what the outcome is? 250 – 300 words?
- You have to pick as broad as possible an environmental situation and you can't get to an argument, let alone develop it and conclude it.
- Yes, you can't.

Facilitator:

Something that I am not too sure about is, were there some of the Stanford students that do the same course?

Students:

- I think a Consulting Associate Professor said something about students doing the same questions or some of the same questions.
- I think it is based on the same work, but I don't think they did it simultaneously.

Facilitator:

Do you think that could add to the experience if they have contact with it?

Students:

- They didn't make a lot of these assignments sort of very local or they are trying to. So that's not really going to help. If you localise in the content – there is nothing to discuss with. If I talk about the pollution in the Hartebeestpoort Dam, someone of Stanford is not going to give a damn about what I am talking about, because they will do their local specific issues.
- But the Russians can talk about their ice caps melting.
- It gives you insight into the problems that they are facing, it opens up your world. So they are going to see what we are facing.

Facilitator:

I am just specifically thinking about that going to be a cross-cultural interchange – so we want to expect to have kind of a cross-cultural interchange.

Students:

- Let us take some of their solutions from the discussions.
- Or otherwise the assignments should have been localised.
- You can localise the assignments, but the problem that they face – the solutions that they use – they could learn from us.
- Even if there might be different case studies – like general point solutions, policy making decisions – it stays the same.
- Tackle it the same way – educate the community.

Facilitator:

I was wondering what it is that they brought to the table, that the Americans brought to the table?

Students:

- I think that the CD lectures were really interesting.
- Very well prepared.

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E-learning Initiative in South Africa (ELISA)

- Very well presented.
- It was great.
- Good lecturer.
- And you feel as if you were actually in a class – because there are people there and they are making comments and things that like. It is very helpful.
- I am not quite sure how advanced the departments are in a university in South Africa with regard to things like that. I am not speaking you know of any other supporting my point of view, I might be wrong, but I don't think we will be able to deliver a course with sort of such specialisation, because I mean, what was his name – the Stanford course author – he really knows what he is talking about and he has years and years of experience – and I don't think the environmental issues have actually been that mainstream in this country as an academic and developing sort of background. I am sure some universities might have a department and I am sure that they might be pretty on board with everything, but he was very good. All the lecturers, all the video lecturers that we've had were great as well.
- I mean sitting in front of my computer going through the CD lectures – it feels like it's your lecturer and you're in class and you can pause.
- We actually learn a lot better.
- You could have a cigarette while you are listening.
- You can stop to make some coffee, or watch your favourite soapy – it's like you are seeing the material, you are hearing it, you have got the notes popping up in front of you all the time, reinforcing the learning process.
- It was a huge learning process.
- That's great – yes.
- What is not good is that you can't ask questions or bring up a point.
- I don't think that's too crucial. I think that we pretty much get the gist of it.
- This is a system where we say that this is week one's lecture and then at the end of the week, we should be able to go to a forum and put our own points and debates on the table.
- If it's not going to count any points, who are going to do it?
- Then we will be able to tackle our assignments better.
- I think it is being interesting as well.
- And after each one we have a discussion about it, we talk about it.
- One becomes much more aware of the reporting in newspapers.
- You do.
- For general interest sake, I mean those lectures – you see the lecturer and everything – you don't need the direct correspondence. Maybe it's like being passive in a class – you have the opportunity to ask your own questions. If you do have a question, it's pretty well covered.

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Facilitator:

To what extent do you use WebCT6 to communicate with the facilitators overseas, use bulletins, the bulletin boards, email on WebCT6?

Students:

- There are about 15 messages. You've got a default topic and then people started talking about something and other people started talking about things.
- I only posted about two or three messages.
- I never knew where to go. If you want to address the first teaching assistant, you don't know if the default was on – I am not technology literate, user friendly things attract me. So to use a thing like WebCT6 is not easy. If they have a point where they say post to – I think what will make it much easier is that it should be more user friendly.
- The headings of the separate discussion topics.
- The basic format of a forum basically on the Internet has that certain area, where you can see each message sort of in a tabled form and who posted last, and maybe this has to be this week's lecture and post your comments here on that, in a more interactive user friendly way. You know people just posted all over the show on different forums.
- I think it all comes down to WebCT6, because like I actually emailed the first teaching assistant on one or two occasions. I didn't use my email on WebCT6, I used my personal email to do that. It was just such a hassle to get in there and to get past the buffalo and then you have to logon and then you have to get to the email and then you have to write the email, because you put in her name – like it says in WebCT6 – it's just so much easier to get into my own email and send it to her.
- The one time I emailed her from WebCT6, I never got a response. So don't know if there was something wrong with it.
- I don't think she got it, because I tried to email and then it's like you can't get into the email, you have got to put in her name. And then I thought ok put in her name and her surname or her initial and her surname or the surname and the initial, because you tried once and it doesn't work, because it's very sort of case and character sensitive. You have to input the data perfectly before you can send the message.
- I'll send all my data through my personal email.
- I still cannot use the WebCT6, because at one time I tried to post and it said something… something expired, and my work was gone.
- I had my whole assignment typed and something happened, we logged off and everything was just gone.
- I had to redo my first assignment three times – because of that.

