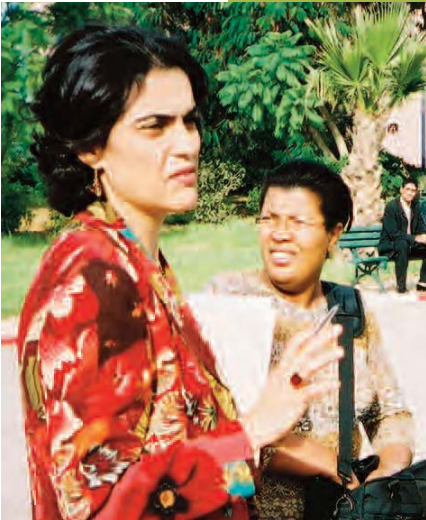


Partners for

# CHANGE

Educators from North Africa  
and Northwest Ohio Join Efforts  
to Promote Journalism Future



**IPSI**  
L'Institut de Presse et des  
Sciences de l'Information  
Université de la Manouba  
Tunis, Tunisie



**BGSU**  
school of communication  
studies  
DEPARTMENT OF JOURNALISM  
Bowling Green State University



By improving  
**journalism education**

we support  
**journalism**

which builds a  
**free + independent media**

and enhances  
**democracy.**



## Program Contacts

Dr. Catherine Cassara    ccassar@bgsu.edu  
Dr. Laura Lengel        lengell@bgsu.edu

School of Communication Studies  
302 West Hall  
Bowling Green State University  
Bowling Green, OH 43403 USA  
Phone +1-419-372-8349  
Fax +1-419-372-0202  
[scs.bgsu.edu/Engagement/MEPI](http://scs.bgsu.edu/Engagement/MEPI)

Cover design by Warmuth Design

*Cover photography courtesy of BGSU*

---

# BGSU-IPSI MEPI Program

## Partners for Change

### Partnership Information

#### Lead Institution

Bowling Green State University (BGSU)  
Bowling Green, Ohio, USA

#### Host Country

Tunisia

#### Host Country Partner Institution

L'Institut de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information (IPSI)  
Université de la Manouba, Tunis, Tunisia

#### Name of U.S. Project Directors

Dr. Catherine Cassara and Dr. Laura Lengel  
School of Communication Studies  
Bowling Green State University

#### Name of Tunisia Project Directors

Dr. Hamida el Bour and Dr. Fatma Azouz,  
L'Institut de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information (IPSI),  
Université de la Manouba

#### Project Dates

January 31, 2005 – September 30, 2006

#### Amount of ALO/HED award

\$100,000

#### Cost share contributions

\$240,000

---

---

# BGSU-IPSI MEPI Program Partners for Change

## Table of Contents

Federal Grant Support	iv
Acknowledgements	iv
Preparation of Report	v
Summary of Program Impact	1
Partners for Change Program Overview	2
Alignment with the MEPI Pillars	3
Educational activities supported by Partners for Change	4
Spin-offs from the partnership: Collaboration, exchange and enrichment	6
Partnership successes lead to other exciting developments	8
Overall impact of Partners for Change	10
Partnership Program Details, Activities and Results	11
Impact of Major Partnership Activities	12
Partnership Educational and Professional Development Outcomes, Activities and Impact	15
Description of Outcomes, Activities and Impact in Each Partners for Change Program Phase	15
Phase I: January 31, 2005 – April 30, 2005	17
Phase II: May 1, 2005 – September 30, 2005	37
Phase III: October 1, 2005 – April 30, 2006	56
Phase IV: May 1, 2006 – September 30, 2006	74
Results of Research and Studies Emerging from Partners for Change	82
Serendipities and unexpected Outcomes of Partners for Change	96
Challenges and Lessons Learned	99
Future Plans	105
Description of Media Coverage of Partnership Activities and Impact	106
Examples of Media Coverage of Partnership Activities and Impact	108
Quantitative Data	109
Appendix I: About MEPI	117
Appendix II: Online and Technology Resources Provided by BGSU	118
Program Contacts	119

---



# BGSU-IPSI MEPI Program

## Partners for Change

### Summary of Program Impact

#### Partnership mission

This journalism and media studies partnership has provided skills building opportunities for students and instructional development opportunities for faculty both at l'Institut de Presse et des Science de l'Information (IPSI), Université de la Manouba, Tunis, Tunisia and Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, Ohio, USA, particularly in the areas of international media and journalism, women and the media, and media and democracy.

#### Educational development impact of major partnership activities

The partnership program has worked with the successor generation of journalists being trained at IPSI, who come not only from Tunis, but also from Algeria, the Palestinian Territories, and elsewhere in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). It builds on the already solid education students receive at IPSI to emphasize the importance of responsible reporting of key public issues — particularly issues relating to women, the environment, and the power of information technology to aid development.

We have provided hands-on experience in the field and practical insights into how the theories about objective and balanced journalism can be applied in real life. One of the most important impacts of the program outcomes is the power of the partnership's educational activities to promote cultural and professional exchange. Students, faculty and administrators at both the U.S. and Tunisian partnership institutions have noted the manner in which program activities have shattered their pre-conceptions about people and cultures of other countries.



IPSI Peer Mentors Khadija Chouika (second from left) and Mehdi Ben Hamza (center) help IPSI faculty members use the BGSU online course delivery program.

The BGSU IPSI Partners for Change program emphasizes the importance of key public issues particularly relating to women, the environment, and the power of information technology to aid development, all key to the Middle East Partnership Initiative.

## Partners for Change Program Overview

For two years educators from Northwest Ohio and North Africa have been working together to enhance journalism education in Tunisia.

The cooperation between the faculty from the School of Communication Studies at Bowling Green State University (BGSU) and L'Institut de Presse et des Sciences de l'Information (IPSI), Université de la Manouba in Tunis, has been funded by a \$100,000 grant from the U.S. Department of State's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI) in cooperation with Higher Education for Development, and USAID.

At the end of the program, BGSU's commitments of time, funds and resources have reached twice the federal funding.

The program has involved hands-on journalism workshops for IPSI students, teaching workshops for IPSI, and an intensive 3-week seminar on Women, Media and Democracy at BGSU for students from both universities.

### Educational milestones and impact

The Partners for Change curriculum builds on the already solid education the students are receiving at IPSI to emphasize the importance of responsible reporting of key public issues — particularly issues relating to women, the environment, and the power of information technology to aid development — some of the key areas of focus of the Middle East Partnership Initiative.

These MEPI foci impact the training of the successor generation of journalists being trained at IPSI — young people who will become the journalism professionals of the future in Tunisia, and elsewhere in the MENA.

Participants note that the Partners for Change program “shattered preconceptions about people and cultures of other countries.”



Lunch break during a reporting trip to Nabeul gives BGSU students Stephanie Guigou, left, and Josh Comer, right, a chance to get to know IPSI student Saida Bouslahi.



As mentioned above, one of the most important outcomes is the power of the program to promote cultural awareness and professional exchange. Students, faculty and administrators at both institutions have noted the manner in which program activities have shattered their pre-conceptions about people and cultures of other countries.

### Alignment with the MEPI Pillars

The Tunisian and U.S. Partnership Directors and teams are confident that the Partners for Change has addressed all MEPI Pillars: The Political Pillar, the Economic Pillar, and, in particular, the Education and Women's Empowerment Pillar. In terms of the Political and Economic Pillars, in many ways Tunisia has been a model for development and political and economic advancement in the Arab world. Political leaders in Tunisia and across the MENA region have expressed their interest in the development of civil society and a democratic press. Media practitioners, civil society organizations, and researchers, however, argue that what currently exists in Tunisia is merely the outward appearance of a free, democratic and pluralistic press. The Tunisian march toward press freedom reflects what Sivan calls "illusions of change" (2000, p. 69). Civil society organizations argue much needs to be done to democratize media, journalism and unrestricted access to information and communication technology in Tunisia and elsewhere across the MENA.

An important place to begin the types of reform and transformation called for by the MEPI is to foster educational collaboration between MENA nations and the U.S. that recognizes the role that journalism plays in democratic transition and which understands that journalists can serve as models of democratic practice. This program will create and sustain an important collaboration.

Along with addressing the broad MEPI pillars, the Partners for Change program also addresses the MEPI



IPST student Hassan Srafi presents the findings of his senior thesis to other IPST and undergraduates and graduates of BGSU during the Women, Media and Democracy workshop at BGSU. This photo was awarded second place in the 2006 HED "Picturing Change" photography competition.

The Women, Media and Democracy workshop was one of the milestones of the Partners for Change program, and contributed to MEPI's efforts in the Women's Empowerment Pillar.



**Education Pillar's six key components of excellence in education.** 1) First and foremost, the program has developed new curricula at IPSI, most notably in the area of women and the media. 2) IPSI and BGSU collaborated to develop a set of journalism skills, assessment tools to measure students' mastering of these skills. 3) The partnership developed innovative teaching techniques in media and journalism, particularly those that use online and distance education platforms. Throughout the program, innovative subject area study focused on the UN World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS) Phase II summit meeting held in Tunisia in November 2005 and other issues in international media. 4) BGSU administrators consulted with those at IPSI and the University of Manouba to strengthen administrative processes. 5) BGSU established a brief internship and professional shadowing program for IPSI students participating in the intensive workshop on Women, Media and Democracy, July-August 2005. 6) Finally, BGSU enhanced online resources for IPSI.

The educational activities supported by the Partners for Change program were aligned with the mission and goals of the MEPI Education Pillar.

### **Educational activities supported by Partners for Change**

#### **Media and journalism skills training in Tunis**

Before the United Nations held its World Summit on the Information Society in Tunisia in November 2005, BGSU faculty worked with two groups of IPSI students on news reporting, balanced coverage of international news, and coverage of human rights. Discussions stretched the students' thinking about Internet and global communication,

A number of the students from the workshop later worked as volunteers at the UN world summit itself.

### BGSU intensive workshop on Women, Media and Democracy

In summer 2005, 10 students and two faculty members from IPSI traveled to BGSU for an innovative, intensive workshop with BGSU faculty and students from the U.S., China and Russia.

Four additional BGSU media and communication professors interacted with the students, who earned three hours of credit for their work. IPSI students opportunities to meet journalists at regional media organizations, engaged in volunteer outreach for *The Arab Gazette* national newspaper, and interviewed Arab American newspaper editors at the *Arab American Press* and the *Forum and Link*.

### IPSI Peer Mentor program

IPSI students who completed the summer workshops at BGSU have continued to interact with IPSI and BGSU students. Several assisted at the November 2005 workshop at IPSI and in the *Frontera* program, which provided an opportunity for IPSI and BGSU students to engage in online dialogue and collaborative research on international and online media.

### Digital video conferencing

BGSU administrators and faculty “met” their Tunisian counterparts along with nearly 100 IPSI students through a video-conference made possible through the facilities of WBGU PBS TV in Ohio and the U.S. Embassy in Tunis. Other videoconferences will allow student-to-student and researcher-to-researcher discussions, as ongoing research projects are already in process.

### Access to online resources

As part of the BGSU cost-share contributions to the



IPSI Peer Mentors interact with the U.S. Partnership Co-Directors at the UN World Summit on the Information Society in Tunis, November 2005. Several Peer Mentors were competitively selected to volunteer at the summit.

program, BGSU has provided IPSI students and faculty with access to state of the art online information and data resources through the BGSU library and the OhioLINK library network, one the most comprehensive in the U.S. In addition, a comprehensive website will make available all details, reports, and curriculum materials to students, faculty and administrators not only at IPSI, but all universities in the Middle East and North Africa.

### Spin-offs from the partnership: Collaboration, exchange, and enrichment

#### English-language book donations

One important, sustainable outgrowth of the BGSU-IPSI Partners for Change program is BEAME (Books for the Enhancement of Arab Media and Education). The BGSU community has contributed hundreds of recently published textbooks, trade books and scholarly journals to Tunisia; of those so far more than 500 items have been sent for inclusion in the IPSI library. Discussions are underway to expand the program to university programs beyond IPSI to other libraries in the Middle East and North Africa.

#### New approaches to teaching and learning

After exposure to the Women, Media and Democracy workshop at BGSU and the manner in which it was taught, Tunisian partnership directors and administrators asked that their BGSU partners meet with IPSI faculty to talk about teaching.

At the suggestion of the director of IPSI, BGSU partnership directors and participating faculty met in several sessions with IPSI faculty. Those sessions included using MyBGSU and OhioLINK online facilities and development of effective teaching styles, curriculum development, more tools for effective class management,



Director of IPSI Mohamed Hamdane, left, and BGSU professor and U.S. Partnership Co-Director Catherine Cassara, right, show the donated book collection to Patricia Kabra, educational and cultural counselor of the U.S. Embassy in Tunis.

The Books for the Enhancement of Arab Media and Education (BEAME) has created an extensive English-language media, journalism and communication library at IPSI that has already been used by numerous faculty and students at the Tunisian partnership university.

and more active, collaborative learning.

#### Attention to technology challenges

Problems with student access to computers were highlighted during discussions of what they should cover in the IPSI student newspaper. One key concern is the slow to complete lack of online access for students on IPSI computers. Access even to computers without Internet access is a major problem for IPSI students. IPSI administration is aware of the problem and the May 2006 visit by BGSU faculty and administrators revealed that there is genuine improvement for student computer access.

#### Fulbright Scholars

An additional grant from the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence program brought Tunisian Partnership Co-Director, Dr. Fatma Azouz, to teach at BGSU during the 2005-2006 year. Dr. Azouz taught International Communication collaboratively with Dr. Laura Lengel, U.S. Partnership Co-Director. She also taught a graduate course in Women and Media in the Arab World, and gave lectures supported by other universities and the Fulbright Commission around the U.S.

Applications for other Fulbright scholarships are on the horizon which would take BGSU professors to Tunis and bring other IPSI faculty to BGSU.

An additional grant from the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence program brought Tunisian Partnership Co-Director, Dr. Fatma Azouz, to teach and present her research on women and the media at BGSU during the 2005- 2006 academic year.

## Partnership successes lead to other exciting developments

### IPSI student newspaper development

The partnership between BGSU and IPSI has been extended through an additional MEPI grant to bolster the Tunisian press institute's student newspaper.

With help from the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, IPSI faculty applied for and received an additional MEPI grant to buy computer equipment so that their print students could regularly produce their own newspaper. At MEPI officers' urging, the grant was extended to involve an exchange between IPSI and a U.S. university.

The exchange took BGSU students, the director of student publications and a professor to Tunis to work with the IPSI newspaper staff on newspaper management and news gathering skills.

Tunisian faculty and students traveled to BGSU to observe an American student newspaper in action and meet with their American counterparts. Along the way, the Tunisian professors were also exposed to American approaches to journalism education.

### High school outreach

During the newspaper visit in the spring, IPSI students went to Rogers High School, an inner-city school in Toledo, to meet with social studies classes. For eight periods IPSI students interacted with multiple classes of Rogers High School students. The result was an exciting experience of learning and cultural exchange for all.

In addition to their social studies appearances, the Tunisian students met with Arab speaking students studying at Rogers and with the student newspaper advisor and staff.



Tunisian Partnership Co-Director, Dr. Hamida El Bour exits the new IPSI student newspaper, funded by an additional MEPI grant.

### Research, education and cultural exchange as paths to development

Partnership faculty from IPSI and BGSU crafted common goals, objectives and program milestones, such as skills building workshops at IPSI and at BGSU, to address concerns expressed early on by the IPSI faculty. As the result of the collaboration's successes, faculty and administrators at both universities have a renewed commitment to continuing collaboration beyond the end of the MEPI grant.

IPSI alumni are attending the master's program at BGSU; other students plan to apply. Plans are in the works to create exchanges that will take BGSU students to Tunisia.

Researchers at both universities are developing an applied research agenda focused on vital questions, such as the role the media in both countries place in generating inaccurate stereotypes of the residents of the U.S. and the Middle East and North Africa.

Extensive efforts have been devoted to sustain the partnership in the future. The partnership co-directors have applied for new sources of funding to support additional programs between both institutions, which in the future may provide opportunities for faculty and students from other MENA countries to participate.

Future efforts will focus both on professional skills development for undergraduate and graduate students and on cultural exchange for students and faculty in both the U.S. and Middle East and North Africa.

The Partners for Change program has made a demonstrable impact on both IPSI and BGSU in curriculum development, journalism skills training, online resources, and instructional enhancement in the U.S. and Tunisia.

### Overall Impact of Partners for Change

The partnership program has made a demonstrable impact on both IPSI and BGSU and IPSI in curriculum development, journalism skills training, online resources, and instructional enhancement in the U.S. and Tunisia. It has high probability of sustainability due to its high institutional commitment and cost-sharing from BGSU, and commitment from the presidents of both universities, who signed a Memorandum of Agreement in May 2006 to continue and extend partnership program across both universities. Additional evidence of impact and sustainability is the two IPSI Peer Mentors who have embarked upon graduate studies at BGSU during the 2006-2007 academic year. These IPSI alumni, once they complete their masters degrees in the School of Communication Studies at BGSU, will return to Tunis to continue their volunteer efforts as IPSI Peer Mentors, will guide younger IPSI students to their future academic and professional successes. Another notable impact is the BEAME books donation program, which has created an extensive English-language media, journalism and communication library at IPSI that has already been used by numerous faculty and students there. Finally, the IPSI and BGSU faculty who are committed to, and already beginning collaborative research will ensure that our professional relationships will grow and flourish.

With its extensive outreach to Tunisian, U.S., and Arab American media, schools, civil society, and private sector organizations, the partnership has created a wide reach that we hope will continue to extend across North Africa and the Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan regions.

Perhaps most importantly, the cultural exchange and learning for faculty and students at BGSU and IPSI will continue to shape our professional development, our interpersonal and intercultural communication competence, and our lives in the future.

### Partnership Program Details, Activities and Results

The cultural exchange and learning for faculty and students at BGSU and IPSI will continue to shape our professional development, our interpersonal and intercultural communication competence, and our lives in the future.



#### Objectives of partnership activities

All partnership members are committed to the idea that a viable *civil society is not possible in a country without a free press*. Development initiatives are most valuable where they draw on the expertise and interests of the experts on the ground to identify and support efforts that matter to them, and this program is no different. The workshops at IPSI and at BGSU were crafted to address concerns expressed early on by the IPSI faculty. We have been influenced by on-going discussions with experts from the U.S. Embassy in Tunis. Finally, the Tunisian students have shared issues of critical concern to them.

The partnership work — at IPSI and at BGSU — has addressed issues of *women and media* — in Tunisia, in the MENA region, and in the U.S. We have facilitated workshops for students from two graduating classes from IPSI on *journalism skills* — investigative reporting, generating story ideas, and covering human rights. In addition, we have stretched their thinking about *Internet and global communication*, and have provided them with use of the on-line library information and data resources available through donated access to BGSU's library and the OhioLINK library network. Through a small MEPI grant IPSI received from the Embassy in Tunis, we worked with the print students on *newspaper management and news gathering skills* needed to expand the IPSI student newspaper, a paper that is arguably freer than the professional, national media.

