

Report on Partnership between East Carolina University (US)  
and Agostinho Neto University (Angola)  
on Internet Based Global Understanding Course

November 5-10, 2006

Submitted to: Provost and Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, East Carolina University  
Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Outreach, East Carolina University  
Rector, Agostinho Neto University  
US Embassy in Angola  
Department of State, USA  
S & N Pumps  
Dr. Neil Efird, Project Coordinator in Angola

Submitted on: November 13, 2006

Submitted by: Dr. Elmer Poe, East Carolina University  
Dr. Rosina C. Chia, East Carolina University

**Objectives:**

1. To establish a partnership between East Carolina University (ECU) and Agostinho Neto University (UAN) in Luanda, Angola, that will offer a joint Global Understanding course via internet based real-time, audio/video, and supporting collaborative tools.

2. Specifically to:

- install, demonstrate and test the videoconferencing technology and chat technology at UAN
- mentor UAN faculty and support personnel in the pedagogy of teaching a seminar style international cultures course
- talk to senior level administrators, teachers, and students about this course and about opportunities in other areas of cooperation
- test link from UAN to ECU
- explain the project to US Embassy in Angola and solicit their continuous support for this partnership in the future
- discuss areas of mutual interest that may lead to lecture exchange and course sharing

**Outcomes of Visit:**

- We arrived on November 5, Sunday and Monday we met with Dr. Neil Efird, Project Coordinator who obtained the grant from S & N to purchase 15 new computers and high speed internet connectivity for this project, Ms. Aida Pegado, Director of International Affairs at UAN and who has worked very hard on this project in the last 6 months, the Vice Rector in charge of all academic programs, Dean Joao Manuel, Deputy Dean Ndonga Mfuwa, lead teacher Dr. Victor Morais, and two tech support faculty Mr. Yanoski Delgado and Mr. Roberto Jimenez. All parties at UAN showed great enthusiasm for this partnership and expressed willingness to offer concrete support to this partnership by having the lead teacher and the tech support person present in every class to ensure the

class goes on smoothly. We are very encouraged by the degree of support pledged by UAN administrators and faculty at all levels.

- On the same day we made a courtesy call to the US Embassy in Luanda and were received warmly by the Ambassador. She strongly supports this partnership saying that this is the bridge that will lead to cooperation and collaboration through trust and understanding between the future leaders of the two countries. We also met Ms. Alice Beirao Educational Advisor at the Embassy who was exceptionally helpful in advocating our project and in coming up with locally feasible solutions. Alice's dedication to the education of Angolan students was apparent and she will continue to be essential to the success of this project.
- We went to the computer lab at ANU which had been specially set up for this course. Prior to the visit, the 15 new computers were delivered and high speed internet connectivity (512K) was contracted with NCR. The two Engineering Professors at ANU were very helpful in installing the computers and chat software to be used specifically for this project. The lab, furniture, and computers were all quite adequate for the conduct of this course but unfortunately, the required 256K bandwidth promised by the local ISP, NCR, was not available. We tested several times during our stay over a period of 4 days, and the bandwidth averaged 24K with momentary fluctuations between 3K to 161K. The video conferencing equipment and software were installed but we were not able to test the video link between ANU and ECU. Even our backup audio service, Skype, which requires only 28K could not maintain a connection to ECU for more than a few minutes at a time. Dr. Poe, Mr. and Mrs. Draper from S&K Pumps, Coordinator Dr. Neil Efird, as well as the administration at UAN discussed the matters thoroughly and several possible solutions were suggested. Deputy Dean Ndonga Mfuwa emphatically confirmed he will do everything he can to make the video link a possibility as soon as possible so we can start test linking before classes begin next March. .
- We spent one and a half days going over all the details of the course with lead teacher Dr. Morais and the two tech support faculty, Yanoski and Roberto. They were energetic and competent and we have full confidence they can carry out the course successfully once the bandwidth problem is resolved. Resolution of that problem will have to be handled at higher levels in the university community.
- A presentation was made by the visiting team to a larger group of ANU students and some interested faculty to explain the nature of this course and how ANU students can be linked virtually with our other 17 global partners at no cost to the students. We also talked about potential future expansion of the project into other specific disciplines.
- The UAN/ECU partnership was officially launched on November 9 at the auditorium of UAN. Key members present include: Rector Teta, Dean Manuel and Director Pegado from UAN, Drs. Elmer Poe and Rosina C. Chia from East Carolina University, the US Ambassador, donors Mr. and Mrs. Draper from S&N Pumps, and Coordinator Dr. Neil Efird. An official agreement was signed by these parties. The ceremony culminated in the Ambassador holding the ECU banner with several UAN students and the crowd broke out in roaring applause.
- At the subsequent reception held in the Ambassador's house, many suggestions were made to resolving the bandwidth problem. Other strategies were decided to get things moving and keep the momentum before UAN classes begin next March. Strategies include: students going to the Embassy for English enhancement; ECU sending over a

CD of an ECU faculty lecture on ethnology to help students learn how to obtain information from observing and working with others, and a follow-up lab led by an ECU faculty.

- With strong endorsement and enthusiasm from the Rector to the International Director, the Dean, the designated teaching team, and the interested students on the part of UAN, the reconfirming support of the US Embassy, we feel the bandwidth problem will be resolved and a successful partnership can start next Spring as originally planned

Special thanks are extended to Mr. and Mrs. Draper from S&N Pumps who gave the grant to make this partnership possible. Great appreciation is expressed to Dr. Neil Efird who worked tirelessly, seeking the grant and coordinating the implementation of the project.