**Project Title:**
Curricular Strategies for Teaching about Issues on War and Terror

**Applicants:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>College</th>
<th>Dept.</th>
<th>College</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Uli Linke</td>
<td>442-1506</td>
<td>Sociology &amp; Anthropology (and Women’s and Gender Studies)</td>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>Sociology &amp; Anthropology</td>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Danielle Taana Smith</td>
<td>475-4413</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Project Summary**

   Events during the past several years have made it increasingly imperative that our classrooms offer students strategies for grappling with the realities of war and terror at a global scale. We propose to develop curricular revisions for courses in Anthropology, Sociology, International Studies, and Women’s and Gender Studies. These teaching modules will encourage student understanding of the lived experiences, cultures and historical contexts of war and terror, and of the intercultural factors underlying such forms of human aggression. We will hone pedagogical techniques, through readings and exercises, for allowing students to arrive at their own informed assessments about the ways that cultural differences are related to these global phenomena.

   Our aim is to help students 1) better analyze the intercultural conditions for war and terror, and 2) arrive at understandings of how war and/or terror are experienced by various groups of people around the world. Students will benefit from more sophisticated tools with which to evaluate world events in an informed way. As grant recipients, we would research relevant resources for thinking through - at a comparative level - histories and everyday forms of lived war and terror. Our goal is to have the resources and teaching strategies we generate impact several key courses across multiple departments, such that we and other faculty can teach these topics more effectively and with more solid engagement.

   We believe that by facilitating students’ exploration of the intercultural dynamics that are part of war and terror, we will begin to provide the analytical tools students need to themselves interact both locally and globally. They will learn the ways in which war and terror are situated and rooted in specific cultural practices, while at the same time being cross-cultural in their techniques, ramifications and structures. We want them to explore the ways in which cultural differences are used by agents - whether state or non-state entities - to further extremist agendas and justify violence.

   In order to promote political aggression, persons of other cultures are often dehumanized. Through carefully designed exercises in both reading and writing, we hope that students can learn instead to see the human side of such persons’ actual lives and come to an appreciation of diverse cultural environments, stretching themselves beyond the education in U.S. multiculturalism that they have received prior to college. At the same time, we hope they will gain a critical perspective on the processes by which enemies may be actively created through practices of cultural derogation.

   We suspect that such goals are best achieved through eclectic juxtaposition of readings - autobiography, essay, ethnography, historical account, etc. - and by encouraging students to critically engage with different genres to cultivate a depth of understanding. We are determined to conduct a thorough search for the most enabling course materials on war and terror.
2. Number of Students Affected

Our project on curricular strategies for teaching about issues on war and terror will initially reach a total of approximately 2,300 students each year. Our proposed curricular modules are designed to be implemented in the following core/foundation and upper division courses (see Targeted Learners).

3. Targeted Learners

We will cooperatively develop four 2-week teaching modules for potential use in the courses listed below, representing four disciplinary programs: sociology, anthropology, international studies, and women's & gender studies.

Core/Foundations Courses:

- **Sociology**: 0515-210 *Foundations of Sociology*. Enrollment 800 (40 students per class, every quarter, approximately 20 sections offered a year).
- **Anthropology**: 0510-210 *Cultural Anthropology*. Enrollment 600 (40 students per section, every quarter, approximately 15 sections offered a year).
- **International Studies**: 0524-210 *Introduction to International Studies*. Enrollment 40 (once a year).
- **Women's and Gender Studies**: *Foundations in Gender Studies*. Enrollment 80 (several times a year, in preparation for 2006).

Upper Division Courses:

- **Anthropology**: 0515-447 *Anthropology of Mass Media*. Enrollment 32 (once a year).
- **Anthropology/Film and Animation**: 0510-375 *Visual Anthropology*. Enrollment 32 (once a year).
- **Women's and Gender Studies/Anthropology**: 0510-451 *Gender and Sexuality*. Enrollment 32 (once a year, scheduled for 2006).
- **Sociology**: 0515-449 *Population and Society*. Enrollment 64 (32 students per section, at least twice a year).
- **Sociology**: 0515-485 *Diversity in the City*. Enrollment 32 (at least once a year).