The partnership work has focused on women and media, journalism skills, the Internet and global communication, newspaper management and news gathering skills.

## Impact of Major Partnership Activities

### Workshop on Women, Media and Democracy at BGSU

In summer 2005, 10 students from IPSI and two ISPI faculty members traveled to BGSU for an innovative, intensive workshop on Women, Democracy and Media. Students earned three hours of graduate credit for their participation in a hands-on curriculum.

Interaction and short shadowing experiences with media organizations: IPSI students had the opportunity to shadow journalists at regional media organizations during the Summer workshop on Women, Media and Democracy. They also had meetings with Arab American newspaper journalists at the *Arab American Press* and the *Forum and Link*.

### Journalism skills workshops at IPSI

March and November 2005. For details please see details of activities in Phase I and Phase III.

### Pedagogy skills workshop at for IPSI faculty

November 2005. For details please see details of activities in Phase III.

### IPSI Peer Mentor Program

Some IPSI students from the first workshop and the Women, Media and Democracy workshop, have continued to interact with IPSI and BGSU students. Several assisted at the November 2005 workshop and in the *Frontera* program.

### *Frontera* Program

IPSI and BGSU students engaged in online dialogue and collaborative research on international and online media. For details see: [www.fronteraproject.org/](http://www.fronteraproject.org/)

Some of the partnership milestones include the Women, Media and Democracy workshop at BGSU, journalism and teacher training skills training at IPSI, and the IPSI Peer Mentor program.

#### Delegation at the UN World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in Tunis

The program guided students to examine the impact and report on the UN WSIS which was held in Tunis, November 15-19, 2005. Drs. Lengel, Cassara, El Bour and IPSI Peer Mentor Mehdi Ben Hamza presented during the "Online Journalism" segment of the civil society sessions held at the summit. For more details please see details of activities in Phase II.

The UN World Summit on the Information Society held in Tunis was a key focus area of the partnership.

#### BEAME (Books for the Enhancement of Arab Media and Education

The BGSU community has contributed hundreds textbooks, trade books and scholarly journals to IPSI, of those so far more than 300 items have been sent for inclusion in the IPSI library.

#### Development outcomes in the area of teaching skills and computer access

Exposure to the manner in which BGSU faculty taught the Women, Media and Democracy workshop triggered a new focus on pedagogical issues at IPSI – including effective teaching styles, tools for effective class management, and syllabus construction. Several workshops with IPSI faculty have helped to increase active teaching and learning in Tunis.

Problems with student access to computers were highlighted during discussions of what they should cover in the IPSI student paper. One key concern is the slow to complete lack of online access for students on IPSI computers. Access even to computers without Internet access is a major problem for IPSI students. IPSI administration is aware of the problem and the May 2006 visit revealed that there is genuine improvement for student computer access.

### Planning for sustainability

The U.S. partnership co-directors and three top BGSU administrators met in Tunis with IPSI faculty and administrators, administrators of the University of Manouba, and the U.S. Ambassador and U.S. Embassy experts. The presidents of both universities signed a Memorandum of Agreement to continue to seek ways to sustain, extend and expand the partnership to other disciplinary areas across both universities.

U.S. Partnership Directors have been actively writing grant applications to extend and expand the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program to include other MENA nation universities and civil society and media organizations.

Details of additional cost-share contributions are listed in the Quantitative Analysis section. Highlights of additional BGSU cost-sharing includes online and technology resources equaling \$20,000, BEAME books valued at more than \$20,000, and opportunities for two IPSI alumni to obtain their master's degrees in the BGSU School of Communication Studies with graduate assistantships valued at more than \$30,000.

**BGSU's high cost-share contributions have helped to ensure the sustainability of the Partners for Change program, after the funded phases concluded.**

## Partnership Educational and Professional Development Outcomes, Activities and Impact

Description of outcomes, activities and impact in each Partners for Change program phase

In their efforts to create sustainable core curriculum revisions, learning opportunities for students, and instructional development opportunities at the Institut de Presse et des Science de l'Information (IPSI), Université de la Manouba, particularly in the areas of international media and journalism, women and the media, and media and democracy, the BGSU and Tunisian faculty teams have engaged in online, teleconference, digital video conference and face-to-face communication to assess the educational development needs of both institutions.

Based on open dialogue, co-directed workshops, and collaborative teaching and research at both partnership institutions, the partnership co-directors and faculty have addressed the following key educational development needs for the IPSI-BGSU partnership in order to make the most critical and sustainable impact possible.

1) IPSI faculty and administrators called for assistance in strengthening bachelor and master's offering at IPSI in a) international media, b) women and the media, and c) media and democracy – including human rights reporting and investigative reporting;

2) Faculty at both partnership institutions benefitted from efforts to develop enhanced cultural sensitivity and increased awareness of diversity in both the US and the Arab World;

3) IPSI desired sustainable curricular development, both in the form of staff development workshops and the development of on-line and print resources and teaching materials, which might include materials in print and digital form; a curriculum resource book; recently published

The partnership teams developed education and professional development outcomes and activities that would create the strongest impact and have the highest level of sustainability for both university partners.

---

text books and scholarly books in media, communication, and journalism for curriculum and program development at IPSI.

4) BGSU faculty desired increased opportunities to interact with students and faculty from the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) to enhance their understanding of cultures and nations in this region.

In conjunction with the HED program reporting periods, the partnership activities, successes and challenges for each reporting period are listed below in Phases I through IV.

## Phase I: January 31, 2005 – April 30, 2005

Activities BGSU and IPSI implemented to achieve the stated partnership objectives and educational development outcomes

During this first phase of the partnership program, the partnership co-directors, the director of IPSI, and IPSI faculty began to address the education development needs stated above through the following outcomes:

- 1) an ongoing assessment of curricular needs;
- 2) a cultural and professional exchange at IPSI;
- 3) a workshop at IPSI on journalism, media, and online skills;
- 4) development of online course materials accessible to 60 IPSI students and 30 IPSI faculty and administrators;
- 5) training for IPSI students and faculty to use the BGSU Blackboard online course delivery program so that IPSI students and faculty can participate in BGSU courses and collaborative research efforts;
- 6) a "Workshop on Diversity Issues and Cultural Sensitivity for Teachers and Researchers Doing Work in the Middle East and North African Region" held at BGSU;
- 7) a cultural and professional exchange at BGSU;
- 8) U.S.-based training for a Tunisian Partnership Team member; and
- 9) the BEAME program to enhance IPSI's media, journalism, and communication library.

## Scenes from Phase I



A BGSU journalism student interviews IPSI's Dr. Mohsen Hamli, during his cultural and professional exchange at BGSU.



Opening plenary session of the first workshop at IPSI, March 2005.



Najet Mlaiki (left) and Lotfi Ben Khelifa at the first journalism skills workshop at IPSI.



---

Details of activities BGSU and IPSI implemented to achieve the stated partnership objectives and educational development outcomes in Phase I

1) First, the US Embassy Tunis provided cost-share of digital video conference (DVC) facilities to link 60 IPSI students and seven IPSI faculty with the BGSU Team and key administrators. The DVC provided an opportunity to hear directly from IPSI faculty and students to **assess curricular needs** at IPSI and to **discuss and plan** details for the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program.

2) Second, U.S. Partnership Team members traveled to IPSI for a **cultural and professional exchange** and 3) **both teams developed and implemented a workshop on journalism, media, and online skills at IPSI** where four BGSU faculty members of the U.S. Partnership Team directed teacher and student training.

Four members of the U.S. Partnership Teams, all members of the Tunisian Partnership Team, Dr. Mohammed Hamdane, Director of IPSI, other IPSI faculty and administrators, and approximately 40 IPSI students were involved in the March workshop which focused on such topics as international media, women and the media, investigative reporting, human rights and the media, and the digital divide and other international inequities in computer mediated communication.

During the workshop, which occurred March 14-17, 2005, each team member had a specific educational development role. Dr. Catherine Cassara, U.S. Partnership Co-Director, chaired all plenary sessions and led workshop sessions for IPSI students on reporting skills, advanced reporting skills, investigative reporting skills, and human rights reporting. Dr. Laura Lengel, U.S. Partnership Co-Director, led workshop sessions that addressed international media, women and the media, and the digital divide in developing nations. She also introduced the *Frontera* project which will link IPSI and BGSU students online.

---

---

Dr. Kristie Foell, Director of International Studies at BGSU and U.S. Partnership English Language Curriculum Coordinator, led conversational interviews in English with the IPSI students as part of the assessment to choose 10 IPSI students to participate in the Women, Media and Democracy workshop at BGSU, July-August, 2005. The main role of Dr. Bruce Edwards, Associate Dean of Continuing and Extended Education and U.S. Partnership Online Curriculum Coordinator, was to train and prepare students for their online participation in BGSU Spring courses in journalism and communication, as well as to train and prepare faculty for their own involvement.

While Dr. Foell conducted the assessment interviews during the workshop, Drs. Cassara, Lengel and Edwards each conducted three sessions per day, March 14 and 15, 2005, for three distinct groups of students, on their respective topics. Dr. Catherine Cassara led workshop training sessions for IPSI students in investigative reporting and human rights reporting. Dr. Lengel directed student training sessions focused on concerns about information and communication technology in developing regions, including the digital divide, access to technology, and freedom of communication online. Dr. Edwards directed several training sessions for both IPSI students and faculty for Blackboard, the BGSU online course delivery system.

On March 16, there was a final plenary session for all participating IPSI students, faculty and administrators during which time the U.S. Partnership Team presented representatives from the IPSI Dean's office and IPSI faculty the first installment of scholarly books and text books for the "Books for IPSI" program (please see point 9 below in this section).

On March 17, the U.S. and Tunisian Partnersl teams met to assess the workshop and plan for the next set of program milestones.

---

The Tunisian Partnership Team, administrators, and students reported that the workshop was successful and enhanced the IPSI educational program and mission to enhance international exchange, dialogue, and learning.

4) In consultation with the Tunisia Partnership Team, the US Partnership Team **developed online course materials** for 60 IPSI students and 30 IPSI faculty and administrators through the BGSU Blackboard online system. Materials focused on curriculum for the March workshop, the Summer workshop on Women, Media and Democracy at BGSU, and ongoing curricular needs.

Dr. Cassara led the efforts to update the US Partnership Team with information on IPSI and Tunisian journalism and laying foundation for curriculum for March and July workshops; She is also exchanged ideas about curriculum development with IPSI faculty, Tunisian journalists, and American diplomats and scholars.

In addition to the online material development, Dr. Edwards directed the development of the Community Blackboard site for IPSI and BGSU partnership connections, adding the course and faculty participants to the rosters, and testing to make sure that all links, pages, and materials were accessible and active (For more details on the online curriculum development, please see section on “Curricular and Instructional Improvement in Phase I” below).

Dr. Lengel liaised with private sector partner, Warmuth Design, for the design of the IPSI-BGSU MEPI logo for the Community Blackboard site, the development of the external website, letterhead, bookplates for the “Books for IPSI” program (see point 6 below), the curriculum book, and other print materials.

5) During the March Workshop, Dr. Edwards **trained and prepared students for their online participation in BGSU Spring courses in journalism and communication**, as well as to train and prepare faculty for their own involvement (please see Quantitative Analysis for Phase I).

This was the center of the week's activities on campus

**The partnership built**

for Edwards, who conducted three sessions per day, Monday, March 14 and 15, 2005 for three distinct groups of students, all focused on using the internet to access and post responses to course materials. He also conducted a three hour workshop for IPSI faculty on Wednesday, March 16, focused not only on internet access matters but also online pedagogy.

6) To address the cultural and professional development needs for participating faculty and administrators at BGSU, both Partnership Teams were involved in cultural and professional exchange, highlighted by a **“Workshop on Diversity Issues and Cultural Sensitivity for Teachers and Researchers Doing Work in the Middle East and North African Region.”** This workshop was co-facilitated by Tunisian Partnership team faculty member Dr. Mohsen Hamli and held at BGSU for BGSU faculty and administrators on April 12, 2005 (for more details please see section on “Collaboration with Other U.S. Institutions in Phase I” below).

To enhance the partnership through a 7) **cultural and professional exchange** and to 8) **provide US-based training for a Tunisian Partnership Team member**, Tunisian Partnership Team member Dr. Mohsen Hamli traveled to BGSU to give a series of presentations on media in the Arab world, and women and diversity in the Arab world for the BGSU School of Communication Studies Week, April 11 – 15, 2005.

To prepare for Dr. Hamli’s visit, the IDEAL staff worked on further training materials for Dr. Hamli and for the July 17 - August 6, 2005 Summer Workshop on Women, Media, and Democracy, during which time two IPSI faculty and ten IPSI students will be in residence at BGSU to advance skills in reporting on international issues, women and the media, media and democracy.

During the week of April 11-14, 2005 the BGSU IDEAL staff hosted Dr. Hamli for further Blackboard training during his visit and continued to extend the access to the

relationships with other higher education institutions, businesses, NGOs, community organizations, and public/private agencies in Tunisia.

One key partner has been the

web-based community by adding faculty accounts, and continuing an online dialogue with selected students who will be journeying to BGSU for the Summer Workshop.

Dr. Hamli was hosted at meals and meetings with numerous faculty in the BGSU School of Communication Studies, the Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, the Chairs of all three departments in the School of Communications and the Interim Director of the School, and Continuing and Extended Education. Dr. Foell, Director of International Studies and U.S. Partnership Team member, hosted Dr. Hamli at a reception in her home. Dr. John Folkins, BGSU Provost and Vice President, spoke at the reception to thank Dr. Hamli for providing an opportunity for a rich cultural exchange and the U.S. Partnership Team for their ongoing efforts in the MEPI program. We were delighted that Dr. Hamli was invited to a meeting with Dr. Sidney Ribeau, President of BGSU, who has recognized the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program as an example of the Scholarship of Engagement at the international level.

Finally, 9) **BGSU contributed 75 books** for what was originally called the “Books for IPSI” program (the program was renamed BEAME – Books for the Enhancement of Arab of Media and Education during Phase II to reflect the partnership’s intention to expand the book donation program to other universities across the Middle East and North Africa). This program provides recently published media, journalism and communication scholarly books and textbooks for the IPSI journalism and communication library (please see Quantitative Analysis for all phases more details). The textbooks and scholarly books are focused on subjects including, but not limited to: news writing, reporting, and public affairs reporting, investigative reporting, media law, media history, media economics, media management, media theory, public relations, internet journalism, communication theory, interpersonal and small group communication skills, political science, international and intercultural communication.

Centre d’Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis (CEMAT). Partnership Co-Directors were guided by the expertise of Dr. James Miller, Director of CEMAT. They also build relationships with other organizations such as Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) to forge opportunities for future collaborative research between researchers in the U.S. and the MENA region.

Dr. Lengel donated 13 copies of *America Now: Short Readings from Recent Periodicals*, which can be used in IPSI classrooms. The books included those published by BGSU authors, including a books on computer mediated communication and online journalism by Dr. Lengel and Dr. James Foust respectively.

#### Collaboration with other U.S. Institutions in Phase I

The partnership has aimed to collaborate with NGOs, community based organizations, government agencies, the private sector, other higher education institutions. This section describes the extent and nature of their involvement in partnership activities during Phase I.

Dr. Hamli and the U.S. Partnership Team worked with a colleague from the University of Northern Illinois (NIU). NIU journalism associate professor, Dr. Orayb Aref Najjar, and Dr. Hamli co-facilitated the "Workshop on Diversity Issues and Cultural Sensitivity for Teachers and Researchers Doing Work in the Middle East and North African Region" on April 12, 2005. Dr. Najjar also presented lectures to BGSU faculty and students, and community organizations on such topics as "Arab Politics and the USA as Seen through Arab Cartoons", "Conducting Research in the Middle East and North African Region: Focus on Women in the MENA."

Dr. Lengel gave a presentation to the Montessori School of Bowling Green on "North Africa: *kif kif wa mush kif kif*" which emphasized cultural diversity and unity in North Africa and the U.S. The elementary school students who attended the presentation were very excited about the learning experience and even three-year-olds in the Early Childhood program learned a few Tunisian Arabic terms. Community outreach of this nature links BGSU with learners of all ages.

Warmuth Design (a private sector cost-share partner), worked on the design of the external website. This website reports on the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program and provide a sustainable means to share curriculum developments and other outcomes of the program.

other outcomes of the program.

#### Relationship building with private sector and civil society partners

The partnership worked to build relationships with other higher education institutions, businesses, NGOs, community organizations, and public/private agencies in Tunisia.

While in Tunis, the Tunisian and US Partnership Co-Directors met with the director of the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR), a civil society organization. At CAWTAR, the Partnership directors learned of CAWTAR's mission, research programs, and interaction with the United Nations Development Program. The mission of CAWTAR is to provide research, training sessions, and development of materials tailored to contribute to building capacities of decision makers in governments, civil society organizations and media, and raise awareness on gender issues.

The Tunisian and US Partnership Co-Directors also met with Dr. James Miller, Director of the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis (CEMAT) to discuss the challenges of academic researchers in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region, particularly with regard to their lack of access to the academic research databases that U.S. academics tend to take for granted. These discussions lead to the development of an idea for a one-day conference on the academic digital divide, to occur just before the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS) in Tunis, November 15 - 19, 2005.

Dr. Miller also asked the Tunisian Partnership Director and the BGSU faculty who were in Tunis for the March workshop to present details about the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program to area studies scholars at CEMAT on March 17. Here, Drs. Cassara, Lengel, Edwards and Foell from BGSU, and Dr. Fatma Azouz, Tunisian Partnership Director and IPSI professor, presented the mission, goals, and outcomes milestones of the IPSI-RCSI MEPI program along with



---

milestones of the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program along with details of their own research programs in international studies, and in international journalism, media and communication.

#### How partnership relationship building has contributed to educational development in Tunisia in Phase I

Through sessions such as the one at the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis (CEMAT) on March 17, 2005. Here, Drs. Cassara, Lengel, Edwards and Foell from BGSU, and Dr. Fatma Azouz, Tunisian Partnership Director at IPSI professor, had an opportunity to mentor young scholars who were embarking upon their graduate or undergraduate degrees and their new research programs on the MENA region. Such exchanges provide awareness raising for U.S. researchers and students in the MENA region.

The meeting at the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) can forge opportunities for future collaborative research between researchers in the U.S. and the MENA region.

These activities contribute to the educational development in Tunisia by creating sustainable collaborative relationships for teaching, learning and research in Tunisia and, more broadly, through the MENA.

#### How relationship building has benefited BGSU and the wider northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan communities

Along with benefiting the host country and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region, these activities contribute to the educational development for BGSU students and faculty by creating sustainable collaborative relationships for teaching, learning and research. They will benefit the wider community by raising awareness about the diversity across the MENA region. The lack of awareness about the MENA region, about Islam, and U.S. foreign relations in this reason by some U.S. students is shocking. Further, most U.S. students know nothing of the

---

---

accomplishments of civil society, women's groups, and research groups in Tunisia and across the MENA. For example, the research by the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) on women and the media and Arab adolescent girls will make a contribution to knowledge for BGSU students in communication, journalism, women's studies, and international studies.

