FROM THE COORDINATOR

COST continues to explore new ground, both within the 13-university consortia and in our local UWRF chapter. At the national level, we welcome Sherie Williams and Anna Marotti at Grand Valley State in Michigan, who have assumed the directorship from Ken Cushner and Rose Onders at Kent State. Here at home, we had our first placement ever in India. You can read some of Emily Metzler’s Indian highlights in this issue of Coastlines. We were also successful in getting Mexico on the active list of COST receiving sites, and have already welcomed back one student from Queratero and said bon voyage to another currently in Guadalajara. Speaking of Mexico, Nora Koch and I attended the 2013 directors meeting last March on the Palomar and Valle Real campuses of Instituto Thomas Jefferson in Guadalajara. It is an enriching eyewitness experience to imagine one of our own students on the ground teaching and learning with the same children and professionals with whom we worked. We also set new precedent for numbers this year, with the largest cadre of candidates matriculating to schools in Bahamas, China, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, and the Netherlands. This group also participated in a pilot project involving pre-departure seminars, exploring everything from language and politics to music and history in the local cultures where they were about to become immersed. These students will also provide focused feedback during their global experience and reconvene around a “Showcase” event upon return. Keep your eyes open for future Coastlines reports from these well-traveled candidates, as we continue to explore new dimensions within ourselves as well as nueva tierras across the globe.

COST Coordinator
Teacher Education Department Chair

NOTES FROM ABROAD

Emily Metzler in India Spring 2014
an excerpt from her email January 2014 . . . .

Emily Metzler in COST’s first “selfie”

I have just finished my first week here in the schools! I am working in a three and four year old classroom here! It is so strange to see how different the schools here are from the school in the United States! The students I have in the three and four year old classroom are learning a lot of the things that I taught my first grade classroom last semester. The students here are learning both English and Hindi. They have worksheets, read stories and sing songs in both

They make their own paper from recycling!
languages. They can smoothly transition between the two languages in a conversation and even within a sentence. For their specials they have yoga, dance, clay, art, games class (or PE for the older students), Indian music and many more specials!

The school building is four stories high and is an open air school. The hallways are bridges to and from the classrooms and on the lowest level there are courtyard type areas between the classrooms. The playground uses tires in almost every piece of equipment and their games class is held in a huge open sand and dirt field. The students here call all of their teacher’s ma’am or sir. I am called Emily ma’am by all of my students. They still don’t all know that I don’t speak Hindi so most of my students ask me all questions in Hindi.

The lunch here is delicious! Their lunch is vegetarian Indian cuisine. Since it is to students most of the spice is mild but the flavors and spices are still delicious! The teachers and staff here are all so friendly and welcoming!! They have been more than willing letting me know about their school and helping me with any questions or concerns I might have. Since the roads here are busy and we live a distance from the school, I ride the school bus an hour each day to and from school. The other morning I saw a cow by the stop light while I was waiting for my bus!

COST DIRECTORS MEETING, MEXICO

In March 2014 Dr. Scheurman and Nora Koch traveled to Guadalajara Mexico for the annual cost Meeting. In addition to daily business meetings, we toured two Thomas Jefferson schools: TJ-Palomar in Guadalajara and the newly opened TJ-Valle Real school.

Nora Koch gave a presentation on “How to Build a Newsletter.”
COST PILOT SEMINAR

Dr. Geoffrey Scheurman piloted a series of short pre-departure seminars and activities to help teacher candidates prepare and remain engaged before, during, and after their experience abroad. The seminars took place on August 13, September 10, September 24 and October 8, 2014. Fifteen participants included students who would be leaving for their COST placements fall 2014 and those leaving spring 2015. Seminar topics and activities included:

✦ Find “contemporary cultural icons or celebrities,” in your placement country.

✦ Find the lesser known singers, athletes, movie stars, controversial politicians, or other newsmakers who are noteworthy in your assigned country but not necessarily in our own media.

✦ If you can, sing us part of a song, play us a film excerpt, or show us a painting, news story, or some other artifact.

✦ Find an issue which is front and center in your country, even if it isn’t making the American media. Dig around and find one of those. Tell us about it and/or show us a news headline if you can find one.

Dr. Scheurman asked previous COST participants to visit the seminar to speak briefly about their experience and answer questions from the outgoing group. Karel Moersfelder, recently returned from South Africa spoke at the September 10 meeting.

On October 8 those students who had not already left for their COST destinations met at a local restaurant where last minute needs were addressed and expectations while away and upon return were determined. All present enthusiastically endorsed the idea of hosting a potluck when everyone gets back.

Geoffrey Scheurman and Holly Reisselman, fall 2014 student, South Africa

Megan Madeson, Germany, Alex Bell, the Netherlands, Sara Fuller, Mexico, Brittany Oberstadt, the Netherlands, Anna Feyereisen, Ecuador, Andrea Roth, China and Hayley Selkirk, the Netherlands, ready to fly

Geoffrey Scheurman and Holly Reisselman, fall 2014 student, South Africa

Brittany Oberstadt, spring 2015, heading to the Netherlands, and Karel Moersfelder (just back from South Africa)

Megan Madeson, Germany, Alex Bell, the Netherlands, Sara Fuller, Mexico, Brittany Oberstadt, the Netherlands, Anna Feyereisen, Ecuador, Andrea Roth, China and Hayley Selkirk, the Netherlands, ready to fly

Hannah Carlos, spring 2015 student headed for the Netherlands and Paul Ruble, spring 2015 student headed for Germany introducing one another in host country language
**Tips for Student Teaching Abroad**

- Limit the amount of plastic you take with you. No more than two credit cards or one credit card and one debit card (for cash withdrawals) are recommended.
- Notify your financial institution that issued your debit and credit card that you are traveling.
- Carry traveler’s checks. These are great for back up if your credit and debit cards are lost or stolen.
- Get foreign currency. Get $100 in the currency of the country you are visiting. This will cover expenses incurred before you have the chance to change money.
- Safely carry your money. If you don’t have a hotel safe, keep your money, credit/debit cards, passport and airline tickets on you at all times. Don’t carry everything in a purse or backpack, use a money belt.
- Leave behind valuables. Leave valuable jewelry, family keepsakes & Social Security Card at home. Leave behind store membership cards that you won’t need.
- Book flights well in advance to avoid high priced flights. Ask about international baggage allowance—some airlines will charge $200 for a second checked bag.
- Familiarize yourself with local conditions and laws of your host country.
- Research the school at which you are placed.
- Purchase an international cell phone once you arrive in your country of travel Pre-paid plan with low minutes and text messaging.
- Download Apps before you leave.
- Bring gifts from home for your school, students, host family, etc.
- Bring a book that is known in the United States or home state and donate it to your classroom or school’s library.
- Prepare a video or picture slide show to share with your students about yourself.

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**Holly’s Blog Living Louder**

October 9, 2014:

I’m roughly 25 hours out from the beginning of an amazing journey. I’ll be leaving the states and making my way to Knysna, South Africa to student teach for the next 2 months. Something tells me it’ll be nothing I’m expecting, but more than I can imagine.

*Look for more from Holly in spring Coastlines.*