- You know typing it – just attached it – it also did not work.
- The attachment worked for me quite well, I managed to do it like that all the way through.
- It worked for me quite well, I actually worked like that.
- Copy and paste that's fine – if you didn't know it was your first assignment – then you're going to redo it.
- I had a cross as well. I tried to post it and someone else's and mine crossed and I couldn't post it.
- I also got someone else's on the first assignment.
- You know what the problem might be, because at the bottom it says like type of assignment and it's always individual and when you post it, it's says group. So she was the first one who posted it as an individual assignment and it takes it as posted like a whole group of assignments. Then it was rectified a couple of days afterwards.
- After that I have just emailed everything.
- I think the biggest thing is to try and cut WebCT6 out of this.
- Whatever the system and whatever the Internet system you are going to use, be compatible with the i-mate, because that will make it a lot easier.
- The i-mate in general and lots of these things are made for America and Europe, where most people use broadband and you come here with dial up and you just sit there for ages – it just has to be something that you can use more simply.
- I like it that you have a website where you can go to and check your things and see where you're assignments are.
- Especially on the PDA though.
- I went to Cape Town – I couldn't access WebCT6 at all – not in Internet Café's also. It says the WebCT6 is not accessible and the Java thing and everything.
- I think it's the language that the website is written in. Every time I sat at a different computer, because I sat anywhere I could not open it on that computer. You have to download it.
- Normal HTML or something like that.

Facilitator:

Did you guys manage to open all the other files and stuff that wasn't on WebCT6?

Students:

- Not on WebCT6.
- Yes.
- If you went to WebCT6 I got a "this page cannot be displayed" message.

- You sit there for half an hour while it downloads and we trust that it will be downloaded and then it says: "Not displayed".

Facilitator:

Some closing comments perhaps?

Students:

- I think it was a great course. It was very interesting. I thought the Americans were great and they brought a lot to the table and I thought that the PDAs were great, they were convenient, they weren't use to their full potential. I think they could be used to their full potential, but that requires not using WebCT6. So in being able to access everything that you need just on a normal Internet HTML site so you can access from your PDA. It will be even greater, if you have got a phone with a better processor, so you can even watch all the videos and all the lectures on the phone as well. So just having integrating all of the stuff and just having it on your phone and not sort of have a separate email address for WebCT6 and a separate address to download this. That was fine and it was great and amazing and I really enjoyed the course and the PDA is a really good idea, but you can use it in a lot better ways.
- I think this was a fantastic course – you know the content that you learn that's available is wonderful, but what I find very frustrating and obviously I don't know for the people that are doing their third year now, if they had the same experience, that I found it frustrating that my current schedule – the mass of work and readings and listening to the lectures, I couldn't always get around to everything and I would have loved to – perhaps one can consider spreading it over more than six months, because, I actually feel disappointed that there is a lot of stuff I couldn't get around to see, because with having an assignment almost always every week on top of another very full course and working full time, is just very difficult.
- If I can add something, sorry Michelle hold that thought, one thing is if you can just change it from Friday night due date. Ok say that everything can be accessed from your PDA – make the due date a Sunday night instead of a Friday night – and if you had a Friday and Saturday and Sunday to work it would be better.
- It will be effective if you are working full time and you have got evenings and weekends.
- Even if they posted three assignments – so that you can see what you have to do in a month – doesn't help because you're so busy doing the other ones that by the time you get to the third one you have got a day left. I mean it's a good thought, so that they can give the assignments ahead of time so that you can start thinking about it, but I didn't find it advantageous, because when I got around to do it, I had no time. It was still not easy.
- I suggest that they do the course over a year at least.