These are courses that we have taught in the past and/or look forward to teaching in the future, however we propose to develop 2-week teaching modules that may also be adopted by other faculty who are seeking techniques for including war and terror themes in their curricula. In this way we hope to maximize the number of students reached.

Additionally, based on our research and training in relevant literatures under the Provost's Learning Innovations Grants program, we hope to develop:

- An advanced undergraduate course that will be offered under the title *War, Gender and Terror in Comparative Perspective* to be taught in Women's and Gender Studies (with appropriate cross-listings in International Studies, Sociology, or Anthropology).
- A reading and resource list for undergraduate students and faculty with the theme of war, violence, and terror.
- An outline for an advanced undergraduate course relating to the theme of War and Terror to be taught in International Studies (with appropriate cross-listings in Sociology and Anthropology and/or the Women’s and Gender Studies program).

4. Anticipated Impact on Teaching and Learning

Increasing migration, capital mobility, electronic communication, and international institution-building have brought peoples from disparate parts of the globe in ever-closer, more frequent contact. Members of groups with different histories and cultural formations struggle to comprehend and communicate with each other. The course modules we propose, as well as the overall revisions to our teaching methods, would extend exercises in intercultural learning. Specific readings such as those by Kaldor, Davies, Nussbaum and Scott from *The New Humanities Reader* offer an excellent starting point for
the exploration of the themes of war and terror. The intensification of intercultural encounters worldwide, whether peaceful or hostile, makes this an increasingly pressing need.

We want students to explore how some cultures come to be perceived by others as threatening, as candidates for destruction. With what kinds of terror do people live? How has the “war on terror” become conflated with United States policy in the Muslim, and specifically Arab, world, and with civil rights abuses against Muslims, Arabs and South Asians in the United States? We would provide cultural, political, and historical contexts for these practices. How have countries as diverse as South Africa, Ireland, Algeria and Sri Lanka -and the people who live in and have migrated from these places- been drastically reshaped by experiences of war and terror? What are the role, history and practices of bioterror in the global context? How do human rights norms and paradigms intervene in situations of war and terror? We would provide readings, discussion, and community-based projects that would encourage students to make cultural and historical connections amongst readings and situations, from the colonial era up to contemporary forms of racial, national and ethnic war and/or terror.

How are war and terror, as long-term lived conditions, produced by entities that have gained some form of legitimacy? How does it feel to live as a member of a minority population whose very cultural or racial identity makes one subject to daily threat at the hands of a dominant group? Through cross-cultural, historically-specific readings, students will develop more capacious meanings of terrorism, as a strategy and as a culture of fear that arises often in situations of long term political subordination and/or conflict. One potentially relevant example is that of the Taliban in pre-9/11 Afghanistan, which received recognition from U.S. allies such as Saudi Arabia and Pakistan despite policies that, in effect, legitimized state terror against all women and ethnic and religious minorities. Through this and other cases, we can also explore how gender is importantly constitutive in practices of war and terror transnationally.

The set of courses and modules we propose would help students contextualize their own histories, cultures, and experiences globally. How can students come to their own definitions and understandings of war and its meanings? This is especially important given that war has been described in different ways in the current period, from the war on terror to the war on drugs to pre-emptive or preventative war. How do these various terms translate to people who have lived through long-term wars in their countries, affecting their homes and communities? What are the relationships between U.S. militarism and cultures of war in diverse places such as Colombia, Bosnia, Chechnya, Afghanistan, and Iraq? What are the connections between the kinds of terror inspired by the regime of lynching and the rise of the Ku Klux Klan in the U.S. South and modern-day police brutality and torture both at home and internationally? How do we understand the constant reality of rape in the United States as compared with rape as a tactic of war, as has been practiced in Guatemala, Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Bangladesh? How can we think through the category of woman in a cross-cultural context while taking into consideration the terror produced by patriarchy and militarism upon women’s bodies in varying contexts?

We would use group discussions, projects, and collective pedagogy (i.e., working with students to come up with teaching strategies devised by the class as a whole) to help students inform and push each other to new levels of global understanding of what seem to be local situations.