It is the hope of both the U.S. and the Tunisian Partnership Teams that the BGSU-IPSI MEPI program can change views and enhance knowledge of the MENA region in the U.S. both at the university and community levels.

One of the goals for the BGSU-IPSI partnership program is to establish a sustainable working relationship to enhance the educational missions of both institutions. Both the U.S. and Tunisian Partnership teams engage in ongoing dialogue about how BGSU faculty and students can contribute to the efforts at IPSI to prepare their 2,000 plus students for successful careers that will contribute to their country's efforts at development.

The partnership program has enhanced the educational mission of BGSU by providing an outstanding opportunity for the enhancement of international exchange, dialogue, and learning. It is also an excellent example of the Scholarship of Engagement which is a part of the BGSU mission.

An example of the specific ways in which international exchange can benefit both IPSI and BGSU is the *Frontera* (Frontiers of New Technology Education, Research, and Action) program, an ongoing program that links university students from around the world to exchange ideas on international and intercultural communication. This academic year, BGSU students in IPC 409 International Communication and JOUR 475 International Journalism courses (offered in the Departments of Interpersonal Communication and Journalism respectively) are engaging in collaborative dialogue with IPSI students through the *Frontera* program. Through *Frontera*, BGSU students are

---

learning first hand about the challenges of the digital divide in North Africa, about freedom of communication and information in the country and the broader Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region. The BGSU students are benefiting from the unique opportunity to develop professional and personal relationships with students from Tunisia and the MENA.

For more information from *Frontera* please see <http://www.fronteraproject.org>

Informing policy at the institutional, community, national or international levels

The partnership aimed to achieve the Higher Education in Development and USAID goal to inform to “policy in the host country through policy relevant research consultations, analysis, advice and/or direct assistance, such as helping to increase the enrollment or participation of students from economically disadvantaged and/or rural communities, introduced internships and opportunities.”

The partnership anticipates informing policy at the institutional, community and national levels in Tunisia in the next six-month segment of the program. This is, foremost, because the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS) is being held in Tunis, November 16-18, 2005. Dr. Lengel has been a civil society delegate (representing the academic organization, the Union for Democratic Communications) to the UN WSIS meetings (She participated in the UN WSIS Phase I summit meeting in Geneva, December 2003, and the first preparatory conference in Hammamet, Tunisia, June 2004). Dr. Azouz was also a civil society and media organization delegate to the preparatory conference in Hammamet, Tunisia, June 2004. Drs. Lengel, Cassara, El Bour, and other Tunisian Partnership faculty will be delegates to the Phase II meeting in Tunis in November.

Participation in the delegation of the UN WSIS was a direct and important opportunity to voice concerns of

“This partnership came at a critical moment for our Embassy’s efforts in Tunisia to support freedom of the press as the cornerstone of democracy and human rights.”

— Stephanie Syptak, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Embassy in Tunis

---

higher education and civil society to the UN regarding sustainable development, higher education reform, problems of the digital divide, and democracy building in Tunisia and the broader MENA region and Arab world.

#### Collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Tunis

The IPSI-BGSU Partnership has worked closely with the U.S. Embassy in Tunis to assess sustainable development in Tunisia broadly, and mission and goals of the IPSI-BGSU Partnership and Tunisian media and journalism higher education specifically.

In January 2005, through online and teleconference communication, Dr. Cassara began exploring with IPSI faculty and Stephanie Syptak, Information Officer (Press Attache) at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, about IPSI's needs, about journalism in Tunisia, and how both workshops and ongoing contact could help bring about useful and sustainable development in journalism education at IPSI.

Since February, Dr. Cassara, Ms. Syptak and IPSI faculty have continued to correspond about developing a student newspaper at IPSI and discuss implications for both workshops and sustainable development.

A key contribution of the U.S. Embassy in Tunis has been a cost-share contribution of digital video conference (DVC) facilities so that the Tunisian and U.S. Partnership Teams can conduct quarterly video conference meetings. WBGU-TV PBS has also provided cost-share contributions of their videoconference facilities. The first DVC, the official launch of the BGSU-IPSI partnership program, occurred on February 11, 2005. Much planning and organization in both countries went on in advance of the DVC launch.

Drs. Cassara and Lengel communicated with Mr. Philip Breeden, Counselor of Embassy, U.S. Embassy in Tunis and his technology administrator, Mr. Mohieddine Ezzine, the AV Technologist at the Embassy, who organized and set up the technical aspects the digital video conference launch of the program.

Ms. Katie Boyle, Distance Learning Operator and

---

Technician at WBGU-TV, and Stephanie Syptak, Information Officer at the U.S. Embassy Tunis, sent and received numerous pieces of email correspondence to set up the date and time (considering the vastly different time zones of each partnership institution), the ISDN requirements, and other requirements for the digital video conference test link.

A successful test link-up occurred on January 27 between the videoconference services at BGSU/WBGU-TV and the U.S. Embassy Tunis, organized by Katie Boyle. Attending the meeting and test was Philip Breeden, Moheddine Ezzine, the AV Technologist at the U.S. Embassy, Drs. Cassara and Lengel, and Katie Boyle.

Attendance at the February 11 digital video conference program launch included Mr. Breeden and Ms. Syptak of the U.S. Embassy, all members of the Tunisian and U.S. Partnership Teams, key representatives of the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, Dr. Linda Dobb, BGSU Executive Vice President, Dr. Joseph Frizado, Interim Director of the BGSU School of Communication Studies, Dr. Mohammed Hamdane, Director of IPSI, and approximately 60 IPSI students attended the videoconference launch meeting.

The digital video conference launch meeting covered the following agenda points:

- 1) Overall goals and sustainable projected outcomes of the BGSU-IPSI Partnership Program;
- 2) Planning of international media and reporting skills, and online skills workshop at IPSI, March 13-17, 2005;
- 3) Planning of the Women, Media and Democracy workshop at BGSU, July 18–August 5, 2005; and
- 4) Planning of the upcoming face-to-face curriculum development meeting in Tunis in March, 2005 on the IPSI campus.

The U.S. Partnership Co-Directors also worked with the U.S. Embassy in Tunis to process the visa for Tunisian Partnership Team member Dr. Mohsen Hamli, so that he

---

could travel to the U.S. for a cultural and professional exchange, specifically to give a series of presentations on media in the Arab world, and women and diversity in the Arab world for the BGSU School of Communication Studies Week, April 11 – 15, 2005.

Drs. Lengel and Cassara also communicated with the U.S. Embassy in Tunis for advice and assistance in arranging accommodations in Tunis, and other organizational issues. They also met with Stephanie Syptak of the U.S. Embassy in Tunis to discuss the possibility of a program to develop a student newspaper at IPSI.

Dr. Lengel was pleased to meet Ms. Fouzia Chouch at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis visit. Ms. Chouch was instrumental in mentoring Dr. Lengel in her Fulbright Research year in Tunisia, 1993-1994.

Finally and importantly, the U.S. Partnership team meet with Ambassador William Hudson; Philip Breeden, Counselor of Embassy, and Stephanie Syptak, Information Officer and Director of the American Center at the US Embassy Tunis on March 15, 2005. The hour-long meeting focused on democracy building efforts in the Middle East and North Africa region, how the BGSU-IPSI program contributes to democracy building efforts, and how to ensure sustainability of the partnership program.

#### **How the partnership has strengthened programs at Arab universities**

The sustainable core curriculum changes that our in development as part of the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program will strengthen programs at IPSI and, we hope, at universities across the MENA region. The “Books for IPSI” program, and contribution of electronic copies of our own publications on media, communication and journalism provide a resource that was previously unavailable. More importantly, the sustainable collegial relationships developed in the IPSI-BGSU program will continue to strengthen higher education in years to come.

---

### Collaborative research during Phase I

Through all phases of the grant funded program, the partnership aimed to address educational and other development problems in Tunisia and to improve the quality of independent student research at both the graduate and undergraduate levels. After the close of funding, IPSI and BGSU faculty and administrators continue their commitment to engaging in collaborative research.

During the cultural and professional exchange at IPSI in March, 2005, the U.S. Partnership Team met with the Tunisian Partnership Team to discuss co-editing a special issue of *Review Tunisienne de la Communication* on a topic related to the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program. This refereed journal is edited and published at IPSI.

Drs. Cassara and Lengel encouraged the IPSI Partnership faculty to submit research to be reviewed for presentation at the International Research Foundation for Development (IRFD) World Forum on the Information Society, a research conference on the Digital Divide, Global Development and the Information Society, organized for the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society.

At the end of Phase I, Drs. Cassara and Lengel learned that their paper, "Have Nots in the Global Academy: The Information Society and the Digital Divide in the Academic Workplace" was accepted for presentation at the IFRD World Forum. Their paper is directly informed by meetings with IPSI faculty and Dr. James Miller, Director of CEMAT, on the challenges faced by academic researchers in regions like the MENA where under-funded universities cannot access the vast online journal databases that U.S. academic researchers take for granted to conduct their work.

This research is important because it raises awareness about the digital divide experienced by academicians in under-funded universities such as those in Global South

nations like Tunisia. Drs. Cassara and Lengel were encouraged at this point in the partnership that collaborative and relevant research was off to a great start and that members of the partnership teams would be inspired to engage in collaborative research efforts during the partnership phases to follow and to sustain beyond the funded partnership period (Please also see section on Results of Research and Studies below).

#### Curricular and instructional improvement

In consultation with the Tunisia Partnership Team, the US Partnership Team developed online course materials for 60 IPSI students and 30 IPSI faculty and administrators through the BGSU Blackboard online system. Materials focused on curriculum for the March workshop, the Summer workshop on Women, Media and Democracy at BGSU, and ongoing curricular needs.

Dr. Cassara has led the efforts to update the US Partnership Team with information on IPSI and Tunisian journalism and laying foundation for curriculum for March and July workshops; She has also exchanged ideas about curriculum development with IPSI faculty, Tunisian journalists, and American diplomats and scholars.

IDEAL, the Distance Education unit at BGSU, has been actively involved in consulting with the U.S. Partnership Team in preparing training materials for web-based course management tools to facilitate the classroom interaction between IPSI faculty and students and Bowling Green State University faculty and students. In addition, the IDEAL office with the assistance of BGSU's TECS program (Technology Education, Consulting, Support), prepared workshop materials that were delivered to students and faculty during the March 2005 Workshop at IPSI by Dr. Bruce L. Edwards.

Prior to the March Workshop at IPSI, Edwards and his staff at IDEAL, worked on training and reference materials for the on-campus internet workshops to be conducted at



IPSI. This involved consultation with the national office of Blackboard, Inc., the proprietary software used on the BGSU campus for online course delivery. IDEAL also created course accounts for 62 IPSI students and 6 IPSI faculty identified as involved in the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program proposal. All participating IPSI students and faculty were provided enrollment in the BGSU course management system and given BGSU email accounts to facilitate their participation. For the reference materials to be left with students and faculty, IDEAL burned 75 CDs with the training and reference materials and transported them to Tunis during the on-site visit.

In addition to the material development, Dr. Edwards directed the development of the Community Blackboard site for IPSI-BGSU-MEPI connections, adding the course and faculty participants to the rosters, and testing to make sure that all links, pages, and materials were accessible and active. Dr. Edwards invested time in reviewing French and Arabic language materials leading up to the trip.

On January 13, 2005, Drs. Cassara and Lengel started weekly meetings with Eric Browning and Keith Pryor, of the BGSU Technology Enhancement Classroom Support Specialists (TECS) program. Browning and Pryor, undergraduate and graduate students respectively, along with undergraduate student Wesley Border, have been working with the US Partnership Team at BGSU to consult, develop and implement technology into the BGSU-IPSI curriculum materials and instruction. The weekly meetings in January focused on developing curriculum materials for the March workshop at IPSI.

The TECS team and Dr. Lengel liaised with Ann Warmuth, Director of private sector partner Warmuth Design. This partner has provided a \$2,000 cost share for the design of the IPSI-BGSU MEPI logo for the Community Blackboard site, the development of the external website, letterhead, bookplates for the BEAME book donation program, the curriculum book, and other print materials.

### Preparing future professionals

One goal of the BGSU-IPSI partnership is to prepare IPSI students and recent alumni for productive employment in Tunisia's workforce, including the private sector marketplace, particularly in economically disadvantaged and/or rural communities.

Longstanding efforts have been in place at IPSI before the partnership began. These rural communication efforts have made an important impact on telecommunications research and rural development in the south of Tunisia. For example, in the early 1970s, Dr. Mohamed Ali Kembi took a group of IPSI students to the rural, economically disadvantaged southern regions of Tunisia to conduct field research on the impact of the diffusion of television for the first time. One of the student field research team, Dr. Hamida El Bour, is now the Tunisian Partnership Co-Director and has discussed on numerous occasions how important that field research experience was to her professional development, first as a journalist and then as a professor at IPSI. For several years now, Dr. Fatma Azouz has taken a group of broadcast journalism students to the south to experience working with rural radio stations. Again, this type of applied field research makes a lasting impact on IPSI students and future media, journalism, and communication professionals.

During Phase I, partnership faculty enhanced the acquisition and development of professional skills in the following areas: a) contacting international media organizations; b) resume building; c) learning about working internationally; c) how to report online, develop communities and engage in collaborative, co-located work teams online.

The March 2005 workshop at IPSI trained students and faculty in professionally-relevant skills in information and communication technology, specifically for the use of the BGSU Blackboard system, the online course delivery system

---

of the university. The workshop also enhanced IPSI students' skills in the English language in professionally-focused media, journalism and communication contexts.

#### Synergies, serendipities, or human interest stories for the partnership in Phase I

Because the U.S. Partnership Directors had developed such a strong relationship with the Tunisian Partnership Directors, they felt confident applying for a Fulbright Scholar-In-Residence award to bring Dr. Fatma Azouz, one of the Tunisian Partnership Directors, to BGSU for the 2005-2006 academic year. Drs. Cassara and Lengel received approval from the Council for International Education Exchange (CIES) for their application submitted in February 2005 and learned unofficially in Phase I that the award was in the process of being finalized. The presence of Dr. Azouz in Bowling Green for the academic year made an important impact and a great deal of difference to ensure that curriculum materials proposed and developed by BGSU faculty would be useful to IPSI in the long term.

Research interests developed as a result of meetings and conversations during the March professional and cultural exchange to Tunisia lead to Drs. Cassara and Lengel submitting a research grant application to the International Research Exchange Commission (IREX).

As for media coverage, Bonnie Blankinship, Editor of the weekly online publication, *Monitor*, interviewed Drs. Cassara and Lengel on the IPSI-BGSU MEPI Program. The story on the program was the lead article in the February 14, 2005 issue of the *Monitor* (please see: <http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/pr/monitor/>; for a full list of media coverage about the partnership, please see the section below on the description of media coverage on the partnership).

#### Challenges encountered in Phase I

Partnership directors and faculty encountered few

---

---

challenges other than those experienced as a result of the digital divide, such as challenges in sending fax and other forms of communications. Partnership directors were pleased to report that all partnership activities progressed smoothly in Phase I.

Perhaps the greatest challenge during Phase I was the high intensity of the workload to plan and implement the partnership activities; in hindsight, it would have been very helpful to have release time during the academic year to free up more time for the partnership. However, the U.S. Partnership Directors were happy that most of the grant is going to support IPSI students, and cultural and professional exchanges.

---

## Phase II: May 1, 2005 – September 30, 2005

## Scenes from Phase II

### Partnership Outcomes, Activities and Impact in Phase II

During the second phase of the program, the partnership achieved the following milestones:

- 1) An intensive communication and journalism workshop at BGSU on “Women, Media and Democracy”;
- 2) Cultural and professional exchange for IPSI faculty and students to BGSU;
- 3) Internships for 10 IPSI students from Tunisia with regional and national media organizations and meetings for all students with regional journalism professionals;
- 4) On-site professional development consultations with area media executives;
- 5) Curriculum development, including
- 6) an online collaborative educational experience under the ongoing *Frontera* (Frontiers of New Technology Education, Research and Action) program;
- 7) US-based training for a Tunisian Partnership Team member.

Finally, during this reporting period 8) BGSU contributed over 100 books for the ongoing “Books for IPSI” program.

Below, details of the above program milestones are discussed below as evidence of successful implementation of the overall IPSI-BGSU MEPI program.

#### 1) Workshop on “Women, Media and Democracy”.

The most important program and curriculum development effort at this point in the partnership has been the “Women, Media and Democracy” workshop. The workshop brought a competitively selected group of Arab students and faculty to the BGSU campus for a three-week intensive workshop from July 17 – August 5, 2005. In this workshop 10 IPSI and 9 BGSU graduate and undergraduate students from the



IPSI students ham it up for the camera during their stay on the BGSU campus for the 3-week summer workshop on Women, Media and Democracy in 2005.



BGSU graduate student Michelle Cordone, middle, works with her Tunisian counterparts Imen Balegi and Mehdi Ben Hamza during the Women, Media and Democracy workshop.

US, Russia, and China were brought together to collaboratively explore contemporary issues concerning women, media and democracy and the points at which those topics overlap and interact (A syllabus for the workshop, additional workshop materials, and the *Women, Media and Democracy Curriculum Book* is available upon request).

There were several scheduled online activities at regular intervals throughout the workshop, each which used Blackboard, the BGSU online course delivery program (for additional details, please see appendices). Each session's online dialogue topic was developed in relation to particular readings, the presentations by guest lecturers, the documentaries viewed, class discussions, and other activities of the workshop. Students were expected not only to take part in the online discussions, by reacting to other people's posts, but also by offering discussion points of their own. Participating in the online discussions not only added to IPSI and BGSU students' learning about women, media and democracy, but it also made the workshop very enjoyable. The workshop organizer and U.S. Partnership Co-Director, Dr. Catherine Cassara, and participating faculty, U.S. Partnership Co-Director Dr. Laura Lengel, Tunisia Partnership Co-Director and IPSI faculty member Dr. Hamida el Bour and IPSI faculty member, Dr. Mohamed Kembi, were delighted that they themselves could learn from the IPSI and BGSU students about online workshop discussions that will help to develop effective communication between students at great distances, primarily between students on-site on their respective Tunis- and Bowling Green- based campuses during the academic year following with workshop.

**2) Cultural and professional exchange for IPSI faculty and students to BGSU.** The "Women, Media and Democracy" workshop was the highlight of all the cultural and professional exchanges scheduled during the two year partnership program. An additional cultural and

professional exchange that occurred in tandem with the partnership was the award of a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence to Tunisia Partnership Co-Director Dr. Fatma Azouz, who is in residence at BGSU during the entire 2005-2006 academic year. Drs. Cassara and Lengel were the co-authors of the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence (SIR) grant for the U.S. cost country institution (BGSU) and engaged in numerous negotiations at BGSU to secure cost-share contributions for accommodation, teaching assignments, collaborative teaching and research activities, and civil society interaction for Dr. Azouz. Drs. Cassara and Lengel also consulted Dr. Azouz for her writing of her application for the Fulbright SIR grant.