- Maybe an assignment every two weeks.
- I don't think that is a good idea.
- Why not?
- I didn't think the workload was too much.
- We do – that's how we experienced it and I think definitely a year.
- The fourth year course load is actually a lot more than the third year course load and maybe that's the difference as well.
- I am a third year student and I also think it's very heavy, because as I said not being able to work on WebCT6 assignments during the day, everything at my home always became late because I was busy with my assignments. It becomes frustrating.
- It also forces you to use Internet as your library, because you cannot touch your library.

Facilitator:

Anything else?

Students:

Thank you

Participant observer:

Thank you so much for attending the course.

Annexe I

Letter of Informed consent

e-Learning Initiative in South Africa
(ELISA)

3 February 2006

Dear Participant

You are invited to participate in a research project aimed at teaching and e-learning between Stanford University, California, United States of America and Tshwane University of Technology, Tshwane, South Africa.

Your participation in this research project is voluntary and confidential. You will not be asked to reveal any information that will allow your identity to be established, unless you are willing to be contacted for individual follow-up interviews. Should you declare yourself willing to participate in an individual interview, confidentially will be guaranteed and you may decide to withdraw at any stage should you wish not to continue with an interview.

Accompanying this letter, is a document explaining your role in the research process.

The results from this study will be used to contribute to the domain of successful cross-cultural education and to contribute to cooperation between Higher Education Institutions.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign this letter as a declaration of your consent, i.e. that you participate in this project willingly and that you understand that you may withdraw from the research project at any time. Participation in this phase of the project does not obligate you to participate in follow-up individual interviews, however, should you decide to participate in follow-up interviews your participation is still voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Under no circumstances will the identity of interview participants be made known to any parties/organisations that may be involved in the research process and/or which has some form of power over the participants.

Participant's signature……………………………..............: Date: …………………………………

Researcher's signature…………………………………..: Date:…………………………………..

Yours sincerely

Researcher

Request to Whitehead Foundation

	9/1/05-8/31/06	9/1/05-8/31/07	9/1/07 8/31/08
Stanford University	**42,205**	**54,154**	**63,407**
Faculty PI – 2%	2,000	2,060	2,122
Project Director – 10%	7,000	7,210	7,426
Fringe benefits	3,672	3,782	3,896
Teaching Assistant – 50% (1/ quarter/course)	13,475	27,759	28,591
Research Assistant – 25% (2 quarters/year)	0	0	0
Fringe benefits – Graduate Students @ 3.45%	458	944	972
Office supplies	500	500	500
Telecommunication	500	500	500
Printing/copying	300	300	300
Postage & freight	500	500	500
Working meals	500	500	500
Books & publications	500	500	500
Video conferencing (3 times per semester per course)	700	700	700
International travel			
Conference/site visit travel (2 persons)	8,000		8,000
Stanford Faculty to Pretoria	4,000	8,000	8,000
Indesign Critical Thinking Test	100	100	100
Subcontract – Tshwane University of Technology	**77,190**	**103,493**	**107,350**
Project Director @ 15%	10,500	10,815	11,139
PhD candidate (De Swardt @ 2 semesters UP)	15,000	15,450	15,914
PhD candidate (TUT student @ 2 semesters)	15,000	15,450	15,914
TUT Instructor honorarium – P Diederichs ($1000 per course)	1,000	2,000	2,000
Benefits rate @ 25%	10,375	10,929	11,242
Mobile phones – TUT Telematic education ($200 per phone for 20 students)	4,000		
Phone provider – TUT Telematic Education ($80/mos For 20 students for 5 mos)		8,000	8,000
Office supplies	750	750	750
Telecommunication	500	500	500
Printing/copying	300	300	300
Postage & freight	500	500	500
Working meals	750	750	750
Books/publications	500	500	500
International travel			
Conference/visits to Stanford (3 persons)		12,000	12,000
Website design & maintenance (if use WebCT6)	**2,000**	**2,000**	**2,000**
Creation of complementary TUT lectures	1,5000	3,000	3,000
TUT indirect cost charge @ 20%	12,865	17,249	17,892

SUBTOTAL	**119,395**	**1647**	**170,757**
Stanford infrastructure charge – 8.5%	10,149	13,400	14,514
TOTAL	**129,544**	**171,047**	**185,271**

Assumes 3% cost rise per year   **485,862**
Assumes increase in course offerings/university participants from one to two over three-year project

E-learning Initiative in South Africa (ELISA)

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