

## **Sustainable Tourism Pedagogy and Student Community Collaboration: Developing Core Literacies and Reflective Practice**

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### **Introduction**

There have been increasing calls to move away from the traditional disciplinary structures and research, teaching and learning approaches that have tended to ‘tunnel’ student learning and reinforce particular worldviews towards new forms of post-disciplinary social science (e.g. Tribe 1997; Gretzel, Jamal, Stronza & Nepal 2008). These calls have been underpinned by a need to adopt more creative and flexible approaches to investigating problems, and a more tolerant approach to the forms of knowledge that different groups can contribute to problem solving. Tourism, as a multi-sectoral and transdisciplinary phenomenon, has struggled to carve out its scholarly territory and produce a coherent body of work that might achieve disciplinary status (Etchner & Jamal, 1997; Tribe, 1997; 2004). Indeed, Coles, Hall and Duval (2006) argue that the search for disciplinary status should not be the focus of discussions but that tourism, as part of a much larger social, economic, environmental and political system, requires deeper transdisciplinary understandings; i.e. disciplinary status is not as important. An important contribution of these debates is to highlight the challenges to teachers and students of tourism who seek to unpack sustainability issues that transcend disciplinary and sectoral boundaries, and to fashion a curriculum that delivers such rich learning opportunities.

In the field of tourism, curricula and teaching and learning approaches are continuing to evolve (see, for instance, McIntosh, 1983; Van Weenen and Shafer, 1983; Jovicic, 1988; Tribe, 1997; Leiper, 2000). Indeed, the political, economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions of tourism, and the different ways that tourism can be conceptualized (i.e. as an activity, an experience, an industry, a political problem, a cultural dilemma, a resource challenge, a social justice issue and so on) make sustainable tourism a multi-faceted, dialectical concept and a challenging topic of instruction and study (Gunn 1998). In the growing body of tourism pedagogy, the value of learning experiences built around investigations of complex empirical problems embedded in rich contexts is increasingly recognized (Francis & Cowan, 2008). Here, the importance of encouraging students to understand, appreciate and apply the concept of sustainability within a tourism context presents educators with a range of institutional, pedagogical,

resource and other challenges that are only just beginning to be unpacked (Jamal, 2005; Jurowski, 2002).

Consideration about what to teach has often overshadowed how to teach (Stergiou, Airey & Riley, 2008; Tribe, 2002). Whilst we see the two concerns as inextricably related, our aim in this paper is to give consideration to the practice of teaching and learning, and how the two concerns might be balanced within a holistic teaching approach wherein students are encouraged to develop and apply knowledge and the human qualities and dispositions required to work collaboratively within complex tourism settings. In this paper, a collaborative community-based approach to teaching sustainable tourism is outlined and discussed in terms of the contributions it made to trans-disciplinary student learning. A discussion of student experiences demonstrates that the approach provided a useful vehicle for student learning. Importantly, the paper also contributes to the scholarship of sustainable tourism education by reflecting instructor experiences gained in class and through academic-student-community collaboration.

### **Sustainable tourism education: Teaching what students need to practice**

The challenges of sustainable tourism planning and management are well covered in the literature as evidenced by over 30 years of literature dealing with its application in various geographic, political, social, cultural and economic contexts. However, only recently has the challenge of designing and delivering learning experiences that prepare students for operating in the 'real world' of sustainable tourism planning and management received attention (Jurowski, 2002; Stergiou et al., 2008). This attention has been driven by two main factors: (1) global dialogues about the future of tourism and hospitality education (and related discussions about curricula, graduate attributes and core competencies); and (2) calls for graduating students to have the knowledge, skills, values and capacities necessary to operate effectively and to grow as ethical, deliberative and philosophic practitioners. These factors have focused increasing attention on the importance of teaching and learning practices (Inui & Lankford, 2006; Jamal, 2005; Tribe, 2002).