3) **Brief internship and professional shadowing experiences** for the 10 IPSI students who participated in the Women, Media and Democracy workshop. The students were placed with regional and national media organizations and meetings for all students with regional journalism professionals: During the July – August 2005 workshop on “Women, Media, and Democracy”, the 10 participating IPSI students were placed in the following media organizations: The *Sentinel Tribune* newspaper, WBGU-TV PBS, BGSU Marketing and Communications. The students were involved in shadowing the media professionals in these organizations, engaging in media writing, and increasing their awareness of U.S. journalistic practices and overall media and journalism skills.

4) **On-site professional development consultations with area media executives.** Along with internships during the July – August 2005 workshop on “Women, Media, and Democracy”, both IPSI and BGSU students traveled to several regional and national media organizations to meet with established editors, writers, and owners to discuss current journalistic issues and practices. These media organizations include: The *Sentinel Tribune* newspaper, WBGU-TV PBS, *Arab American News*, *The Forum and Link*, *The Arab Gazette*. In addition to meeting with the editorial

and production teams of these media organizations, the partnership engaged in communication outreach activities (see point 5 immediately following).

5) **Community outreach activities**, including, but not limited to, volunteering to deliver copies of the Cleveland-based, free national newspaper *The Arab Gazette* to community organizations in and around Dearborn and Detroit, Michigan, home of the largest Arab American community in the United States.

6) **Curriculum development**, including 7) an **online collaborative educational experience** under the ongoing *Frontera* (Frontiers of New Technology Education, Research and Action) program. Drs. Fatma Azouz and Laura Lengel have developed both online and face-to-face curriculum for IPC 409 International Communication and are currently co-teaching the course. One of the key components of IPC 409 International Communication is a semester-long online curricular component which is part of the ongoing *Frontera* program.

*Frontera* is an established, grant award-winning program that has linked over 1,000 students from 14 different universities worldwide since its inception in 1996, including BGSU, IPSI, and Zayed University, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, United Arab Emirates (for more information, please see [www.fronteraproject.org](http://www.fronteraproject.org)). Accessed through the Blackboard online learning environment housed at BGSU, *Frontera* allows students at both partnership institutions to connect online and focus a dialogue on topics including online civic discourse, the Digital Divide, media and journalistic ethics, and international affairs reporting. Students who have been teamed with others in the online international exchange forum have reported that their connection through *Frontera* has lasted long after their 'official' time with the program has ended (Lengel, 2002; Marin & Lengel, forthcoming).

This semester students not only from IPSI and BGSU, but also from the People's Friendship University in Moscow



are asked to both interrogate the Internet and encounter it as a discursive tool to explore critical issues in international and intercultural communication. Online dialogue will focus on the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS) taking place in Tunis in November 16 – 18, 2005.

The online course project affords students the opportunity to learn across borders and cultural differences. Through computer mediated communication (CMC), students work “together” in “cyber classrooms”, across national borders and cultural differences, to explore ethnicity, nation and citizenship, the potential for civic discourse with persons from different cultures and nations. During the past decade students of diverse heritage, Mexican, Norwegian, Nigerian, Brazilian, Indian, Spanish, Turkish, English, Arab, US, Welsh, Irish and Russian to name only some, have engaged in dialogue through *Frontera*.

Grouped into small CMC teams and using Blackboard (in the case of the IPSI-BGSU partnership; other partnerships use their university email accounts), students have been informed that they are part of an international university partnership. They are also told that are to explore their differences; differences of created by the boundaries of nationalism, but also boundaries of race, class, ethnicity and one's own identity. Use of CMC is positioned as a mechanism through which to explore this crossing of boundaries because it made possible the students' ability to journey virtually to other places, thus facilitating a virtual “community of practice” of student peers and faculty.

To enhance the partnership through a cultural and professional exchange and to provide 8) **US-based training for a Tunisian Partnership Team member, Dr. Mohamed Kembi, and Tunisian Partnership Co-Director, Dr. Hamida El Bour**, who traveled to BGSU to co-teach the “Women, Media, and Democracy” workshop (see point 1 above). While at BGSU, they received training (preliminary

for Dr. Kembi, advanced for Dr. El Bour) on the BGSU course delivery program and on the BGSU and OhioLink online academic databases.

9) **BGSU contributed over 100 books for the Book for the Advancement of Arab Media and Education (BEAME) program.** This ongoing program provides recently published media, journalism and communication scholarly books and textbooks for the IPSI journalism and communication library (for cost-share details, please see the Quantitative Analysis for Phase II). The textbooks and scholarly books are focused on subjects including, but not limited to: news writing, reporting, and public affairs reporting, investigative reporting, media law, media history, media economics, media management, media theory, public relations, internet journalism, communication theory, interpersonal and small group communication skills, political science, international and intercultural communication. Since the partnership began, BGSU has donated over 200 books to IPSI.

#### How Phase II activities have strengthened the capacity of Tunisian higher education institution

The activities in Phase II have strengthened the capacity of Tunisian higher education, particularly IPSI, University of Manouba, in the following ways: 1) The intensive communication and journalism workshop at BGSU on Women, Media and Democracy allowed an opportunity for IPSI faculty to co-teach an innovative online and face-to-face workshop. They have been exposed to current research on women and the media, particularly that which focuses on women's participation in and representation by media in the Arab World.

The 2) cultural and professional exchange for IPSI faculty and students to BGSU will also provide IPSI sustainable teaching and research materials that they have brought back from BGSU to Tunisia. The 3) internships for 10 IPSI students from Tunisia with regional and national

media organizations provide outstanding first-hand, hands-on skills development in media, journalism and professional communications. The ten IPSI students who participated in these internships are encouraged to mentor IPSI students who are in the first few years of their media and journalism education. This activity lays the groundwork for an ongoing sustainable peer mentor program in Tunisia.

The meetings for students and faculty with regional journalism professionals and 4) on-site professional development consultations with area media executives, again, will assist with skills-building as well as raise awareness about democratic media practices. 5) The community service of delivering *The Arab Gazette* to the Arab American community will enhance the spirit of civil society and community involvement in Tunisia. 6) The curriculum development, particularly the 7) online collaborative educational experience under the ongoing *Frontera* (Frontiers of New Technology Education, Research and Action) program is probably the most sustainable program to enhance intercultural and international exchange, and ongoing distance education between IPSI and BGSU. The 8) US-based training for the Tunisian Partnership faculty will allow to these faculty to return to Tunisia and teach and mentor other faculty members on how to access online teaching and research materials, and how to create sustainable programs after the program period concludes in 2006. Finally, the 9) contribution of over 100 books for the ongoing BEAME program undoubtedly benefits the host country institution which, until the IPSI-BGSU MEPI partnership began, had no current media, journalism, communication and related texts in the English language.

#### How these activities benefited local Tunisian communities

The IPSI-BGSU MEPI program has a strong commitment to community and civil society building in both partnership countries. The program benefited the local

host country community by bringing 10 IPSI students and 2 faculty members to BGSU for a 3-week Women, Media, and Democracy workshop. Although the workshop primarily enhanced interaction with community and civil society in the U.S. partnership nation, it also made the IPSI student and faculty group aware of the possibilities of civil society-university interaction back in the local host country.

As described elsewhere in this section on Phase II activities, the Women, Media and Democracy workshop at BGSU provided the greatest benefit to Tunisian communities during Phase II. The broad topics addressed by the workshop and those areas where they do interact are critical to the health of civil society in countries around the world. Thus a three-week workshop, no matter how intense, only offered the international group of students the chance to scrape the surface of the issues. Nevertheless, students from both institutions reported how much they learned and grew from the workshop. The curriculum involved each student engaging in individual research and journal assignments, group research and presentation assignments, outside-of-class group and individual work, a series of guest lectures, visits to Arab-American media organizations, and other extracurricular activities.

All participating students, but in particular the IPSI students, stated that the online component of the Women, Media and Democracy workshop was one of the most enjoyable and valuable to them. Many felt more comfortable communicating online, rather than during class discussions, which took place in English, the third language for students from Tunisia and Russia, and the second language for the student from China. They could think and write at their own pace, read others' postings, and thoughtfully respond. They were encouraged not to speak to their peers in the computer lab, but communicate only through computer mediated communication (CMC).

All participating students, but in particular, the IPSI students, stated that the online component of the Women, Media and Democracy workshop was one of the most enjoyable and valuable to them.

Extent and nature of collaborating U.S. institutions' involvement in partnership activities during Phase I

While in Washington, D.C. for the ALO conference in July, Drs. Lengel and El Bour met with the Dr. James J. Zogby, Founder and President of the **Arab American Institute (AAI)**, as well as several of the staff of the AAI. The AAI is the most well-known political and policy research and support service for the Arab American community.

An officer of the Commercial Section of the **Tunisian Embassy in DC** provided assistance to Drs. Lengel and El Bour in a consultative face-to-face meeting concerning the international tax treaty between Tunisia and the U.S. and well as discuss private sector partnerships as part of the IPSI-BGSU MEPI partnership. This information was instrumental in advising the BGSU Business Office on the procedure for providing honoraria for to Drs. El Bour and Kembli for their instruction of the "Women, Media and Democracy" workshop.

Two private sector media organizations, **Boyle Media** and **Warmuth Design**, provided design, layout, production, photographic and other services for documenting and engaging in outreach of all partnership activities. Warmuth Design began design of a research conference poster that will be displayed during the next reporting period at the BGSU Research Conference, November 3-4, 2005.

**Regional and national Arab American media organizations** including *Arab American News*, *The Forum and Link*, and *The Arab Gazette* opened their doors to meet with the IPSI and BGSU students. Editor-in-Chief and writers from *The Forum and Link* also provided a tour of the Arab American National Museum for the IPSI and BGSU students.

The **U.S. Embassy in Tunis** provided ongoing assistance and advice to enhance the partnership and its activities.

**USAID** representatives at the ALO conference in July provided advice on visas, taxation, and health insurance for the IPSI students and faculty participating in cultural and

the IPSI students and faculty participating in cultural and professional exchanges.

Several university units have provided additional technical support for the partnership.

#### Relationship building with private sector and civil society partners in Tunisia during Phase II

Civil society interaction with other higher education institutions, businesses, NGOs, community organizations, and/or other public/private agencies, is important to ensure sustainability and expansion of the partnership.

During the Women, Media & Democracy workshop, the IPSI students experienced short internships with the following **media organizations**: The *Sentinel Tribune* newspaper, WBGU-TV, the *BGSU News*, BGSU Marketing & Communication. Workshop students and faculty benefited from visits to local newspaper, radio and television including the *Sentinel Tribune* and WBGU-TV, along with guest presentations by the current Religion Editor of the *Toledo Blade*, David Yonke, who has over 20 years of editorial experience of the *Toledo Blade*, the BGSU library to learn of online digital library and research resources, particularly those on women, the media, and democracy. Dr. Hamida el Bour met with Robert Bortel, faculty advisor to the *BGSU News* university newspaper as part of an additional MEPI project overseen by Stephanie Syptak of the U.S. Embassy in Tunis.

The workshop had also a positive impact in terms of its **outreach to the community, particularly the Arab American community**. Thus, the IPSI and BGSU students and faculty met with the following organizations: *Arab American News*, and *The Forum and Link* (an Arab American newsmagazine). Drs. El Bour and Lengel met with one of the contributing writers of *The Arab Gazette* newsmagazine in Cleveland, Ohio. Students in the workshop volunteered to deliver copies of the Arab Gazette to shops and community organizations in Dearborn and Detroit

IPSI and BGSU students participating in the Women, Media and Democracy workshop engaged in community outreach efforts, such as volunteering to deliver free copies of *The Arab Gazette* to shops and community organizations in Dearborn and Detroit, Michigan.

Michigan.

On July 31, the IPSI-BGSU faculty and student group, along with Ann Warmuth of private sector partner Warmuth Design, enjoyed a **tour of the Arab American National Museum by the editor and journalists of *The Forum and Link***. The group also enjoyed attending a Toledo Mud Hens baseball game, learning how to play softball with Joe Boyle, or Boyle Media, one of the partnership's private sector partners, home visits, and drum circle participatory musical event at the **Peace Church** in Bowling Green. The IPSI students proposed and organized a Tunisian Soiree at Laura Lengel's home where IPSI and BGSU students and faculty, and community members enjoyed Tunisian food, song, and celebration.

**How these activities contributed to educational development in Tunisia**

The program's impact in Tunisia will include personal, professional growth on the part of the Tunisian students, and serve to increase graduation rates through an exciting and motivating international education exchange program, enhance students' English-language skills and, ultimately, augment private sector employment of Arab university graduates in media, journalism and related communications fields such as ICT.

**The partnership's greatest successes during Phase II**

As detailed above, the Women, Media, and Democracy workshop was the partnership's greatest success during this reporting period. The level of educational growth and intercultural interaction between the IPSI and BGSU faculty and students, as well as the interaction with regional media, private sector and civil society partners was outstanding.

**Unanticipated successes**

One unanticipated success was the expertise gained by the U.S. Partnership Co-Director and the Director of the BGSU School of Communication Studies in processing

BGSU School of Communication Studies in processing visas through the USAID TraiNet system, as well as negotiating the complicated system of international tax treaty between the U.S. and Tunisia, then informing the BGSU Business Office and other relevant bodies about this tax agreement.

#### Partnership challenges encountered

While the knowledge gained from the visa processing and the taxation talks as an unanticipated success, it was the primary challenge during this reporting period. The U.S. Partnership Directors were relieved to establish the groundwork for such activities to move much more smoothly for future cultural and professional exchanges.

#### Informing policy at the institutional, community, national or international levels

The partnership aimed to achieve the Higher Education in Development and USAID goal to inform to “policy in the host country through policy relevant research consultations, analysis, advice and/or direct assistance, such as helping to increase the enrollment or participation of students from economically disadvantaged and/or rural communities, introduced internships and opportunities.”

During Phase II, at the institutional level, Drs. Cassara and Lengel, the U.S. Partnership Co-Directors have met on several occasions with the following units at both country’s institutions in order to increase enrollment and participation of students from the host country: Dr. Mohamed Hamdane, Director of ISPI, Dr. Heinz Buhlman, Dean of the BGSU Graduate College, Dr. John T. Warren, Graduate Studies Coordinator of the BGSU School of Communication Studies, Dr. Joseph Frizado, 2004-2005 Interim Director Coordinator of the BGSU School of Communication Studies, and Dr. Oliver Boyd-Barrett, Director of the BGSU School of Communication Studies (SCS). Through these meetings, we have secured the

#### Scenes from Phase III



Dr. Catherine Cassara consults IPSI faculty during the active teaching and learning workshops at IPSI, November 2005.



commitment of having at least one IPSI graduate be enrolled with funding (if she or he meets the same qualifications as all other candidates to the SCS graduate programs) in the Masters program of the School of Communication Studies.

During October, Dr. Fatma Azouz, Tunisian Partnership Co-Director at Fulbright SIR at BGSU, has been making contacts for Drs. Cassara, El Bour and Lengel to meet with Ministry of Education officials while in Tunis for their November cultural and professional exchange.

As delegates to the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS), Drs. Cassara, El Bour, and Lengel followed all the civil society preparatory meetings and dialogue leading up to the UN WSIS meeting, November 16 – 18, 2005. They anticipated that their time together in Tunis during the UN WSIS would enhance opportunities to inform policy at institutional, community, national and international levels.

#### Collaboration with the U.S. Embassy in Tunis

The partnership continued to benefit from our close relationship with the U.S. Embassy in Tunis during Phase II. During this phase, Dr. Cassara engaged in numerous teleconferences and correspondence with Stephanie Syptak, Director of the American Center of the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, to assist Dr. Hamida El Bour, Tunisia Partnership Co-Director, in her application for an additional MEPI grant to develop a university newspaper at IPSI. The grant was approved during Phase II; this resulted in IPSI receiving funds to acquire necessary equipment to house a university newspaper on campus, as well as bring the Mr. Bob Bortel, faculty advisor of the BGSU independent student newspaper, the *BG News*, and two student *BG News* editors to IPSI in November.

The partnership directors were in close touch with Ms. Syptak and other officials at the U.S. Embassy in Tunis on issues including, but not limited to, processing visas,



Partnership Co-Directors Catherine Cassara and Hamida El Bour consult on the schedule for a workshop at IPSI.



IPSI Peer Mentors hold the partnership poster to be displayed at the UN World Summit on the Information Society.

---

addressing taxation concerns for IPSI faculty honoraria, and making travel arrangements for cultural and professional exchanges.

#### How the partnership has strengthened academic programs at Arab universities in Phase II

Please also see details about how the partnership has strengthened academic programs at IPSI and the University of Manouba. Partnership directors engaged in several teleconferences with Dr. James Miller, Director of the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis (CEMAT, the American research center in Tunis), to determine how partnership developments could be introduced to other universities across North Africa and, eventually, the Middle East.

#### Collaborative research during Phase II to address a development problem in Tunisia and improve the quality of independent student research

Despite having only launched the partnership in February 2005, the team has already had several papers accepted for presentation and publication:

Lengel, L., Cassara, C., Azouz, F., & El Bour, H. (2005). Online Media Education and Training in the Arab World and Abroad: Connecting Journalism and Communication Students in International Contexts. Forthcoming in the *Proceedings of the 3rd Annual Communication Forum on Media Education & Training in the Arab World*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia Saudi Association for Media & Communication (SAMC).

During this phase, Drs. Cassara, Lengel, El Bour and Azouz either presented, or had papers accepted for presentation at the following organization annual meetings:

Organization for the Study of Communication, Language and Gender (Reno, Nevada, October 2005).

International Research Foundation for Development (Tunis, Tunisia, November 2005).

Saudi Association for Media & Communication (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, December 2005).

---

---

Of course, Drs. El Bour and Lengel also presented at the Association Liaison Office for University Education in Development (Washington, DC, July 2005).

In addition, as the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at BGSU this year, Dr. Azouz has been very active in her research and presentations:

Women in the Arab World (for the BGSU Women's Studies Department).

Women and Gender in Islam (for various units at BGSU).

Democracy in the Arab World (for various units at BGSU).

An international journalist shares her experience (Presented in French at the Maison Francaise, Department of Romance Languages, BGSU).

Arab Women Journalists (co-authored paper with Dr. Catherine Cassara, presented at the Global Fusion conference, University of Ohio, Athens, Ohio, September, 2005).

Image of Arab Women in Arab Media (College of Communication, Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, October 2005).

Blocked Channels: War Coverage as a Route to Professional Advancement for Western and Arab Women Journalists (co-authored paper with Dr. Catherine Cassara, presented at the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language and Gender annual conference, October 13, 2005).

Image of Arab Women in Arab Media (University of Nevada, Reno, October 14, 2005).

Healthcare in Tunisia (School of Public Health, College of Human and Community Sciences, University of Nevada, Reno, October 14, 2005).

Adaptation of curricula and improvement of the quality of

---

---

faculty instruction and materials available at Arab universities during Phase II

Please see above for details on how the partnership has adapted and enhanced curricula and the quality of faculty instruction and materials, as well as, in various sections of this report, the discussions of the “Women, Media, and Democracy” workshop. Materials developed and compiled for, and faculty instructional expertise gained during this workshop will enhance both curricula and quality of faculty instruction and materials at IPSI.

