

Abstract for publication

1. Title of the submission: PERFORMING DIVERSITY: Researching and Exploring Issues of Multiculturalism and Diversity with First Year Students using live theatre, visual art, and the making of videos.
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6. Abstract of paper: The common philosophy and goals of the First Year Program at St. Lawrence University are to teach writing skills, oral communication skills, research skills and critical thinking to first year students. While the first semester of the program is team-taught and focuses primarily on writing and oral communication skills, the second semester is structured in small individual seminars with a primary focus on research skills, giving individual professors a great deal of freedom to develop creative approaches to their own teaching of these skills. In this paper, I will discuss how expecting students to express their research about diversity creatively through the use of visual media and live theatre gives them a deeper understanding of the American culture of which we are all a part. Student videos, samples of original theatrical monologues, and images from a collaborative mural project will be featured. After the paper presentation, I will open the session to questions for a broader discussion about the effectiveness of these kinds of innovative approaches to teaching research skills to first year students.