Consideration of two basic questions 'What is to be taught?' and 'How is it to be taught?' are central concerns in any discussion of sustainable tourism pedagogy (Stergiou et al., 2008). As a field of study, tourism has traditionally been influenced by its vocational origins, and tourism education has tended to focus on delivering instrumental, technical knowledge. However, as knowledge about sustainable tourism expands beyond what is possible to deliver in a single academic unit, or even a program of study, it has become more important to consider not only the type of knowledge being delivered but *how* that knowledge can be used in practice and processes

of life long learning (Jennings, Scantlebury & Wolfe 2009). Moreover, sustainable tourism is a dialectical goal, dependent upon a range of factors including the context; how the problem is defined; who is involved; the landscapes of power in which problems emerge and solutions are negotiated; knowledge of the range of alternative solutions available; and what might be politically acceptable solutions (Dredge & Jenkins, 2007).

Given this complex operating environment, the challenge of fashioning content that delivers sustainable tourism education requires more than an instrumental approach that transmits technical skills and knowledge. Presenting and discussing key concepts such as sustainable tourism, the tourism planning process, steps in community consultation or typologies of government involvement provide static and technical knowledge. As valuable as these concepts and theories might be, their understanding can be substantially enhanced through application, reflection and community engagement. How sustainable tourism content is taught therefore becomes a critical factor in the learning environment (Stergiou, Airey, & Riley, 2008).

At the same time that there has been increased interest in the content of tourism curricula including sustainable tourism, there has also been calls for equipping students with practical knowledge and adaptive capacities necessary to operate effectively in dynamic, politically charged environments. There are calls for practitioners to harness their reflective capacity (e.g. Schon, 1983; Tribe, 2002; Jennings et al., 2009), for practitioners to be deliberative and operate skillfully within the political and power-laden environment of practice (e.g. Forester, 2000; Stergiou et al., 2008) and to employ the Aristotelian concept of 'phronesis', a type of practical wisdom underpinned by values (Flyvbjerg, 2004; Jamal, 2005). The critical challenge for teachers of sustainable tourism is to create rich learning environments—simulated or actual professional situations—that expose students to the complexity and transdisciplinary nature of sustainable tourism issues and that facilitates the development of reflective and deliberative skills and practical wisdom.

In the teaching and learning literature, different options have been explored for exposing students to practice worlds. Busby (2003) discusses student exposure to sustainability issues via internship opportunities. Crispin and Robinson (2001) argue for greater industry engagement in student learning and career development. Another alternative is found in real-world, applied problem-based learning exercises advocated in field trips (Gretzel et al., 2008). What all these approaches have in common is that they shift the student from passive observer to active engaged learner; they seek to apply theoretical understandings to real world problems; and they encourage critical reflection on what sustainable tourism means in practice.

In the following case study of teaching practice, the instructors sought to embed many of the aforementioned considerations in the redesign and delivery of a sustainable tourism unit. In essence, the course sought to cover a range of content and develop literacies (which we define as being integrated sets of skills and knowledge that are practiced and refined reiteratively) to create reflective, deliberative and ethical practitioners. The core values of sustainable tourism education (1) Ethics; (2) Stewardship; (3) Knowledge; (4) Professionalism; and (5) Mutuality (see TEFI, 2009) underpin the overall approach. However, with regard to the key questions in ‘What is to be taught?’ and ‘How is it to be taught?’ decisions need to be made about how to distill these values and what sort of literacies need to be delivered. These literacies and the foci of this teaching exercise were:

**Technical literacy** – theories, concepts, and frameworks that provide foundational, technical knowledge. Such technical knowledge includes not only information contained in traditional academic sources, but also an appreciation of other forms of knowledge generated by others;

**Analytical literacy** – skills, techniques and personal qualities necessary to critically analyze and evaluate the different forms and value of knowledge;

**Ecological literacy** – in its broadest sense ecological literacy refers to an awareness of the connections between people and their environment, and consequences of decisions and actions upon these relationships. These connections extend beyond ecological relationships to social and cultural connections to built and natural environments;