Dr. Fatma Azouz and Laura Lengel have developed both online and face-to-face curriculum for IPC 409 International Communication and are currently co-teaching the course. Dr. Azouz and Dr. Kristie Foell, Director of International Studies and U.S. Partnership English Language Curriculum Coordinator for the IPSI-BGSU MEPI Partnership, continue to collaborate in curriculum development and teaching of INST 200 International Studies. We are confident that when Dr. Azouz returns to IPSI next academic year she will take all the curriculum developments and knowledge to students and faculty at IPSI.

In addition, the work of Drs. Cassara and Lengel in their weekly meetings with Eric Browning of the BGSU Technology Enhancement Classroom Support Specialists (TECS) program, will develop and implement technology into the BGSU-IPSI curriculum materials and instruction.

Finally, the BEAME book donation program will greatly benefit both curricula and quality of faculty instruction and materials at IPSI and, in the future, other Arab universities.

---

---

### Preparing individuals for productive employment in Tunisia's workforce, including the private sector marketplace

The IPSI-BGSU partnership is enhance the acquisition and development of professional skills in the following areas: 1) how to write for the media (via internships with media organizations); 2) how to work and obtain education in international contexts; 3) how to apply for graduate programs in the U.S.; 4) how to report online, develop communities and engage in collaborative, co-located work teams online; 5) how to analyze research and media reports; 6) increased opportunities to speak and write in the English language, and 7) opportunities for enhancing knowledge relevant to the private sector marketplace, specifically in the area of professional development in marketing and public relations.

The Women, Media, and Democracy workshop at BGSU trained students and faculty in professionally-relevant skills in information and communication technology, specifically for the use of the BGSU Blackboard system, the online course delivery system of the university. The workshop also enhanced IPSI students' skills in the English language in professionally-focused media, journalism and communication contexts.

The professional shadowing experience at BGSU Marketing and Communications will have an impact on IPSI alumni's professional development in the private sector marketplace in Tunisia.

### Synergies, serendipities, or human interest stories for the partnership during Phase II

The overriding purpose of the summer workshop was to bring the Tunisian students and faculty to BGSU so that BGSU partnership faculty could spend time with them and gain a better understanding of the needs of IPSI faculty, students and administrators Tunisian and what BGSU could do from a curricular standpoint to help IPSI.

The workshop was open to graduate and undergraduate students from RCSII and partnershin directors and faculty

---

students from BGSU and partnership directors and faculty expected the interactions between the students to be beneficial to both universities.

When the time came for the students to share their evaluations of the three-week experience everyone involved – from the organizers to the students – was not prepared for the overwhelming response that experience generated. Both the Tunisian students and the BGSU students reported that they had never understood how much their initial perceptions of the people on the other side of the cultural exchange had been shaped by pervasive negative stereotypes. The shattering of those stereotypes and the students' glee at finding people "just like" themselves instead helped carry home exactly how important it is that citizens on both sides gain exposure to the other culture beyond what media messages offer.

An additional unexpected result of the workshop was the Tunisian students' appreciation of the different teaching styles used by the BGSU professors they came into contact with. Our initial interest had been in them as students, and only secondarily were we focusing on their teachers. This fall the workshop will be as much for the IPSI faculty as it is for their students, which is fitting if we are sincerely interested in capacity building. And thanks to the Tunisian students involved in the summer workshop, we know where to begin.

Additionally, the faculty at both institutions have gained a greater appreciation of each others' strengths, abilities and sincere interests in what can come out of our joint efforts. The presence of Dr. Fatma Azouz in Bowling Green this year has been a great gift to the program, even though her presence here is due to a Fulbright appointment. Our joint research presentations suggest that we have a great many research interests in common and that there is a rich potential in joining our shared interests to study the accomplishments of women journalists, particularly women foreign correspondents, working in the Arab world and in the West.

---

Arab world and in the West.

---

### Phase III: October 1, 2005 – April 30, 2006

#### Partnership activities, outcomes, and impact during

#### Phase III

Milestones during Phase III included the following:

1) An intensive journalism and communication workshop for IPSI students at IPSI in Tunis.

2) Face-to-face and online curriculum development workshop for IPSI faculty and for the IPSI alumni Peer Mentors held at IPSI.

3) IPSI and BGSU partnership faculty, the director of the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis (CEMAT), IPSI student volunteers, and IPSI alumni Peer Mentor volunteers convene at the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS) in Tunis where a team of partnership faculty and a peer mentor present partnership successes at the Summit.

4) External evaluator to the project meets Tunisian partnership directors and students at the UN WSIS to engage in second external evaluation of the partnership.

5) U.S. Partnership Co-Director and the faculty advisor of BGSU's independent student newspaper, *BGNews*, consult IPSI print journalism faculty and lead a 5-day workshop for faculty and students in the creation of an independent student newspaper, funded by a MEPI Small Grant (\$41,000) from the U.S. Embassy in Tunis directly to IPSI.

6) Cultural and professional exchange for the Tunisian co-director who is the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at BGSU.

7) U.S. partnership co-directors sought additional support for and mentor the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence.

8) U.S. and Tunisian partnership co-directors collaboratively taught International Communication at BGSU.

9) Tunisian partnership co-director taught a master's and Ph D -level course in *Women and the Media* in the

---



---

and Ph.D.-level course in Women and the Media in the Arab World and an undergraduate course in International Communication at BGSU.

10) An online collaborative educational experience under the ongoing *Frontera* (Frontiers of New Technology Education, Research and Action) program.

11) Efforts to extend and expand the partnership to other nations in the Middle East and North Africa.

12) Partnership co-directors presented several papers related to the partnership at competitively reviewed national and international conferences.

13) BGSU continued to contribute text and scholarly books and journals to the newly named BEAME (Books for the Enhancement of Arab Media and Education) program; during this reporting period, BGSU contributed over 75 books to IPSI under the BEAME program.

Details on the above Phase III partnership activities, outcomes, and impact

**1) Journalism and online communication workshop for IPSI students.** The workshop, held on the IPSI campus in November 2005, is the third in the series of hands-on practica at both IPSI and BGSU. Fifty (50) undergraduate students and six (6) alumni Peer Mentors were taught by U.S. Partnership Co-Directors, Drs. Catherine Cassara and Laura Lengel. Topics covered were investigative reporting, human rights reporting, and online journalism – with particular focus on the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS).

Online focus included teaching this new cohort of third and fourth year IPSI students how to use Blackboard, the BGSU online course delivery program (please see Appendices). IPSI students communicated with BGSU students in the International Communication course that Lengel and Tunisian partnership co-director, Dr. Fatma Azouz, were collaboratively teaching from August – December 2005. IPSI students were expected not only to take part in the online discussions, by reacting to other

---

take part in the online discussions, by reacting to other people's posts, but also by offering discussion points of their own. Participating in the online discussions not only added to IPSI and BGSU students' learning about the UN WSIS first-hand from students and faculty in Tunis, as well as topics including the digital divide in the MENA region.

2) Face-to-face and online **curriculum development workshop** for IPSI faculty and for the IPSI alumni Peer Mentors held at IPSI in November 2005.

Responding to a call from Dr. Mohamed Hamdane, Director of IPSI, Drs. Cassara and Lengel facilitated a faculty skills building workshop to enhance development of curricula, enhance syllabi, enhance class discussion on topics including investigative reporting and human rights reporting, enhance lectures and class presentations which such applications as PowerPoint.

3) Partnership directors, faculty and students participate as a **civil society delegation to the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS)**.

IPSI and BGSU partnership faculty, Dr. James Miller, the director of the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis (CEMAT), IPSI student volunteers, and IPSI alumni Peer Mentor volunteers convene at the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS) in Tunis where a team of partnership faculty and a peer mentor present partnership successes at a competitively selected session during the Summit.

The Summit, held in Tunis from November 16 - 18, 2005, brought together heads of state, industry leaders, and members of civil society organizations to analyze the problems of the digital divide and information access and flow, particularly in developing nations. It was, arguably, the most important international media and communication event thus far this century and, thus, a highlight of the overall IPSI-BGSU MEPI program.

Presenting in the session were Drs. El Bour, Bakkredine, and Lajmi from IPSI and Drs. Lengel and Cassara from

and Lajmi from IPSI and Drs. Lengel and Cassara from BGSU, and Mehdi ben Hamza, a recent IPSI alumnus and Peer Mentor of the IPSI-BGSU partnership.

The session specifically focused on online media and journalism teaching in international contexts. The panel was held in the Kasserine Room of the UN Summit in Le Kram PalExpo in Tunis, from 5 - 7 pm on November 16, the first day of the Summit. The session was an outstanding opportunity to share the successes of the IPSI-BGSU partnership with world leaders in information and communication technology.

Drs. Cassara, El Bour Lengel, Dr. James Miller, Director of the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis, Mehdi ben Hamza and other IPSI Peer Mentors were privileged to attend the opening plenary session where UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan presented his thoughts on the importance of breaking down the digital divide in order to enhance peaceful global communication.

**4) External evaluator to the project met partnership directors and students at the UN WSIS to engage in second external evaluation of the partnership:**

Dr. Christine Ogan, Professor at Indiana University and expert in Middle East and North African media and communication, traveled to Tunis for the UN WSIS to engage in her second evaluation of the partnership. Dr. Ogan conducted independent interviews of the three attending partnership directors, Dr. Mohammed Hamdane, Director of IPSI, Dr. James Miller, Director of the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis, Dr. Priya Kapoor, civil society delegate to the UN WSIS and specialist on women and the media in the Global South, several partnership Peer Mentors who were volunteering and attending the Summit. After the Summit, Dr. Ogan visited IPSI to observe teaching in action, see relevant documentation, and meet and discuss program goals, milestones and next steps with participating faculty, students, and partnership directors.

**5) Enhancing the IPSI university student newspaper.**

Dr. Hamida El Bour, Tunisian Partnership Co-Director, was awarded a MEPI Small Grant (\$41,000) from the U.S. Embassy in Tunis directly to IPSI to create the first independent student newspaper in Tunisia. For the grant, IPSI was awarded computers for writing, editing, desktop publishing. Also funded by the MEPI Small Grant, student staff of the BGNews, the independent daily student newspaper at BGSU. Dr. Catherine Cassara, U.S. Partnership Co-Director, and Robert Bortel, Director of Student Publications at BGSU were funded by the grant to travel to IPSI in November 2005 to consult in the creation of the student newspaper and lead a 5-day workshop for faculty and students in independent student news writing and publishing.

In addition, IPSI print journalism faculty and students traveled to BGSU in March 2006 for additional training in producing independent student newspaper.

6) Cultural and professional exchange for the Tunisian co-director who is the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at BGSU for the 2005-06 academic year.

One of the faculty active in the partnership, Dr. Fatma Azouz, continued her hear in Bowling Green and U.S. partnership directors interacted with her extensively, co-authoring professional presentations, team teaching with her, and supporting her outreach efforts, and generally participating in her active engagement in the Bowling Green community.

**7) U.S. partnership co-directors seek additional support for and mentor the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence/Tunisian Partnership Co-Director.**

Drs. Cassara and Lengel authored a similar proposal to the Council for International Exchange of Scholars from BGSU to support Dr. Azouz's Fulbright year. They engaged in numerous negotiations at BGSU to secure cost-share contributions for accommodation, teaching assignments, collaborative teaching and research activities, and civil society interaction for Dr. Azouz. They negotiated with the Director of the School of Communication Studies and the

Director of the School of Communication Studies and the Dean and Associate Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences to obtain \$15,000 in a cost-share contribution to fund Dr. Azouz's teaching at BGSU. They also negotiated with the Director of the Chapman Residential Learning Community for a cost-share contribution of a faculty apartment for Dr. Azouz, valued at nearly \$7,000.

Once Dr. Azouz was awarded the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence to BGSU, Dr. Cassara was the key liaison with the Council for International Exchange of Scholars to plan for Dr. Azouz's travel and arrival at BGSU. Dr. Lengel offered support in moving, and in donating household items not provided in the faculty apartment. All faculty in the School of Communication Studies, International Studies and the Chapman Learning Center provided immeasurable assistance and mentoring to Dr. Azouz.

**8) U.S. and Tunisian Partnership Co-Directors collaboratively teach International Communication at BGSU.**

Drs. Azouz and Lengel collaboratively taught IPC 409 International Communication at BGSU during the Fall 2005 semester. Dr. Lengel engaged in extensive mentoring of Dr. Azouz in teaching senior undergraduate students at BGSU, grading policy and procedures, the web-based MyBGSU and Blackboard online services and helped her learn how to build online curriculum using Blackboard, PowerPoint and other computer services and applications, lecturing and classroom dialogue styles and strategies.

**9) Tunisian partnership co-director teaches a graduate course in Women and the Media in the Arab World and the spring 2006 offering of International Communication at BGSU.**

The mentoring in point nine above prepared Dr. Azouz to independently teach IPC 409 International Communication at BGSU during the Spring 2006 semester. Dr. Azouz also taught a masters and Ph.D. level course in Women and the Media in the Arab World in Spring 2006. She invited Dr. Lengel to give a guest presentation on

---

She invited Dr. Lengel to give a guest presentation on women and the *hijab* (an Arabic term meaning modesty, more widely used to mean veiling, or the veil) to graduate students the course.

10) An **online collaborative educational experience** under the ongoing *Frontera* (Frontiers of New Technology Education, Research and Action) program.

An online collaborative educational experience under the ongoing *Frontera* (Frontiers of New Technology Education, Research and Action) program. Dr. Fatma Azouz and Laura Lengel have developed both online and face-to-face curriculum for IPC 409 International Communication and co-taught the course from August to December 2005. One of the key components of IPC 409 International Communication is a semester-long online curricular component which is part of the ongoing *Frontera* program.

*Frontera* is an established, grant award-winning program that has linked over 1,000 students from 14 different universities worldwide since its inception in 1996, including BGSU, IPSI, and Zayed University, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, United Arab Emirates (for more information, please see [www.fronteraproject.org](http://www.fronteraproject.org)). Accessed through the Blackboard online learning environment housed at BGSU, *Frontera* allows students at both partnership institutions to connect online and focus a dialogue on topics including online civic discourse, the Digital Divide, media and journalistic ethics, and international affairs reporting. Students who have been teamed with others in the online international exchange forum have reported that their connection through *Frontera* has lasted long after their 'official' time with the program has ended.

During the Fall 2005 semester students not only from IPSI and BGSU, but also from the People's Friendship University in Moscow were asked to both interrogate the Internet and encounter it as a discursive tool to explore critical issues in international and intercultural communication. Online dialogue focused on the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN

---

Nations World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS) taking place in Tunis in November 16 – 18, 2005, the digital divide, cultural differences between the U.S. and the Arab World. IPSI Peer Mentors who volunteered and attended the UN WSIS reported from the Summit back to *Frontera* teams, providing first-hand observations, experiences and analyses of the most important media and communication event thus far this century.

The online course project affords students the opportunity to learn across borders and cultural differences. Through computer mediated communication (CMC), students work “together” in “cyber classrooms”, across national borders and cultural differences, to explore ethnicity, nation and citizenship, the potential for civic discourse with persons from different cultures and nations. During the past decade students of diverse heritage, Mexican, Norwegian, Nigerian, Brazilian, Indian, Spanish, Turkish, English, Arab, US, Welsh, Irish and Russian to name only some, have engaged in dialogue through *Frontera*.

Grouped into small CMC teams and using Blackboard (in the case of the IPSI-BGSU partnership; other partnerships use their university email accounts), students have been informed that they are part of an international university partnership. They are also told that are to explore their differences; differences of created by the boundaries of nationalism, but also boundaries of race, class, ethnicity and one's own identity. Use of CMC is positioned as a mechanism through which to explore this crossing of boundaries because it made possible the students' ability to journey virtually to other places, thus facilitating a virtual “community of practice” of student peers and faculty.

More about *Frontera* can be found at < [www.fronteraproject.org](http://www.fronteraproject.org) >.

#### **11) Efforts to extend and expand the partnership to other nations in the Middle East and North Africa**

U.S. Partnership Co-Director, Dr. Laura Lengel, traveled to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to present successes of the

to Riyadh, Saudi Arabia to present successes of the partnership at the Saudi Association for Media and Communication, and meets with U.S. Embassy officials about ways to expand some partnership components to King Saud University in Riyadh (for details on the paper presented, please see discussions of program research elsewhere in this report).

One outcome from the meetings in Riyadh resulted in the extension of the *Frontera* program. During the Spring 2006 semester, students from IPSI, BGSU and the women's campus of King Saud University in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia continued the *Frontera* program (please see point 7 above for details). This semester, focus was on women and the media, and gender and communication, and cultural and gender differences between the U.S, Tunisia and Saudi Arabia.

Dr. Lengel organized the Saudi Arabian component of the *Frontera* program while she was in Riyadh in December 2005 for the Saudi Association for Media and Communication. At the third SAMC conference on Media Education in the Arab World she presented a paper co-authored by all four partnership directors on highlights of the IPSI-BGSU partnership, and keys to successful university partnership programs. She also met with U.S. Embassy political, cultural and education affairs officers and spent three days on the women's campus of King Saud University, lecturing to several classes, engaging in dialogue with the faculty and students, and discussing ways to extend the IPSI-BGSU partnership to other Middle East and North African nations.

**12) Partnership co-directors present research papers** related to the partnership at competitively reviewed national and international conferences. For details, please see research section in this report.

**13) BGSU continues to contribute text and scholarly books and journals to the BEAME (Books for the Enhancement of Arab Media and Education) program.** during this reporting period, BGSU contributed over 75



---

during this reporting period, BGSU contributed over 75 books to IPSI under the BEAME program.

This ongoing program provides recently published media, journalism and communication scholarly books and textbooks for the IPSI journalism and communication library. The textbooks and scholarly books are focused on subjects including, but not limited to: news writing, reporting, and public affairs reporting, investigative reporting, media law, media history, media economics, media management, media theory, public relations, internet journalism, communication theory, interpersonal and small group communication skills, political science, international and intercultural communication. Through the end of Phase III, BGSU donated over 230 books to IPSI, valued at over \$3,000.

#### How activities in Phase III strengthened the capacity of IPSI

The activities have strengthened the capacity of Tunisian higher education, particularly IPSI, University of Manouba, in the following ways: 1) The intensive print journalism and online communication student workshops at IPSI resulted in the first independent student newspaper in Tunisia. A workshop on pedagogy for IPSI faculty allowed opportunities for curriculum development and enhancement at IPSI. Students and faculty at IPSI have been exposed to current research on communication and journalism pedagogy and keys to development and sustaining university partnership programs.

The cultural and professional exchange for the IPSI faculty who is the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at BGSU during the 2005-2006 year will also provide IPSI sustainable teaching and research materials that she will back to Tunisia from BGSU and her visits to other universities in the U.S.