5. Impact on Student Success

Our project aims to enhance student skills in assessing the cultural impact of war and terror, both globally and locally. Students will benefit from more sophisticated tools with which to evaluate world events in an informed way. We aim to provide the analytical methods and substantive real-life knowledge students need to themselves interact and work in an increasingly violent world. Our proposed curricular strategies offer students a broader selection of courses within COLA that have a multi-disciplinary scope and are flexible in structure. The implementation of our modules will impact approximately 2,300 students annually. Students have the opportunity to engage in participatory pedagogy as they are actively involved in structuring the course. Finally, consistent with RIT’s strategic plan, students are given opportunities for experiential learning through their involvement in local community projects with refugees from war-torn parts of the globe.

6. Evaluation Plan and Dissemination

We plan to carry out peer reviews in our classrooms, with the goal of putting together
interdisciplinary review teams to evaluate the courses’ progress each semester they are offered. We will also review our course descriptions and syllabi with the directors or chairs of undergraduate study in each department and program, with an eye to using these courses and modules as central parts of the curriculum. Finally, we will share the syllabi and course descriptions with the RIT faculty and the COLA curriculum committee for review.

Subsequent to such reviews and assessments, we plan to make our teaching modules and the accompanying material accessible to all interested faculty by posting these online through the facilities of the electronic library reserve system. Moreover, we plan to create a website on curricular strategies on teaching about issues on war and terror that will be housed on our departmental home page. These teaching resources may also be accessed by faculty outside of RIT. In addition, we want to contribute toward building the RIT library media collection on war and terror. Finally, we plan to publish an article on "Curricular Strategies for Teaching about Issues on War and Terror” in a professional journal.

7. Rationale for Project

a) This is a new initiative that we expect to be fully integrated into the host departments’ and COLA’s plan of work and strategic vision for undergraduate education. We request assistance from the Provost's learning innovations grant program for developing an evaluation plan that will be able to assess the effectiveness of our curriculum changes on a more comprehensive, long-term basis, i.e. as part of the larger undergraduate education program at RIT.

b) Our curricular strategies for teaching about issues on war and terror will be integrated into existing foundation/core and upper division courses across four disciplines (see 3. Targeted Learners). Uli Linke is a cultural anthropologist and serves as coordinator of the degree program in International Studies. Her research and teaching are focused on gender, race, and violence. Danielle Taana Smith is a sociologist, whose research interests include examining resettlement processes among refugees internally and externally displaced by wars and political turmoil in their countries of origin.

c. This project is relevant to other faculty in the social sciences and humanities concerned with educating students about contemporary world affairs and would enhance their resources to accomplish this goal. The success of this project will be transferred to other faculty through multiple means (see 6. Evaluation Plan and Dissemination).

d. Dr. Linke has done fieldwork in urban Germany on modern forms of violence, especially the violence directed at immigrants and refugees. She is the author of several books: *German Bodies* (1999), *Blood and Nation* (1999), and *Denying Biology* (1996). Other publications include over thirty articles in journals and edited books on genocide. Dr. Smith has published extensively on the economic struggle of racialized minorities in the U.S. She is currently completing a book manuscript on the aftermath of war and trauma by examining the integration of African refugees in Rochester.

e. Plans are underway for creating an interdisciplinary COLA minor in International Studies titled "Global Issues”. One of the tracks available to students in this minor will focus on war and terror and will include, in addition to courses from other disciplines, the courses we propose to develop under the Provost's Learning Innovations Grant.

8. Timetable

We will begin work on our project during the summer 2006.

- **July through November 2006**: research, reading, and assembly of the materials for our curricular modules on War and Terror.
- **December 2006 through February 2007**: systematizing research materials and collaborative construction of the four 2-week teaching modules. Integration of modules into our courses.
- **March through May 2007**: implementation of teaching modules on war and terror in two courses in spring 2007 and initial assessment of the effectiveness of our curricular changes. Finalizing the syllabi for the two new proposed courses on the theme of war and terror and submission of proposals to the departments and COLA curriculum committee. Dissemination of curricular modules to other faculty and program chairs for review.
- **June 2007**: Finalizing the project, assembly of material and modules for on-line dissemination, and drafting the final report. We will begin writing of the article for publication.