**Multi-cultural literacy** – An appreciation of the different cultures, values, interests and power relations that exist between stakeholders with an interest in sustainable tourism. Students are encouraged to consider not only the vocal stakeholders, and those with the power and skills to be heard in the process, but also those voices and knowledges that are silent, marginalized or oppressed;

**Policy and political literacy** – Refers to an appreciation for the way in which sustainable tourism is planned and managed, how decisions are made and how implementation occurs. Planning, policy and politics are intertwined, such that students need to build literacies about how policy is made and planning conducted;

**Ethical literacy** – refers to the development of values and ethical positions within students’ thinking, and how these values are exercised as a form of practical wisdom.

### **Case Study Context and Pedagogy**

Community service, extension, regional engagement and information dissemination are increasingly part of the mission statements of many universities across the world eager to foster innovation and regional development (Allison & Eversole, 2008). Academic-community partnerships present important opportunities not only for teaching and learning, but also for community groups who may be under-resourced, may lack expertise and problem-solving capabilities or who may be traditionally marginalized and unable to garner sufficient attention to local problems and issues. In this case study, community service and engagement was both a driver for the pedagogical approach adopted, and academic-student-community partnerships provided the vehicle for unpacking the values and literacies of sustainable tourism education.

A core 'management' course at a recreation, park and tourism department in a land grant university in the U.S. lacked an instructor for Spring 2009. One of the paper's authors was assigned to teach it, oriented towards the instructor's specialization (sustainable tourism and destination management, collaborative planning), and a teaching pedagogy that included case studies, discussion-based seminar, and direct field-based management experiences. Both the instructor and the teaching assistant assigned to this course were trained in sustainable tourism development and planning. Previous offerings of this course did not contain the sustainability or the experiential dimensions added by the authors. This was the first time the instructor and teaching assistant were involved in this course.

Many regional communities and small towns have been marginalized in the drive to establish tourism destinations that are promoted for their special qualities of place. It was considered that greater attention and opportunities for visitors to experience these "missing" stories is needed in places like Texas, where demographics have shifted so that the minority Latino and Black population now comprise over 50% of the population. Moreover, as agriculture and railroad services continue to decline, many rural communities have been seeking to diversify into cultural, heritage and nature-based tourism. The task of redesigning the course was seen as an opportunity to develop academic-student-community partnerships with the intention of providing a two-way learning and information opportunity for students and the community.

The core required course aimed at providing key management principles to a broad range of third or fourth year students. The course contained thirty-eight seniors (mostly final year undergraduates) and two juniors (third year). The two field-based long assignments were carried out by 10 groups of four students. The core literacies outlined above were delivered as shown in

Table 1, through readings (including a management text book), lectures, in-class dialogue, six short reflective assignments, two long field-based assignments plus one long case study.

Table 1. Six core literacies: Delivery mechanisms and pedagogic approaches

| Literacy         | Delivered by   |
|------------------|--|
| Technical        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic planning principles</li> <li>• Sustainable tourism (ST) principles and indicators</li> <li>• Broad sustainable management principles (e.g. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR))</li> <li>• Organizational culture</li> </ul>  |
| Analytical       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proactive inquiry and problem-solving assignments</li> <li>• Critical thinking (through assignments and in-class dialogue)</li> <li>• Assignment reflection (e.g. re-submission of assessments)</li> <li>• Techniques (e.g. SWOT analysis)</li> </ul>   |
| Ecological       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appreciation of human and ecological communities and contexts</li> <li>• Human-place connections and values</li> <li>• Awareness of ‘silent voices’ and marginalised communities</li> </ul>   |
| Multicultural    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guest speakers provided “real world” insights</li> <li>• Community meetings facilitated appreciation of different world views</li> <li>• Direct experience of historic and geographic segregation of black/white populations in local community (field-based long assignment), plus face-to-face discussion and community meeting with diverse stakeholder group (African-American residents in long assignment 3)</li> </ul> |
| Policy/Political | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion of local-global context</li> <li>• Identification and discussion of multiple stakeholders and fragmented tourism domain, need for integrated planning, and addressing power relationships and inequities</li> <li>• Collaborative planning with a local NGO, and meeting with local tourism industry and community partners (field-based long assignments)</li> </ul>  |
| Ethical          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awareness of diversity, honesty, collaboration, and valuing excellence</li> <li>• Group work skills (e.g. teamwork, and group conflict management)</li> <li>• Stewardship and equity in developing diverse heritage and involving those directly related to the cultural heritage in question.</li> </ul>   |