The online collaborative educational experience under the ongoing *Frontera* (Frontiers of New Technology

---

the ongoing *Frontera* (Frontiers of New Technology Education, Research and Action) program is probably the most sustainable program to enhance intercultural and international exchange, and ongoing distance education between IPSI and BGSU. The US-based training for the Tunisian Partnership faculty will allow to these faculty members to return to Tunisia and teach and mentor other faculty members on how to access online teaching and research materials, and how to create sustainable programs after the program period concludes in 2006. Finally, the contribution of over 80 books for the ongoing BEAME program undoubtedly benefits the host country institution which, until the IPSI-BGSU MEPI partnership began, had no current media, journalism, communication and related texts in the English language.

Drs. Cassara, El Bour and Lengel continue to discuss new directions for the IPSI-BGSU partnership.

#### How activities benefited Tunisian communities

The IPSI-BGSU MEPI program has a strong commitment to community and civil society building in both partnership countries. The program benefited the local host country community by bringing 5 IPSI students and 2 faculty members to BGSU for a print media workshop.

BGSU is privileged to have Dr. Azouz as the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence this academic year. Her links with community and civil society in the U.S. benefits BGSU, the NW Ohio and SE Michigan communities and the learning communities at the numerous universities at which she has given guest lectures this year. When she returns to Tunisia, Dr. Azouz will have numerous insights on civil society and education in the US that she will share with her nation.

Workshops at both BGSU and IPSI provided the substantial benefit to the BGSU, IPSI and other institutions, both educational and civil society. The topics addressed by the workshop such as human rights reporting and those areas where they do interact are critical to the health of civil society in countries around the world. Thus workshons

---

society in countries around the world. Thus workshops offered a chance for cultural and education exchange of students from both institutions who reported how much they learned and grew from the partnership activities. The curriculum involved each student engaging in individual research and journal assignments, group research and presentation assignments, outside-of-class group and individual work, and other extracurricular activities.

#### **How these activities benefited BGSU**

The opportunities for both IPSI and BGSU faculty and students for learning have been outstanding.

Students at both institutions have broken down their stereotypical images and notions of U.S. and Arab World citizens.

Opportunities for scholarship of engagement and service-learning are also possible due to the relationships developed from the partnership.

Negotiating cultural and professional differences between BGSU and IPSI faculty have also been a great learning experience for both groups of faculty.

#### **How these activities benefited BGSU and the northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan communities**

The opportunities for both IPSI and BGSU faculty and students to interact with civil society organizations of the local U.S. community are important and have created a foundation for sustainable activities after the end of the MEPI funding period. As mentioned in earlier reports, it is important to note the location of BGSU, one of just a few major research universities within close proximity to the largest and oldest Arab-American community in the United States. The Islamic Center of Greater Toledo, only 15 minutes from campus, is one of the largest mosques in the U.S. and houses one of the largest congregations. Drs. Azouz and Lengel took their BGSU students to the Islamic Center to meet the Iman, tour the facilities, and meet

---

educational experts there.

Additional outreach opportunities have also benefited the local communities of Northwest Ohio and Southeast Michigan. For example, on September 23, 2005 Dr. Laura Lengel hosted a dinner/reception in her home to celebrate the successes thus far of the IPSI-BGSU partnership and to welcome Dr. Fatma Azouz, Tunisian Partnership Co-director and BGSU Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence. Speaking at the event as Dr. Azouz and Dr. John Folkins, BGSU Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. Attending the reception was Robin Weirauch, 2006 Democratic candidate for Congress for Wood County, Ohio; students and faculty of BGSU; members of the Arab American community of Northwest Ohio

#### Collaboration with other U.S. partners

Warmuth Design designed a large format poster reporting on key milestones and successes of the partnership, which was on display at the United Nations World Summit on the Information Society (November 2005). They will continue to be involved in the design and preparation of the IPSI-BGSU MEPI website.

Several community and civil society organizations hosted Dr. Fatma Azouz, Tunisian Partnership Co-Director and Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence at BGSU to present guest lectures including the Wood County Senior Citizens Center and the Wood County Public Library.

#### Collaboration with other Tunisian partners

Drs. Cassara and Lengel had brief meetings with US Ambassador to Tunisia, William Hudson; Director of the American Center, Stephanie Syptak; and UN WSIS US delegation leaders Ambassador Gross and US ambassador to the UN Human Rights Commission, Morely.

Cassara, Lengel and Dr. Kembli (IPSI faculty member) met with Dr. Mounir Klifa, Tunisian Ministry of Education official, and Dr. James Miller, Director of the Centre d'Études Maghrébines à Tunis (CEMAT) regarding new

d'Études Maghrébines à Tunis (CEMAT) regarding new sustainable initiatives for the IPSI-BGSU partnership, including assistance with restructuring the entire IPSI curriculum as required by the Tunisian Ministry.

Drs. Cassara, El Bour, Kembi and Lengel met with several officials of Centre d'Information Tunisienne pour l'Environnement and Technologie (CITET) and the Association Tunisienne des Universitaires (AT-UNI) to address new curricular directions in environmental communication at the BA and MS levels at IPSI.

### Collaborative research during Phase III

The Tunisian and U.S. partnership co-directors have co-authored several papers related to several subjects relevant to the partnership themes and goals including, women and media in the Arab World, development and sustainability of successful university partnerships, and the digital divide and lack of online research resources available to academic researchers in the Global South. Research has been presented at conferences in the U.S., Tunisia, and Saudi Arabia.

Program directors gave several presentations at the following academic conferences and organizations:

Dr. El Bour and Lengel presented at the annual ALO conference in Washington, DC, July 2005.

Drs. Azouz, Cassara and Lengel gave several research presentations at the following academic conferences and organizations:

Global Fusion (Sept 30 – Oct 2), the Organization for the Study of Communication, Language and Gender (OSCLG, Oct 13-16), various classes in communication and international studies, and a BGSU residential learning community where Dr. Azouz lives. All presentations reported various aspects of the partnership from the online interaction, to the need for increased collaboration between the US and the MENA and the US and Africa, media in the Arab World, and Arab women journalists.

Ann Warmuth, of private sector partner Warmuth Design, designed a 3 ft x 4 ft research poster that reporting on partnership phases and achievements, to be displayed at the following conferences and meetings:

4<sup>th</sup> Annual BGSU Research Conference, Nov. 3-4

IPSI-BGSU MEPI Program Workshop III at IPSI, Tunis, Nov. 9-11

The International Research Foundation for Development (IRFD), Tunis, Nov. 14-16

UN World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS), Tunis, Nov. 15-19

IPSI MEPI Program for University Newspaper Development, Nov. 21-28

In addition, partnership co-directors presented at the following: La Maison Francaise at BGSU (Azouz, Nov. 1), 4<sup>th</sup> Annual BGSU Research Conference (all four co-directors, Nov. 3-4), The International Research Foundation for Development (Cassara & Lengel, IRFD), UN WSIS (ben Hamza, Cassara, El Bour, Lengel, Nov. 14-16); BGSU School of Communication Studies Graduate Program Colloquium (Azouz, Nov. 15). All presentations either reported on or raised awareness about the IPSI-BGSU MEPI program.

#### Curricular and instructional enhancement during Phase III

The November 2005 workshop at IPSI involved several activities that will advance curriculum development and methods of faculty instruction.

In addition, during her trip to Tunis in March 2006, Dr. Cassara met with Dr. Hamida el Bour, Tunisian Partnership Co-Director, to discuss and develop the table of contents for the International Media Curriculum Book. They brainstormed on development of the curriculum book and on key topics and ideas that would be most relevant to IPSI faculty and students.

#### Preparing future professionals

Has your partnership undertaken activities to prepare individuals for productive employment in the host

individuals for productive employment in the host country's *workforce*, including the private sector marketplace during this reporting period (October 1, 2005 – March 31, 2006).

Skills building in the area of media, communication and journalism to prepare IPSI students for employment in local, regional, national and international media organizations.

#### Efforts to prepare future professionals in underserved or disadvantaged groups

IPSI has students from the territories under the Palestinian Authority. Although university programs are solid in their home regions, these students have increased opportunities for hands-on learning with media and communication professionals from around the Middle East and North African region who are working in or traveling to Tunis.

As mentioned earlier, IPSI has several outstanding media and communication research and training programs in the rural south of the country, an area underserved by the some of the best institutions of higher education in Tunisia.

#### Donations of books and CDs during Phase III

BGSU continues to contribute books to IPSI as part of the Books for the Enhancement of Arab Media and Education (BEAME) program. This ongoing program provides recently published media, journalism and communication scholarly books and textbooks for the IPSI journalism and communication library (for cost share figures resulting from the BEAME program, please see Quantitative Analysis). The textbooks and scholarly books are focused on subjects including, but not limited to: news writing, reporting, and public affairs reporting, investigative reporting, media law, media history, media economics, media management, media theory, public relations, internet journalism, communication theory, interpersonal

internet journalism, communication theory, interpersonal and small group communication skills, political science, international and intercultural communication. During this reporting period, BGSU contributed over 100 books. By Phase III, the partnership began, BGSU donated over 200 books to IPSI.

BGSU also contributed numerous CDs of key readings in Women, Media and Democracy, and in pedagogy and curriculum development to the host country partner, compiled by Dr. Cassara and the two BGSU School of Communication Studies Research Assistants involved in the partnership. BGSU also contributed CDs of instructional material on online and distance education, provided by BGSU's IDEAL – Interactive and Distance Education for All.

**Partnership's greatest successes – including any unanticipated successes – during Phase III**

The BEAME book donation program continued to be a huge success at IPSI. In November the books — now in the IPSI library — were displayed at IPSI and were on display for the students and faculty of IPSI, a display visited by members of the US Embassy counselor, the regional MEPI director, the U.S. Embassy in Tunis' press officer, and other members of the embassy staff.

During the civil society programming that accompanied the WSIS, IPSI faculty spoke discussed their on-line efforts with a Canadian school and Dr. Lengel, speaking in French, described the IPSI-BGSU collaborations.

The cultural exchange aspects of the program, at both the Tunisian and American partnership institutions, continued to have impacts far beyond anything expected when the initial proposal was submitted. The impacts of the partnership have had unexpected impacts on the university and town communities in Bowling Green, students of the two programs have repeatedly professed how the contacts have changed their understandings of each other. Faculty from both partnership institutions have developed long-term friendships



term friendships.

#### Partnership challenges during Phase III

The technological infrastructure and computer equipment at IPSI continues to hamper efforts to build on faculty and student learning for the long-term. The small MEPI grant got computers for the newspaper and therefore for print journalism seniors.

However, as a rule IPSI senior undergraduate students are entitled to only one hour a week in a computer lab and there aren't enough computers for the seniors to use their hours. Few classroom computers at IPSI are connected to the Internet at all, and those that all must be networked through the national, university server system, which is incredibly slow when it functions at all. This in spite of the fact that preparations for UN WSIS meant that high speed Internet service is now available in Tunisia through commercial ISPs. Thus, faculty and students with home computer access or the money to go to cyber cafes are the only ones who can participate in on-line aspects of the program.

Faculty at IPSI and elsewhere have been exposed to many grant programs from Western Europe and the US that were much heralded but resulted in very little of substance. Thus, it is really only now that BGSU faculty is convincing the IPSI faculty of the serious intention in collaborating with IPSI, to work to help in the areas that IPSI faculty perceive to be important.

#### Phase IV: May 1, 2006 – September 30, 2006

#### Partnership activities, outcomes, and impact during Phase IV

## Phase IV

Milestones during Phase IV included the following:

1) Cultural and professional exchange for the U.S. Partnership Co-Directors and three BGSU administrators to plan for the sustainability of the partnership.

2) University of Manouba and BGSU presidents signed a Memorandum of Agreement to extend and enhance sustainability of the partnership.

3) U.S. Partnership Co-Director works on overall planning, visa applications and university applications for two IPSI Peer Mentors to embark on the master's program in the BGSU School of Communication Studies.

4) The U.S. Embassy in Tunis, the Council on American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) and the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis (CEMAT) chose the School of Communication Studies at BGSU to receive the 2006 American Studies fellow.

5) The U.S. Partnership Co-Directors produce a DVD on the IPSI-BGSU partnership, called 'Partners for Change', which has been submitted to HED for viewing at the conference.

6) U.S. Partnership Co-Director, Tunisian Partnership Co-Director and faculty member attend the HED conference in Washington, D.C.

7) U.S. Partnership Co-Director and the faculty advisor of BGSU's independent student newspaper, *BGNews*, consult IPSI print journalism faculty on the BGSU campus.

8) External evaluator visit to BGSU to evaluate all partnership materials, interviews partnership personnel, and prepares final external evaluation of the partnership.

9) Research meetings at BGSU for IPSI and BGSU faculty.

10) Two IPSI peer mentors to embark on the master's program in the BGSU School of Communication Studies.

11) Development and production of the *Women, Media and Democracy Curriculum Book*.

12) Meetings with Warmuth Design for final report and

Democracies function best where there is free access to information and where unhindered discussions allow citizens to examine all sides of civic issues. Because higher education is known as a birthplace for civic debate, it is an essential partner in any society's transition to democracy.

curriculum book layout and design.

13) Writing and production of final report.

14) BGSU continued to contribute books to the BEAME (Books for the Enhancement of Arab Media and Education) program; during this reporting period, BGSU contributed over 75 books to IPSI under the BEAME program.

to democracy.

Details on the above Phase IV partnership activities, outcomes, and impact

**1) Cultural and professional exchange for the U.S. Partnership Co-Directors and three BGSU administrators to IPSI to plan for the sustainability of the partnership.**

The U.S. Partnership Co-Directors accompanied Dr. Edward Whipple, BGSU Vice President for Student Affairs, Dr. Heinz Buhlman, Dean of the Graduate College, and Dr. Oliver Boyd-Barrett the Director of the School of Communication Studies, to meet with the president of the University of Manouba, the Director of IPSI, and other administrators and faculty.

2) In advance of the site visit, BGSU President, Dr. Sidney Ribeau, signed a **Memorandum of Agreement to extend the partnership and enhance the sustainability of the partnership program**. Meetings with top University of Manouba administrators lead to their signing of the memorandum in Tunis.

**3) U.S. Partnership Co-Director works on overall planning, visa applications and university applications for two IPSI peer mentors to embark on the master's program in the BGSU School of Communication Studies.** Please see challenges in Phase IV section below for further details.

**4) The U.S. Embassy in Tunis, the Council on American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) and the Centre d'Etudes Maghrebines a Tunis (CEMAT) have chosen the School of Communication Studies at BGSU to receive their American Studies fellow, Dr. Olfa Baklouti, professor at the University of Sfax, Sfax, Tunisia.**

Dr. Baklouti arrived at BG on July 29, 2006 and spent three weeks in residence at BGSU, using the extensive online and in-house library sources, meeting with faculty, particularly those who have expertise in media history, and the history of the McCarthy era, in both the School of Communication Studies and the Department of History.

The American Studies fellowship is another way that our partnership continues to expand and extend; Dr. Baklouti's residence at BGSU created another set of open doors to extend and expand the partnership beyond the two primary institutions, IPSI and the School of Communication Studies, BGSU. The fellowship create new interdisciplinary links between and across BGSU and Tunisian universities.

5) **The U.S. Partnership Co-Directors produce a DVD on the IPSI-BGSU partnership, called 'Partners for Change', which has been submitted to HED for viewing at the conference.** Dr. Cassara also continued to assist IPSI faculty members, Dr. Hamida El Bour and Dr. Mohamed Ali Kembi, in their final travel plans to Washington for the conference.

6) **U.S. Partnership Co-Director, Tunisian Partnership Co-Director and faculty member attend the HED conference in Washington, D.C.** There were numerous, important networking opportunities to extend the partnership to new directions and with additional university partners.

7) **U.S. Partnership Co-Director and the faculty advisor of BGSU's independent student newspaper, *BGNews*, consult IPSI print journalism faculty on the BGSU campus.** Mr. Bob Bortel, and *BGNews* staff met with Drs. El Bour and Kembi to discuss progress on the IPSI student newspaper and the role of Mohamed Aziz Ben Amuer, the IPSI Peer Mentor who has a paid assistantship to work at *BGNews*.

8) **External evaluator conducts third and final evaluation of the partnership.**

---

Dr. Christine Ogan, Professor at Indiana University and expert in Middle East and North African media and communication, traveled to conduct her third and final evaluation of the partnership. Dr. Ogan conducted independent interviews of Drs. El Bour and Kembu, and the Director of the School of Communication Studies, Dr. Oliver Boyd-Barrett. Dr. Ogan met with Drs. Cassara and Lengel to see relevant documentation, and discuss how they have met program goals, how the program milestones created impact for both IPSI and BGSU and future plans for the partnership program. She then wrote her evaluation statement to be submitted independently to HED.

9) **Research meetings at BGSU for IPSI and BGSU faculty.** Please see section “Collaborative research in Phase IV” below.

10) **Two IPSI peer mentors to embark on the master’s program in the BGSU School of Communication Studies.** Mehdi Ben Hamza and Mohamed Aziz Ben Ameer were chosen to be fully funded for study towards their master’s degree in the School of Communication Studies. Ben Hamza’s graduate assistantship is to assist in all partnership activities, particularly in development of the future French language edition of the *Women, Media and Democracy Curriculum Book*, and to suggest specific teaching and classroom activities for the book that would be most useful to IPSI students. Ben Ameer’s graduate assistantship is at the BGNews, which will be important professional development for his future journalism career. Both students will continue their role as Peer Mentors for IPSI students in the future.

11) **Development and production of the *Women, Media and Democracy Curriculum Book*.** As mentioned in the previous point, Mehdi Ben Hamza is involved in developing teaching and classroom activities for the book. Program research assistant, Anca Birszeu, is the key organizer for the book. Drs. Cassara and Lengel have written all the curriculum for the summer 2005 Women, Media and Democracy workshop, from which the book is

---

---

Media and Democracy workshop, from which the book is developed.

12) **Meetings with Warmuth Design for final report and curriculum book layout and design.** Please see details in U.S. partners section below.

13) **Writing and production of final report.** Dr. Lengel has led production of the final report, in consultation with Warmuth Design, and all partnership co-directors.

14) **BGSU continues to contribute text and scholarly books and journals to the BEAME (Books for the Enhancement of Arab Media and Education) program.** during this reporting period, BGSU contributed over 75 books to IPSI under the BEAME program to enhance the IPSI library with recently published media, journalism and communication scholarly books and textbooks Through the end of Phase IV, BGSU donated over 500 books to IPSI, valued at over \$5,000.

#### **How activities in Phase IV strengthened the capacity of IPSI**

The activities have strengthened the capacity of Tunisian higher education, particularly IPSI, University of Manouba, through the creation of a sustainable English-language library on media, communication and journalism, a sustainable Women, Media and Democracy curriculum book, and a purchase of relevant DVDs to enhance the Women, Media and Democracy curriculum at IPSI. The key capacity building component of Phase IV is the sustainable teaching and research materials that IPSI faculty, students and administrators can use in the future.

In addition, the research capacity of IPSI faculty was strengthened through the intensive meetings at IPSI and BGSU to develop collaborative research programs that will continue after the funded phases of the partnership program.