### **Reflective, interactive assignments and interactions**

Weekly readings from the textbook, cases, guest speakers, and newspaper articles provoked analytic literacy including thinking, questions, and discussion. Six short assignments, three long assignments, and a mid-term and final exam comprised the bulk of the grade requirements; bonus points were made available through interactive discussions and writing opportunities. Newspaper articles (specifically, the New York Times on-line) were a useful resource for multi-cultural literacy via interactive discussion, pedagogic learning, and writings focused on local-global travel. The articles were especially helpful in facilitating learning and generating discussion about 'au courant' topics such as the use of social networking sites and twitter by visitors at the internationally attended 'South by Southwest' festival in Austin, Texas.

Short assignments focused on reflective thinking, ethical considerations in relation to sustainability issues and experiential learning. Each short assignment was developed to address or reinforce specific principles and literacies, and enable iterative learning. For instance, one short assignment asked students to reflect on their Spring Break (one week) holiday. The subsequent in-class discussion revealed the need for developing pedagogic tools to bridge the discomfort some students experienced with studying sustainability in class, but not wanting to implement their learning during travel (or at home) or to think about related ethical issues while on holiday. Further reflexive contemplation of the possibilities of separating the in-class "self" from practices in the real world was encouraged through in-class dialogue and subsequent short assignments and bonus assignments. In other words, assignments were stacked to promote reflective iterative learning.

Of the three long assignments, two were field-based assignments with two rural communities in an adjacent county (Robertston County). Due to space constraints, this conference paper focuses on the third long assignment (Assignment 3), related to developing diverse heritage using skills and competencies learned in class, plus employ sustainability principles in problem-solving and exploration of produce development ideas. Assignment 3 revolved around the untold story of a Hall of Fame baseball player, Andrew "Rube" Foster. Twenty-four students attended the field trip to Calvert, Texas, the birthplace of this legendary black baseball hero. The students participated in a community-based meeting, visited a local bed and breakfast (also a historic home), and observed two communities within Calvert: the white and black communities, which are segregated by a railroad track that runs through the middle of town. This academic-student-community collaboration was a "real-world" project, intended to investigate the best location of a proposed cultural marker being developed by the Texas Historic Commission to commemorate "Rube". Future ideas for product development, marketing, and promotion were examined in addition to proposing location(s) for the marker.

The marker location was a problem-solving and inquiry-oriented activity that required analytic, multi-cultural policy and ethical literacy. Where the diverse community of Calvert wanted to place the marker being developed about “Rube”, and how they felt about promoting this story, was part of the exercise. Following principles learned about corporate social responsibility and sustainable tourism (both emphasizing community/societal well-being as a responsibility), planning and decision making had to include an early community meeting involving diverse residents with potentially different values and desires to promote stories set during America’s segregation period.

As baseball is a well-loved, quintessentially American activity, it provided an opportunity for the local community of Calvert to provide visitors with a unique experience of this black baseball hero “Rube”. It also created a similarly constructive venue for the homogenous group of white Texan students in the class to engage actively in information gathering on Rube’s background and activities, inquiry and problem identification, and the key principle of involving key stakeholders early in preliminary dialogue and exploration. The pedagogic hope was that this field-based exercise would reinforce the reflective learning of these principles, including the social responsibility of assisting local communities with tourism-related development, and addressing the problems associated with developing (diverse) cultural heritage (see Smith, 2005).