#### **How activities benefited IPSI and BGSU**

The IPSI and BGSU partnership faculty and administrators are committed to continue to their civil

---

administrators are committed to continue to their civil society outreach and relationship building.

As mentioned earlier, the opportunities for both IPSI and BGSU faculty and students for learning have been outstanding. Opportunities for scholarship of engagement and service-learning are also possible due to the relationships developed from the partnership. Also as mentioned, negotiating cultural and professional differences between BGSU and IPSI faculty have also been a great learning experience for all program participants.

#### Collaboration with other U.S. partners

Dr. Lengel had meetings Ann Warmuth of Warmuth Design to develop and design and layout of the Partners for Change final report and *Women, Media and Democracy* curriculum book. Ms. Warmuth also gave Dr. Lengel considerable advice on the production of the final report, including loading fonts into her Macintosh, creating a layout in Word, and enhancing photos and tables.

#### Collaborative research during Phase IV

At the May visit to Tunis, the U.S. partnership co-directors, the Director of the School of Communication Studies, Dr. Oliver Boyd-Barrett, and Tunisian partnership co-director, Dr. Hamida El Bour, Dr. Mohamed Ali Kembi, and other IPSI faculty had an extended meeting to discuss directions for future collaborative research. Discussions included the special issue of the *Review Tunisienne de la Communication*, which was one of the outcomes in the original partnership proposal.

The research meetings continued at BGSU with the U.S. partnership co-directors, Dr. Oliver Boyd-Barrett, and Dr. Hamida El Bour, Dr. Mohamed Ali Kembi, BGSU faculty, and external evaluator Dr. Chris Ogan. These meetings focused on the development of collaborative research programs in areas including, but not limited to, the impact of the UN World Summit on the Information Society, the representation of women in the media, Muslim identity in

---

representation of women in the media, Muslim identity in the U.S., human rights reporting, and online reporting. They will continue to research co-authored work related to several subjects relevant to the partnership themes and goals including, women and media in the Arab World, development and sustainability of successful university partnerships, and the digital divide and lack of online research resources available to academic researchers in the Global South.

#### Curricular and instructional enhancement during Phase IV

As mentioned above, the submission of the curriculum book on Women, Media and Democracy, the DVDs on media and democracy, and women and the media, and the BEAME books donation program highlight all curricular and instructional enhancement efforts of the partnership program.

#### Preparing future professionals

The above curricular materials will be housed at IPSI to prepare future media, journalism and communication professionals for years to come.

#### Donations of books and CDs during Phase IV

BGSU is committed to continuing to contribute books to IPSI as part of the Books for the Enhancement of Arab Media and Education (BEAME) program. As mentioned earlier, by the end of Phase IV, the partnership began, BGSU donated over 500 books to IPSI valued at over \$5,000.

#### Partnership's greatest successes during Phase IV

Clearly the curricular enhancements are the partnership's greatest successes in Phase IV. But, as with each program phase, the cultural exchange aspects of the program, at both the Tunisian and American partnership institutions, continued to have an amazing impact. The relationships developed from the entire program has led to



---

relationships developed from the entire program has led to long-term friendships that ensure sustainability of the partnership.

#### Partnership challenges during Phase IV

The greatest challenge has been the visa applications for the two IPSI Peer Mentors to begin their graduate study at BGSU. The most distressing case was that of Mohamed Aziz Ben Ameer whose visa to travel and study in the U.S. was delayed so long that he arrived at BGSU three weeks into the fall term. Overall preparation and crisis management of this nature caused additional work for Dr. Cassara, who arranged travel and accommodation, and liaised with the U.S. Embassy in Tunis on numerous occasions to expedite the process. Aziz missed the extremely helpful GradSTEP orientation program for new BGSU graduate students, and several class sessions in important core courses in his master's program. Dr. Lengel, who is teaching COMS 640 Humanistic Research Methods during the fall 2006 term, was willing to work with Aziz outside of class time to catch him up. Nevertheless, Aziz had an immense amount of catching up to do in the first weeks of his study at BGSU.

#### Results of Research and Studies Emerging from Partners for Change

Democracies function best where there is free access to information and where unhindered discussions allow citizens to examine all sides of civic issues. Because higher education is known as a birthplace for civic debate, it is an essential partner in any society's transition to democracy.

---

essential partner in any society's transition to democracy.

As poorer nations explore their options for development of civil societies, it is imperative that their university teachers and researchers have access to current research literature, access to civil society debates, and access to make their voices heard. The research emerging from the Partners for Change program creates opportunities for university teachers and researchers to make their voices heard to global academic communities. While the partnership co-directors continue to conduct research in several areas related to MEPI and Partners for Change goals (for details, please see sections on collaborative research in each of the four phases of the program above), two studies will be highlighted here:

1) The first study detailed below, on the academic digital divide, was presented by Drs. Catherine Cassara and Laura Lengel at the *World Forum on Information Society: Digital Divide, Global Development and the Information Society*, an international conference organized by the International Research Foundation for Development, and held in Tunis on November 14-16, 2005, immediately before the UN World Summit on the Information Society (UN WSIS) (for details on the partnership's participation in the UN WSIS, please see details for Phase III above).

2) The second research and publishing effort emerges directly from the successful Partners for Change program, and focuses the development of successful academic partnerships between the universities U.S. and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA).

Various facets of the research have been presented to audiences in Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and the U.S.

A competitively selected presentation of the research, which highlighted the online teaching and learning component of the partnership program, and discussion of the proposed expansion of the partnership to the Middle East nations, was presented by Dr. Laura Lengel at the 3rd Annual Communication Forum on Media Education & Training in the Arab World, organized by the Saudi Arabia

---

Training in the Arab World, organized by the Saudi Arabia Saudi Association for Media & Communication (SAMC). It is forthcoming in the *Proceedings of the 3rd Annual Communication Forum on Media Education & Training in the Arab World*. Riyadh, Saudi Arabia Saudi Association for Media & Communication (SAMC).

Drs. Azouz, Cassara, and Lengel presented details on how to build successful partnerships between the U.S. and the MENA at the Global Fusion conference at Ohio University, Athens, Ohio, September 30, October 2, 2005. Their paper was also competitively reviewed and selected for publication in the refereed journal, *Global Media Journal*:

Laura Lengel, Catherine Cassara, Fatma Azouz, and Hamid El Bour, "Building a Shared Vision: Developing and Sustaining Media Education Partnerships in the Middle East and North Africa," *Global Media Journal*. Vol. 5 Issue 8, Spring 2006, refereed. Online <  
<http://lass.calumet.purdue.edu/cca/gmj/sp06/gmj-sp06-lengel-cassara-azouz-elbour.htm> >.

Dr. Drew McDaniel (2006), guest editor of the Spring 2006 issue, reported "This Spring 2006 issue of *Global Media Journal* presents leading papers from the Global Fusion 2005 conference and papers submitted separately for inclusion in this edition. The Global Fusion conference took place in September 2005 in Athens, Ohio, on the campus of Ohio University. Papers for the conference were blind-refereed and selected by members of the conference organizing committee. These papers were produced by researchers from across the globe, and represent a varied cross-section of current scholarship on international communication . . . The authors all deserve special acknowledgement for their courage and hard work." He goes on to introduce the paper: Looking at "the Middle East and North African region, the paper authored by **Laura Lengel, Catherine Cassara, Fatma Azouz, and Hamida El Bour** presents an encouraging view of international

---

collaboration in media education and training. In their work *Building a Shared vision: Developing and Sustaining Media Education Partnerships in the Middle East and North Africa*, the authors report on the positive results achieved in partnerships that cross cultural, religious, and geographic divisions."

(From "A Note from the Guest Editor for this Issue, found at <

<http://lass.calumet.purdue.edu/cca/gmj/sp06/gmj-sp06-guesteditorsnote.htm> >. The full paper is found at: <  
<http://lass.calumet.purdue.edu/cca/gmj/sp06/gmj-sp06-lengel-cassara-azouz-elbour.htm> >.

#### Partnerships and civil society building

Citizens, scholars, practitioners and civil society organizations argue much needs to be done to democratize media, journalism and unrestricted access to information and communication technology in the MENA (see Camau & Geisser, 2003; Cassara & Lengel, 2004; Chouikha, 2002; Newsom & Lengel, 2003; Tetreault, 2000) (For complete source citations, please see the article at the above URL).

An important place to begin this transformation is to foster educational collaboration within and outside the MENA that recognizes the role that a free and independent media plays in transition to building democracy and which understands that journalists can serve as models of participants in democratic processes.

As MENA nations engage in building civil society, it will be critical that journalists in the region have not only the skills they need to do their work well, but also the insights necessary to negotiate the challenges posed by democratization. These insights are enhanced by international exchange. The ever-growing presence of information and communication technology (ICT) and the additional resources and challenges that ICT offers journalists and citizens alike create even more opportunities for democratic dialogue and international exchange

(Eickelman & Anderson, 1999).

Because democratic dialogue is a hallmark of civil societies, exchange and dialogue between two international partners is at the heart of the international collaborative Partners for Change program, which has created sustainable core curriculum enhancements at IPSI, the only press institute or program of study in Tunisia and, arguably, the only one in North Africa.

The partnership combines in-person and online contact between IPSI and BGSU faculty and the students with the cultural knowledge and both traditional university learning environments on the two campuses, and online through Blackboard, the BGSU online course delivery program. The project serves both undergraduate and graduate students at both partnership universities, enhances faculty instruction and online and face-to-face curriculum development, and creates sustainable and wide-reaching partnerships between academic institutions, civil society and NGOs, the private sector, and policy makers.

#### Developing a community of practice: Keys to successful media education partnerships

The most successful partnerships cooperate and collaborate as a community of practice. What brings members of a community of practice together is a shared vision and goals, and a passion for mutual dialogue (Preston & Lengel, 2004). Respect for human worth and dignity, individual voices, and wrestling with complex social issues are characteristics of democratic environments (Kubow & Fossum, 2003; Kubow & Kinney, 2000; Kubow, 1999).

Communities of practice are emerging as important bases for creating, sharing, and applying knowledge. These communities share ideas and innovations, collaborating across traditional hierarchical structures and geophysical boundaries. Part of the mission of the partnership discussed in this article is to maintain a sustainable community of

practice in the area of media, journalism, communication and ICT. In this partnership a diverse and committed group of media, journalism, communication technology, comparative/international education and democratic education researchers, teachers, practitioners and students are engaging in the examination and creation of democratic media and online civic discourse. Through face-to-face meetings, online learning, several workshops in both the US and Tunisia, and participation in and reporting on the UN World Summit on the Information Society, the community of practice supports the concepts surrounding the development of a free and independent media and will internationalize and professionalize media institutions in the U.S. and Tunisia, and, more broadly across the MENA.

The partnership transcends traditional university course work and practice to become an actual community, sustainable beyond the 24-month schedule of grant-supported activities. Because of the commitment of the participating institutions, the community will sustain and grow through further curriculum development, research and related activities involving additional partners throughout the MENA. This will occur mainly due to the transformative nature of the interaction. Personal, direct contact with citizens from other culture and nations can break down stereotypical imagery and ideas, which often emerge the result of government and mainstream, corporate media discourses. The direct interaction, intensive collaboration and co-learning, and respectful dialogue of partnerships can create a level of compassionate interaction between the partnership participants who create the community of practice.

#### **Keys to successful media education partnerships**

Communities of practice cannot be created or sustained without commitment. Outlined hereafter are six keys to creating and sustaining successful online university education and training partnerships: 1) Commitment of

partnership institutions; 2) Commitment and expertise of personnel; 3) Commitment to providing access to ICT and other facilities and resources to students and faculty at both partner institutions; 4) Commitment to engaging with professional media, journalism and civil society organizations; 5) Commitment to program development and enhancement; and 6) Commitment to sustainability. The article goes on to describe these six keys in detail.

#### Directions for the future: Lessons learned to sustain the partnership

The partnership co-directors have learned a vast amount of methods and skills to enhance the current and future programs, particularly 1) the importance of cultural and professional exchanges to enhance appreciation of diversity and various practices and learning styles, 2) the importance of co-teaching, co-training, and co-learning with international partners; 3) the importance of learning from students from all participant institutions and 4) the importance of cultural and professional exchange to develop sustainable programs that continue long after the funded program concludes.

As discussed earlier, what brings members of a MENA-U.S. community of practice together is a shared vision and goals, a passion for mutual dialogue, respect for human worth and dignity, individual voices, and wrestling with complex social, cultural and political issues (Kubow & Fossum, 2003; Kubow & Kinney, 2000; Kubow, 1999; Preston & Lengel, 2004). The shared vision and goals will ground the efforts to sustain the partnership, which include 1) curricular materials available on CD-ROM and print, 2) a program website with resources and examples of participant writing and publications, and 3) an ongoing online community. While existing materials are targeted to faculty, the curricular materials will aid not only media faculty students and but also media practitioners. Drawing from the shared goals of the partnership, development of the

materials is a collaborative effort between all partnership institutions. Through its creation and assessment, the curricula will 1) provide a basic shared foundation in media skills and issues, 2) provide conceptual understandings of media in the MENA and the U.S. to build an ongoing communal relationship, and 3) provide a potential foundation for other international media studies programs in the MENA, particularly in areas under the Palestinian Authority, which the partnership institutions are currently helping to formulate.

Through cultural and professional exchanges, media training programs, curricular and training materials, intensive skills-building workshops, online collaboration, and civil society and media organizational interaction, an ongoing community of practice will grow, flourish, and continue. While the long-term impact the program is difficult to quantify, some aspects of the impact can be suggested. Efforts will provide support and resources to MENA media faculty, students and practitioners, especially in the area of curriculum development. The connections faculty, students and practitioners make through the videoconference and other interactions may also bear lasting fruit. Finally, the students themselves who benefit from these opportunities will carry away from the program solid professional skills, a broader understanding of their own country and the challenges it faces, and the knowledge that beyond MENA borders there are resources to draw on and people to stand with them when they encounter professional challenges.

At the heart of successful partnerships, media faculty, students and practitioners will enhance skills they will need to develop as responsible instructors, learners and practitioners of journalism in a democratizing society. Successful partnerships are a forum in which faculty can develop their media teaching and practices to meet current developments in civil society, and in which MENA students can carry on discussions to help explore professional



choices facing them as they participate in the democratization of their society. American students will benefit from their interaction with MENA students, as they dialogue about the connections between media, journalism, and democracy and implications of the project for their respective societies.

Perhaps more importantly than media skills development, is the cultural exchange and interaction afforded by international collaboration. Based on our extensive experience in the MENA and relationships already developed with MENA university partners, we have witnessed how media education partnerships can not only develop professional standards in media, but also build capacity to strengthen democratic practices, build civil society, increase critical thinking and awareness, minimize and manage conflicts, fight negative stereotypes. Near the end of their participation in the Women, Media, and Democracy workshops and their mini-internships, many of the Tunisian student participants announced that while they "hated" America and Americans before coming to the U.S., their views were completely transformed. Similarly, BGSU university students from the U.S., China, and Russia stated that any negative views of they may have had about the MENA disappeared during their direct interaction. Stereotypical imagery and ideas about the MENA, often the result of government and mainstream, corporate media discourses, were stifled after three weeks of direct interaction, intensive collaboration and co-learning, and respectful dialogue. Hearing such reflection, we have hope that, through the direct cultural exchange between U.S. and MENA faculty, students, and media practitioners, partnerships can create a level of compassionate interaction between the U.S. and the MENA.

#### The academic digital divide

The second study presented in this research results section focuses on the academic digital divide. Formerly

defined as a Global North and South issue, the academic digital divide is now a resource issue that affects universities in all global regions. This paper addresses how sustainable university partnerships can bridge the academic digital divide by collaborative research, access for academics in less-privileged environments to well-funded university research databases, and online interaction between students in various international contexts. It explores the benefits of university partnerships for well-funded universities, through exposure to other cultures and perspectives on modernization and development.

Based on over a decade of research on media in the former Soviet Union, the paper examines the structure of inequality for university teachers and researchers in under-funded universities. The author draws on a survey of academic researchers, librarians and university administrators not only in the region, but also throughout the Global South. The paper also discusses the challenges and benefits of developing partnerships with government, education and industry for information and communication technology initiatives to survive and flourish.

The Internet and the World Wide Web have drastically expanded the abilities of libraries to provide scholars in developed countries with access to hundreds of databases and journals in electronic form, and resources that have been available in print are increasingly now available on-line, and sometimes available on-line only. Scholars who a decade ago might have resisted using e-mail now think nothing of conducting most of their research on-line from their office computers. Today's professors and graduate students in the State of Ohio, for example, take for granted access to services such as OhioLink, the Ohio Library and Information Network, a consortium of Ohio's college and university libraries and the State Library of Ohio (please see Appendix 1). They might worry that the State will continue to fund the service at current levels, but nonetheless such

access is used as a given in today's academic workplace.

This research explores the informational handicaps facing scholars in less-developed countries where information and communication technology (ICT) infrastructure and resource limitations mean a reality far different from the easy access taken for granted in the West. The contrast is particularly painful for scholars who return home after stays for graduate studies or academic exchanges at universities in developed countries. In addition to identifying the problems facing scholars in less-developed countries, the research will explore what the lack of access means to researchers, their scholarship, and their countries, as well as what has been or can be done to redress some of the implications of this scholarly digital divide.

The larger research project will work on three levels: First, the pilot study reported in this paper, which 1) identifies and surveys individual scholars from less developed countries in Europe, Eurasia, and the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region who are familiar with the resources offered by large American university libraries. To extend the research, the authors will 2) identify and interview librarians and academic administrators concerned with the growing scholarly digital divide who have the expertise to consider the characteristics and ramifications of such a divide and who are may be aware of efforts taken to redress it; and, finally 3) explore the experiences of the faculty and students taking part in projects that have, if only temporarily, bridged this divide.

The research draws from the experiences of academic researchers, librarians and university administrators who are hit hardest by the scholarly digital divide, namely teachers and researchers at under-funded universities in both the North and South, who cannot compete with those at well-funded universities.

The project also draws upon the work of the U.S. and Tunisian Partnership Co-Directors and their teams who are involved in the Partners for Change program, which has

provided IPSI faculty and students with 18 months' access to BGSU's online resources, which include the OhioLink. It is a natural extension of that effort to consider what is being done and can be done, now that the funded phases of the partnership have concluded, to ensure that the IPSI faculty and students will still have access to the on-line library resources taken for granted by their counterparts at BGSU. As a result of the academic digital divide, their voices are not heard in global academic communities. To examine this concern, the authors and their research team draw upon their distinct areas of expertise to identify scholars, librarians, and doctoral students in and/or from the regions they study who are willing consider the ramifications of the scholarly access deprivations and the impact of that access on their own work and the larger productivity of their colleagues.

#### Surveying academic researchers at under-funded institutions

In the Fall of 2005 the U.S. Partnership Directors and their research team submitted a pilot survey of academic researchers in the Middle East and North African (MENA) region, Latin America, Eastern Europe and the Newly Independent States to: a) assess the importance of academic research in developing nations to the development of a civil society; b) determine what academics at under-funded universities believe their research needs to be; c) and ascertain how academics at under-funded universities can access research databases through international partnerships.