Close assistance was provided by the main community partner who had suggested this project as mutually beneficial for the students due to the literacies involved and for the community. This individual is a well-respected community leader and was also the Historic Commissioner in the county at the time this class was negotiated. The partner facilitated a community meeting at a local restaurant called The Wooden Spoon. She facilitated the meeting with the help of a PowerPoint presentation, led the students on a tour through the parks and amenities in Calvert and liaised with students on product ideas suggested by the students, suggesting alternative ideas, and providing guidance and information to the students. The partner also informed and involved the local government (including council members) of the collaborative project, put out an information notice in the local Calvert newspaper, and circulated a poster on the community meeting among local businesses with assistance from the Chamber of Commerce.

The project was important as diverse ethnic stories from marginalized populations, including Native American, Chinese-American, and African-American, have historically been excluded or remain poorly researched in Texas. Texas history books are slowly being revised to include these diverse voices and ‘missing stories’. Narratives of “Rube” Foster and similarly important individual accounts of persons from marginalized populations offer great potential to bridge segregation history with the well-loved American recreation of baseball.



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**Student Learning: Field trip and marker recommendations**

The final report by the students was written in two parts. Part 1 summarized the field trip on April 7, 2009, to Calvert which include a tour of the relatively well demarcated ethnic division between the black community and white community (Main Street and the railroad divided the two areas historically), a short background of Calvert, and a recommendation on where to put marker. One group of students noted that:

Calvert is a town that is divided into two different sections, with these sections come many unanswered questions and blurred agendas... Calvert is split into two sections, the affluent or “white” side and the poor or African-American side. There is a controversy at the center of the town (Group I)

The second portion of the final report focused on the field trip to examine the town’s attractions, services and amenities, and attend the community meeting at the Wooden Spoon, a local restaurant. The NGO leader led the students around town and facilitated the meeting as well as a meal at the same restaurant after, so that students could engage in discussion with locals that had stayed behind to talk. Overwhelmingly, students stated they learned new information about a town that is in close proximity to their home but not well-known to the students prior to this assignment.

As one student group observed:

Calvert appeared to be a run-down Texas town that is in need of revitalization. The main attraction to Calvert are the beautiful historic bed and breakfasts located around Virginia Field Park on the east side of town. The bed and breakfasts provide the community with tourists that stay overnight and spend their money within the area. There are two parks located in Calvert. They are Virginia Field Park and Payne Kemp Park. Virginia Field Park is a beautiful park, located on the east side of town. This park is surrounded with live oak trees, tourists, and large plantation homes. Payne Kemp Park is in west side of town and is in the bad area. The economic state in this area is very poor and does not have much to offer the community, other than its use for community members that live near the park. (Group B)

A common thread through all group papers were the students observations of a bed and breakfast tour and discussion provided by a plantation home’s owners on the “White” side of town.

His business is located [not far from] Victoria Park, which is where he believes the marker should be located. He advertised the park as an area where people used to play baseball, however in a later conversation he mentioned that the African Americans were not allowed in that park and would have been forcefully removed from the park. This led us to believe...(Group J)

Finally, students felt the location of the marker could be a point of contention as different opinions were evident among the stakeholders they encountered. The students differed considerably on the placement of the marker. Two groups were unable to come to an internal decision on placement of the marker. All groups provided reasoning for their recommendation on marker placement. Of the ten groups proposing marker locations no student groups recommended placing marker on the “White” side of the tracks. Four student groups argued for placing it on the “Black” side of the tracks. Four student groups suggested placing the marker on Main Street. One group recommended the High School and one group did not offer a final location but gave detailed input for each of the three locations (White and Black sides and Main Street). Reasons were given by students for each, for example:

We believe that the Texas Historical Marker should be placed in a neutral, central location on Main Street. Because we are not sure exactly where “Rube” Foster played when he lived in Calvert, a central location along the dividing line would be best. This location provides access to all citizens of Calvert, as well as the visitors. (Group J)

Although the three possible locations discussed above all have their strengths, the area that is recommended for the marker is near Calvert High School. The high school is a community center of sorts. It is the only high school in the town, and everyone has some stake in it, whether they attend, have a child that attends, or extended family attending. During the community meeting, the idea of building a softball field was strongly voiced. If the field is built to the north of the school, near the existing track, it would give the students the opportunity to play baseball/softball, as well as learn about 'Rube' and his contribution to the sport of baseball. (Group B)

This exercise addressed five of the six literacies noted earlier (ecological literacy was not addressed here), using the problem-solving steps learned in class, as well as sustainable tourism management principles including proactive planning, corporate social responsibility, ethics (including community well-being), and stewardship of natural and cultural resources. The range of locations chosen by the student groups and the rationales for their recommendations, reflect efforts at critical analysis, awareness of political issues, challenges of problem-solving and consensus decision making, as the various groups were divided in their opinions about optimal marker locations.

### **Active learning for product ideas and innovation**

Students learn best when there is/are active participation, teamwork, knowledge construction, goals set by faculty with student input, challenges, a connection to what students feel is real-world

applicable, and when there is opportunity for reflection and improvement (Jennings et al., 2009). Calvert Assignment 3 was designed to maximize learning according to this model. For example, students had direct experience of the issues, stakeholders, historic segregation and current day issues related to developing the “Rube” Foster cultural heritage in Calvert, Texas. They engaged directly with key stakeholders through the community meeting held at a local restaurant frequented by its diverse community, which helped facilitate both appreciation for the planning and development challenges, as well as ideas for marker placement and possible product development. Students also had input in product choice. Each group voted on their chosen “product” with ideas including: a mobile exhibit depicting Rube Foster’s achievement, mural painted on a wall by a local artist showcasing Foster’s baseball history, a brochure, and even a miniature baseball field memorial to Rube Foster. Product ideas proposed included an interpretive poster which was developed by one group and delivered to the NGO facilitator to display at a prominent visitor center in an adjacent community within the county (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Interpretive poster board developed by one student group (Group I)



### **Critical reflections and experiences**

Students were invited to raise concerns, issues, and reflections throughout the semester. In class discussions facilitating reflection on issues, learnings and topics were conducted. Reflections were also requested in the short assignments that were not covered in any detail in this paper. The students were invited to participate in an in-class written reflection on the last day of class (with bonus points offered as an incentive), looking back over the semester, and forward into the future. Forty reflection papers were submitted on the last day of class. They were comprehensive, in-depth, and thoughtful. Questions required contemplating and commenting on the textbook, course

content and learnings, and on skills desired. Lastly, the students were asked to envision their desired career or job position five years hence.

The experiential approach in this class aimed to maximize student learning of various principles and literacies via: active participation, teamwork, knowledge construction, goals set by faculty with student input, a challenging environment, a connection to what students feel is real-world applicable, and timely feedback. As the students also learned, developing and telling the many “missing stories” is a key priority for sustainable tourism planners and destination managers. While many rural communities are not endowed with the financial resources or knowledge required to engage in conservation and development of the diverse cultural heritage present in Texas, academic-community partnerships involving faculty members and students have resulted in the development of historic inventories, business, resident and visitor surveys (on-site and on-line), plus specific products such as a prototype, interactive community website for visitors and residents to share stories of the community’s rich cultural heritage.