To administer the survey, the authors tried to access researchers who had had recent access to online databases at well-funded institutions. This population was chosen so that respondents to the survey could compare their experience with full access to databases at well-funded institution with the access, or lack thereof, in those in their home nations. As no such master list of these researchers currently exists, the research team surveyed Fulbright

Scholars to the U.S. during the 2004-2005 academic year. Names were found from the Fulbright program directory, which is a public record. Contact details, which are not listed on the Fulbright directory, were searched for via online searching for individuals and university sites.

Following the sampling approach of 'snowballing', where one respondent leads a researcher to others and so on, the authors asked in the cover letter of the survey and in the survey itself asked for assistance in seeking other researchers who might be willing to respond to the survey.

There were numerous challenges to the research. First, as mentioned above, there is no comprehensive list of "retournées" or professionals who return to their home nation after a work or study sojourn abroad. Second, even after the Fulbright Scholar directory was located, not all individuals on the list had email addresses that could be located. Locating email contacts was a particular challenge; how does one locate individuals via communication technology with problematic access to that technology? In addition, many university websites do not have the resources required for on-line faculty directories. Third, while the authors were pleased with the quick reply of the respondent group, many more emails bounced back as undeliverable. The team tried several times to locate the exiting pool of 2004-2005 Fulbright Scholars, and to seek other ways to access researchers at under-funded universities, often to no avail. This is yet another example of the challenges of information and communication technology in underfunded universities.

#### Results on research about the academic digital divide

Despite the challenges and limitations of accessing the population, the survey was sent to over 75 researchers in at least 30 nations in October 2005. Results from this pilot study were presented at the International Research Federation for Development conference in Tunis in November 2005. Although the research team received a

relatively small number of respondents by the time of the presentation, the respondents represent a wide geographical and national diversity and reveal some important insights about the academic digital divide.

Respondents to the survey come from 13 countries across the following regions: the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (Lebanon, Jordan, Morocco, and Turkey); South Asia (Pakistan); Latin America (Mexico); Western Europe (Ireland and Italy); and the nations of East Central Europe, Southeastern Europe and the Newly Independent States, and (Czech Republic, Estonia, Lithuania, Moldova, and Russia). Their academic disciplines are as diverse as their national heritage: Agriculture (2), Archeology, Aviation, Biology, Education, Environmental Science, Geology (2), Pharmacy, Religion, Rural Development, and Sociology (2). Of the respondents, 64% are women and 36% are men.

The results presented in this paper are preliminary, but already reveal some important concerns about the haves and have-nots in the academy. Most of the respondents (78.57%) have access to the Internet of some kind, while only 21.43% have no access whatsoever in their home nations. All those who have responded that they have access (78.57%) indicated that they have access in their offices. Those who have access to the internet at home total 28.57%, and the same number of respondents (28.57%) have access at their university libraries. All respondents who indicated they had internet access reported that they have access to only a limited number of academic databases.

A strong majority of respondents (87.51%) reported their universities need more access to the internet. One respondent (7%), from Estonia, said her or his access was adequate (and one did not respond). A similar number of respondents (87.51%) said that international partnerships would help increase access to the internet generally and to academic databases specifically. One respondent (7%) was unsure (one did not respond).

In an open-ended query in the survey, the respondents reported lack of access not only to online databases and academic resources, but also to printed resources as well. They noted that they have a strong need to follow current, relevant literature, and information on new methodological approaches and academic standards. Finally, respondents indicated a challenge of a linguistic divide; that they wonder if their colleagues (those who, for example, have not studied or worked in an Anglophone environment) would be able to maximize the benefits of the types of academic databases and on-line resources to which they had access during their Fulbright year.

#### Analysis and impact of the research

The research team is currently assessing how teachers and researchers in under-funded universities can more fully engage in civic discourse and civil society through international collaboration; receive commentary about their work by other academics worldwide; develop and sustain collaborative relationships through ICT; and enhance our understanding of developing nations, civil society, and democratic discourse through intellectual exchange.

Initial analysis reveals that an international, interdisciplinary community of practice partnership in which librarians, educators, and communication practitioners can help to bridge the digital divide. Communities of practice are emerging as important bases for creating, sharing, and applying knowledge. These communities share ideas and innovations, collaborating across traditional hierarchical structures and geophysical boundaries. What brings member of a community of practice together is a shared vision and goals, and a passion for mutual dialogue. Respect for human worth and dignity, individual voices, and wrestling with complex social issues are characteristics of democratic environments.

The research team is currently expanding the research beyond the pilot study reported here. It is pursuing

---

personal contacts with individual academic researchers, and with research centers and libraries. The team is also identifying scholarly networks to increase the population to be surveyed in the future expansion of the study.

### Serendipities and unexpected outcomes of Partners for Change

Much of what has been important, exciting and inspiring (as well as challenging) about the partnership was not predictable when the initial partnership proposal was submitted in 2004.

This is probably to be expected, because while it is predictable when one designs an international project that there will be cultural, technological, and social factors that will influence the program's success, nonetheless they have to be experienced to be understood and, by definition, will vary with project.

For instance, now that the project is ending, IPSI faculty — who were unfamiliar with BGSU and the U.S. Partnership Co-Directors at the start of the funded program — and the top administration of the University of Manouba, are fully poised to continue the partnership in the future. While the IPSI director and Tunisian Partnership Co-Directors were completely enthusiastic about the initial idea of the partnership, it took the full life of one grant to convince some other IPSI faculty that the partnership would, in fact, create change and educational reform, and be an important catalyst for cultural awareness. This is because many IPSI faculty are so used to having teams from France or the United States promise the moon and the stars and then come in, preach, and leave again that they expect the same from the U.S. Partnership team. Instead the U.S. team listened to them, arrived to work with them and their students in ways that

---



---

IPSI faculty and administrators desired and asked for, and came back again and brought their BGSU colleagues and students to Tunis. The U.S. team did teaching, without the preaching. In many instances the U.S. team simply led by example or rather than preaching, in order to show different ways of doing media, journalism and communication research, teaching and curriculum development.

The IPSI Director and Tunisian Partnership Co-Directors report they are still interested in working with the U.S. team and their colleagues are now eager to be included in the future of the partnership. The IPSI students hope the U.S. team will be coming back, and are reported to be working much harder on their English on the off-chance that another workshop on the BGSU campus is announced.

Given the backgrounds and experience of the U.S. team, it was predictable that it would have things to teach, and that there would be impacts on individual IPSI students and faculty it encountered. But some of the other impacts could never have been foreseen.

It was a fluke of personality and interest that led to the BEAME book donation program which may be the most concrete, long-term and measurable impact we have had on IPSI. The IPSI library now has an English language collection about journalism, communication studies, and American culture of more than 500 volumes donated by the BGSU community. There are more books on the way to IPSI and the donations may spread to other Tunisia schools if things work out with the U.S. Embassy, which has facilitate the program. BGSU faculty and staff from many departments are eager to participate.

It was predictable perhaps that there would be a positive impact from the cultural exchange that resulted from the contacts, but that was not one of the primary goals of the program. It was one of the most powerful results. Not only did we work with Tunisian students, we

---

also met Algerians and Palestinians. The contacts with the Palestinians in particular were electrifying – for the BGSU students and faculty visiting IPSI. If the U.S. partnership co-directors have the chance they will pursue contacts with a Palestinian colleague we met at a HED conference as well as with a Dr. Orayb Najjar, a Northern Illinois University professor and woman of Palestinian heritage, who co-directed the cultural sensitivity and diversity workshop for BGSU faculty and administrators.

The success of the Partners for Change MEPI granted program led the U.S. Embassy in Tunis to suggest to IPSI that they apply for a smaller grant to bolster student newspaper efforts and the activities of the two grants generated a synergy that bolstered the success of both. For instance, we had the chance to spend quality time talking to IPSI students about their lives when we were discussing the kinds of stories they might consider running in an IPSI student paper. The insights that arose from those conversations helped explain some of the aspects of the partnership that we had not understood before.

Also, BGSU students and staff traveled to Tunis under the small MEPI and that combined with the coupling of the Partners for Change MEPI and Fulbright grants have given faculty a chance to know each other. The Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence, Dr. Fatma Azouz, IPSI faculty and Tunisian Partnership Co-Director, created interest in research on women and the media in the Arab world for many graduate and undergraduate students at BGSU. Based on the impact of the partnership program, the small MEPI grant for IPSI, and the Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence award, now a large number of BGSU students and colleagues are expanding their international interest generally, and their interest in the Middle East and North Africa specifically, in hope for an opportunity to go themselves.

In fact, the mere presence of the grant has had an impact on the imaginations of Bowling Green State

University faculty, graduate students and undergraduates that has been riveting. University administrators have made the effort to travel to meet their peers at IPSI and the University of Manouba. IPSI students have come here to study here; Two new masters degree students in the School of Communication Studies, Mehdi Ben Hamza and Mohamed Aziz Ben Ameer, funded by the Dean of the Graduate College and the Vice President for Student Affairs. Their fully-funded assistantships and tuition waivers resulted when the Dean of the Graduate College and the Vice President of Academic Affairs traveled to Tunis for a site visit. They were so impressed with IPSI students, faculty and administrators that they enthusiastically committed to sustaining the partnership through their funding packages for the IPSI alumni to study at BGSU, an important impact in sustaining the Partners for Change program.

### **Challenges and lessons learned**

The U.S. and Tunisian Partnership Directors have learned a great deal through our involvement with the Partners for Change program. Those lessons are outlined below in what might arguably be considered the order of their importance.

#### **The rewards of cultural exchange**

Cultural exchange was a byproduct but initially not our primary goal of our original MEPI partnership proposal, but it was clearly a made critical impact to the overall success of the program.

Witnessing the transformative power of cultural exchange on partners and participants at both ends has kept us going through the difficult administrative and bureaucratic aspects of the work.

At U.S. partnership administrators, students, faculty and other community members were clearly impacted by their interactions with the Tunisian students and faculty at

BGSU for the workshop or other visits.

BGSU students particularly were quick to note that the Tunisians they met defied all the stereotypes they held about persons from the Arab World.

The U.S. participants who traveled to Tunisia, whether for the introductory workshop or later for the student newspaper workshop, were quite open in their admissions about the life altering impact of the visits.

For several participants this was the first international travel, for others it was the first travel beyond Europe. Either way, Tunisia defied their expectations and as did the IPSI faculty and staff.

*The smallest contact with international visitors can have a far reaching and unforeseen impact.* For instance, a high school social studies teacher who spent time with the IPSI students playing softball and visiting an amusement park during the Women, Media and Democracy workshop is now more able to engage with the Arab and Islamic students who are showing up in his classroom in growing numbers because he met the Tunisian students, learned a few words of Arabic and can demonstrate even a little knowledge of their culture.

#### Program Implementation

We learned from the process of planning and implementing the workshops, both the workshop in the United States and the workshops in Tunisia. Those lessons will undoubtedly impact the approach we take with the program we are planning.

The only way to come to the requisite understanding of contexts for the participants in the other country, as well as the constraints they face is to spend time on the ground with them.

It is best to just begin whether through video conferences, rather than long periods of "communication" at the distance. This is because there are just enough misunderstandings due to the nuances of communication,

whether by phone or email that neither compares with the rich information exchange between partners who have been in personal contact and developed cultural and interpersonal rapport and trust.

Thorough planning and preparation ahead of time are vital but they are only a foundation. Once on the ground in Tunisia it becomes important to be flexible and willing to adapt the program to accommodate circumstances that can not be foreseen ahead of time.

The workshops and training programs themselves, if managed adroitly, can become a valuable source of information about the contexts in which the participants work as well as about the constraints that hold them back. This is critical information for successful interactions and implementation of the program activities.

The quality and depth of material presented at these workshops matter. Participants notice and appreciate thorough hands-on learning supported by preparation and attention to detail.

Practical, hands-on and applied exercises engage participants in generating ideas about the issues that matter in their lives are the most effective what of interacting in workshops and other learning environments.

On the other hand, learners also notice if a presenter has little to offer and chooses to lecture rather than to engage in hands-on activities.

IPSI partnership faculty and student participants generally have taken part in workshops and training programs offered by other Americans or by Europeans. They are not interested in being presented with a perspective of how they should do things that does not take into account their own concerns and constraints.

#### **Success builds on success**

One successful experience can lead to others, such as the Small MEPI awarded to IPSI for their student newspaper, a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence award, and

---

participating in the delegation at the UN World Summit on the Information Society. This impetus assures sustainability in the future.

Even where government control of media makes it difficult for professional journalists to exercise the personal professional integrity implicit in democratic media — objectivity, accuracy, and investigation as a check on power — can be alive and well in the classroom. However, students benefit from external reinforcement, which is why expanding the curriculum to examine practices in other MENA nations can be useful to student professional development.

#### Technology and infrastructural challenges

There are unforeseen challenges presented by trying to implement distance education in country which faces major telecommunications infrastructure and equipment deficits. Though there was some increased access and speed in Tunisia in wake of UN World Summit, the horrible speed and inefficiency barriers for students using the university computer network made for using the BGSU online resources and participating in the *Frontera* online communication program very challenging.

Such technical problems produces immediate inequity among the students of both participating universities, and among IPSI students, since it means that only the IPSI students with computers at home or with access to and money for use of internet café — a very small minority of whole — have the benefit of full participation.

As a result we are re-imagining the structure of our work to accommodate these constraints.

We are working to help address some of the problems facing the students, but there are issues and technical challenges beyond our reach.

Nonetheless, it is clear from the result, that whatever contact we can facilitate between the participants and ourselves and between the participants themselves is much

---

better than doing nothing.

#### The importance of collaboration

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of some of the lessons we have learned from the challenges of the partnership, as well as the lessons learned from successes and rewards.

University and government have their own intricate bureaucracies, systems, and terminologies. Learning about administrative processes as faculty members has been challenging.

The challenges were turned into successes through collaboration. First, it is not possible to underestimate the value of the expertise, effort and enthusiasm of the U.S. Embassy in Tunis staff. Second, the administrators and administrative assistants at each university have been immensely helpful collaborators in the program's success.

There is also a lot of value in seeking advice and guidance of organizations like Centre d'études maghrébines à Tunis (CEMAT) — particularly in the planning phases leading up to a site visit. In addition, speaking with current and past program directors has been helpful in sharing lessons learned, resources, and ideas for future collaboration.

Grant program administration is time consuming and requires much more work than can be imagined ahead of time. The system of partnership co-directors has created opportunities to collaboration and sharing of the innumerable tasks involved in preparing training programs in the host country, relevant and sustainable curricula, visa processing, and reporting.

Preparations, no matter how complete, cannot prepare you completely for what you will find when you arrive in the host country. Deep preparation is certainly worth the effort, but partnership personnel still have to be ready for unexpected host country participant interests, worries, and misunderstandings.

It is impossible to foresee before the trip how rewarding the experience will be, particularly as the result of the interpersonal contacts.

There is an unimagined reward in seeing host country students, who held negative stereotypes of Americans before training at the U.S. partner institution, change their views based on the admittedly limited time they have in the U.S. As mentioned in the overall impact statement at the beginning of this report, the cultural exchange and growth has been one of the greatest rewards and successes of the Partners for Change program.

### **Future plans**

Planning for the future of the partnership has been underway throughout Phases III and IV of the Partners for Change program. For example, a Fulbright Scholar-in-Residence proposal will be submitted in November 2006 for Tunisian partnership co-director, Dr. Hamida el Bour, to teach and research at BGSU during the 2007-2008 academic year. Dr. Catherine Cassara, U.S. Partnership Co-Director, intends to apply for a Fulbright faculty award to IPSI in the 2008-2009 year. Dr. Laura Lengel is beginning to focus on

---



2009-2010 for either a Fulbright faculty award and/or a Faculty Improvement Leave (formerly known as sabbaticals at BGSU) abroad. Finally, faculty, students and administrators at both partnership universities will work to continue graduate study placements and funding for IPSI alumni. All of these cultural and professional exchanges will create a great impact on the sustainability of the Partners for Change program.

In addition, the online and face-to-face curricula will be adapted and adjusted in the future, according to changing educational needs and contexts for both IPSI and BGSU.

Our cultural exchange and community outreach will continue because all partnership co-directors are passionate about this facet of the program. Outreach, particularly to the Arab American communities of Toledo, Ohio, and Dearborn and Detroit, Michigan, will sustain due to the enthusiasm resulting from the outreach and interaction with media and civil society organizations during the funded phases of the program. The partnership directors are confident that this enthusiasm will continue to grow in the future.

## Description of Media Coverage of Partnership

### Activities and Impact

The Partners for Change program enjoyed media coverage from various U.S. and Tunisian media organizations. In addition to the list of media coverage below, there are plans for the Partners for Change DVD to be broadcast on WBGU-TV PBS and other local and regional media.

*"Ajouwe wa Taraef" [Ambience and Fun], Prospective (IPSI*

- student newspaper), November 2005, p. 14.
- "BGSU faculty work with Tunisian colleagues to expand programs in journalism and media," *BGSU Monitor*, February 14, 2005, <  
[http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/mc/monitor/pastissues/02-14-05/Tunisian\\_grant.html](http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/mc/monitor/pastissues/02-14-05/Tunisian_grant.html) >.
- "Campus shares wealth of literature with Tunisian university," *BGSU Monitor*, December 19, 2005, <  
<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/mc/monitor/12-19-05/page16615.html> >.
- "Des echanges multiples entre formateurs et etudiants des deux pays: Partenariat entre l'IPSI et BGSU (Ohio)," article by Yassine Ben Chikha, *Perspectives*, cover story and p. 5.
- "Fulbright visitor shares Islamic culture," Understanding Cultures and Nations, *BGSU Magazine*, Summer 2005, p. 3.
- "Media training aimed at furthering democracy," BGSU news release, February 17, 2005, <  
<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/mc/news/2005/news8570.html> >.
- "Middle East Partnership Initiative," Understanding Cultures and Nations, *BGSU Magazine*, Summer 2005, p. 3.
- "Middle East Partnership Initiative, example of Scholarship of Engagement," School of Communication Studies, <  
<http://scs.bgsu.edu/Engagement/> >.
- "New Experience...New Vision," article by Mehdi Ben Hamza, *Center News*, The American Center Bulletin, Autumn 1005, p. 14.
- "Pictures from America (View of): *Essahafa* visits Ohio and Michigan," *Essahafa*, electronic version, Friday, September 9, 2005, article by Najet Mlaiki.
- "School representatives travel to Tunisia to teach journalism," *Alumni Newsletter*, Department of Journalism alumni newsletter, Spring 2006, p. 1, 15.

- 
- "Souar wa dhekrayet"* [images and memories], *Prospective*  
(IPSI student newspaper), November 2005, pp. 6-7.
- "Tasharfou be maarifatikom"* [Nice to meet you], *Prospective*  
(IPSI student newspaper), November 2005, pp. 5-6.
- "What's New at IPSI, The IPSI Challenge*, p. 1, p. 2.

Examples of media coverage of partnership activities  
and impact

---