However, it is interesting to note that no student mentioned anything about the “Rube” Assignment 3 other than about the time constraints attached to the “Rube” project (which got mobilized a little later than anticipated as various actions had to be initiated by the community). One student mentioned in the final reflection paper that it might have been better to focus on one field assignment and do it in-depth, while another felt more field trips and less in-class work would provide for more effective learning. Engaging students in community-based collaborations for developing diverse heritage, even one with as good a story as that of an American (black) baseball hero, can generate positive information (e.g., product ideas and mobilizing some local attention and participation in discussing the cultural marker and long untold story of Andrew “Rube” Foster). At the same time, such academic-community partnerships clearly require very careful planning and management, guided by sustainable tourism principles, if the experience is to prove mutually beneficial for visitors, students, residents and others who have a “stake” in the cultural heritage.

## **Conclusions**

The aim in this paper was to give consideration to the practice of teaching and learning sustainable tourism, and how the two concerns might be balanced within a holistic teaching approach wherein students are encouraged to develop and apply knowledge and the human qualities and dispositions required to work collaboratively within complex tourism settings. Student reflections suggest that this pedagogic effort developed a range of literacies including technical, analytical,

multicultural, policy/political and ethical literacies and that the students mostly saw these as useful in their future careers.

There were however limitations to this mode of teaching and the academic-student-community collaborative approach. First, community stakeholders were not involved other than via a singular community meeting at which one dozen community members were in attendance. Of the attendees, most did not speak. Some community members who did show up were late, sat in the back of the room, and left early. A couple of the African-American (black) residents spoke up regularly, and appeared well acquainted with Rube's story, through close relatives that had interacted directly with the community. Greater and more direct involvement in the development, marketing and management of Rube's cultural heritage will be needed from the diverse residents.

A second limitation dealt with the further development and implementation of product concepts. The project essentially stayed at the strategy formulation stage, and no follow-up occurred due to time constraints. However, students learned detailed strategic planning principles, problem solving approaches, and implementation/monitoring that will hopefully serve them in their future careers. In addition, this class of predominantly white (Anglo) students holistically faced a difficult aspect of (segregation) history and its effects on Rube Foster's baseball activities, and also engaged in face-to-face encounter with the African-American residents who attended the community meeting at the Wooden Spoon in Calvert. They also grappled with the political issues that arose with respect to marker placement desires as expressed by black and white residents.

From an instructor's perspective however, there are a number of useful reflections worthy of noting. First, this mode of teaching is resource intensive and may not be able to be sustained if class sizes increase and other resourcing is constrained. As it is, pedagogic facility was strained by the class size being unexpectedly doubled from the university-recommended limit of 20 students for a writing-intensive class (that was crammed into a stifling hot and inadequate classroom space). Secondly, the student group was largely a homogenous group of white Texan students. There may be significant challenges to delivery if, for example, the student group was more diverse or was characterized by different learning styles (especially ones that might impede group interaction, discussion and participation in reflective learning).

Finally, while the instructors were trained and have a strong connection to the subject matter of sustainable tourism, and this knowledge and connection contributed to the course's delivery, other challenges including the much larger "writing intensive" class impeded opportunities to maximize learning outcomes. The increasing move towards standardization of courses, larger class sizes, and recipe-style delivery approaches (where any instructor is selected to teach a course and not

necessarily one with an interest in the subject matter), this style of reflective delivery and collaborative approach may not be as successful. However, the case described above indicates that problem-solving and inquiry-based field experiences, as well as critical thinking and reflective learnings are important competencies to foster in tourism pedagogy (also see Jurowski, 2002), and necessary to effectively deliver the framework of six literacies proposed in Table 1. The case study also suggests that further exploration of the role of “appreciative inquiry” (Cooperrider and Whitney, 2005) may offer useful insights in mobilizing inquiry, and facilitating reflective iterative learning and management of political issues and challenging topics (e.g., diverse heritage), as well as understanding the values, principles and competencies related to sustainable tourism education and practice. With increasing budget tightening and pressures to engage in more “entrepreneurship” and service-oriented projects that promote academic standing and visibility, the role of universities as *bridging organizations* (Westley and Vredenburg, 1991) to transfer technology through students and faculty members merits future exploration as well.

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