

**Captions**  
**(M130B)**  
**Project Inclusion**  
**Patricia DeCaro**

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Project Inclusion

Patricia DeCaro

National Technical Institute for the Deaf

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1 June 25, 2000 "Project Inclusion" with

2 Patricia DeCaro.

3 .

4 HANK: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen.

5 We will start the session now. Our interpreters are

6 JoAnn and Angela Albert. Are there any deaf people

7 here who need interpreting?

8 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: You should be using this.

9 HANK: Are there any people who need  
10 interpreters? Just wait and we will see if there  
are  
11 any. Our presenter today is Pat DeCaro and I  
asked her  
12 how does she want to be represented and she  
said as a  
13 faculty member in National Technical Institute  
for the  
14 Deaf Master of Science and Secondary Education  
15 Program. She is also a prime person in Project  
16 Inclusion, and I will not talk about that because  
she  
17 is. We will have about a half hour. At the end of  
18 that there will be time for questions, if Pat wants  
to  
19 take them during the presentation, she can.  
20 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: Yes.  
21 One of the above. And after about a half  
22 hour we will have a question and answer time  
and then  
23 we will have a break time before the next  
session. You  
24 can also go and do your evaluation in the  
learning  
25 center, if you would. They would love for you to  
do it

2

1 on line. I also would like to remind you that 5

2 o'clock this afternoon there is a, how should we call

3 it, a little cocktail hour reception. It is very nice,

4 included in your package and you have already paid for

5 it. By all means, take advantage of it. And now on

6 with the show.

7 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: Thank you. Here we go.

8 Good to see you. Let me give this presentation in

9 three parts. One is the project itself, and then I

10 will show you a little bit of how it is working on

11 blackboard and then discuss a little bit of the

12 challenges that we face, and some of the very exciting

13 insights that we come to already. This course is

14 ongoing, going on at the moment. So Project Inclusion

15 is the name of it. It is funded jointly by European

16 Union and Department of Education through a grant, put

17 together, and the grant is received by James DeCaro and

18 Ken Nash from here, and Bairt from Sweden.

One of the

19 reasons that they gave us this grant is because it is

20 difficult to conduct cross cultural interactions in

21 educational efforts. So it is an attempt to explore

22 the ways in which we can do this. And our particular

23 interest is in comparing deaf education across four

24 countries. These are the four countries, Sweden,

25 Greece, the Netherlands and the United States. We have

3

1 two universities in the United States, UT Knoxville and

2 National Technical Institute for the Deaf involved. So

3 these are all teacher education programs in each of

4 these countries.

5 Our big picture goal is equality and a

6 quality of opportunity and entry into society. We

7 wanted to explore how each of these different countries

8 are approaching it. The population, the students who

9 are preparing to work with deaf individuals, and

our

10 hope is to prepare teachers for roles not only as

11 teachers but as policy formulators and leaders  
within

12 their own countries.

13 We originally set these up as our goals, to

14 see if we could identify any form of universal  
design

15 principles, policies and programs that were very

16 effective in other countries so we could try to see  
if

17 we could find some sort of best practices. I think

18 already we are beginning to say universal design

19 principles, if such exist, but it is wonderful  
because

20 we are learning quite a lot. Our very first  
question,

21 what does inclusion mean? How do you go about

22 including individuals who are deaf within  
education and

23 society? And then what is the implication of that  
for

24 educational practice itself?

25 We are still hoping that the students will

4

1 compare themselves, will educate one another,

and these

2 are the areas that we are focusing upon: Diversity  
of

3 deaf individuals within all these different  
countries,

4 let alone the cross countries, human rights,  
language,

5 politics, social history and family. We divided the

6 content up into those categories. This is our goal  
for

7 the actual process, that students will compare,

8 contrast, analyze, and we will all be in there, and

9 those of us who are faculty are just as much  
students

10 in this process as the students are.

11 Working together, all of us from all these

12 countries, we came up with a way to fit all these

13 factors in. Let me go to it on a more individual

14 level. First we decided that diversity was

15 foundational. It is a much-ignored aspect of  
fitness

16 and deaf education, and we thought it was  
critical.

17 Human rights, particularly those as articulated  
within

18 the United States declaration of human rights,

were

19 felt to be critical, also, foundational, to any

20 discussion. As an interesting side line, in the

21 discussions one of the very first questions that we got

22 was why is it that the United States was one of only

23 two countries in the world that didn't sign the United

24 Nations declaration of human rights? We have not yet

25 come up with a good answer. We have all been trying

5

1 and we contacted Senators, the State Department, not

2 yet received a clear answer, and were well aware of

3 the fact we were thrown off the human rights

4 commission. I think it wasn't generally advertised or

5 pointed out that we were one of only two countries in

6 the world that hadn't signed it. Very interesting

7 challenges from the start. These are the different

8 factors that we saw as very important influences upon

9 the educational process, language, social history,  
10 politics and family. Then we focused upon how  
do all  
11 of those factors influence the actual educational  
12 policy and practice? We compare and contrast  
between  
13 countries and hope that each of the students will  
take  
14 away from this concepts and ideas that they  
perhaps can  
15 use within their own cultural and historical  
context to  
16 come up with improvements for deaf education.  
17 We are using blackboard, asynchronously, in  
18 part because we originally had the idea we would  
be  
19 able to go through each unit together. I would  
come to  
20 a little later why that soon became quite  
impossible,  
21 let alone the time differences. That aside, we still  
22 couldn't matter synchronous work. That part is  
23 distance learning, and then we have coming up  
in July a  
24 two week experience where all of the individuals,  
25 faculty and students, will be coming here for two



6

1 weeks. Next year we will all go to one of the other  
2 countries.

3 I skipped over that but the distance learning

4 portion will be done in English and when they're  
here

5 it will be in English and the sign languages of each

6 country. We currently have 20 students enrolled.  
Six

7 of those students are hearing impaired or deaf.  
We

8 don't know yet exactly. We only know there are 3

9 students coming from Sweden, and three in this  
country,

10 some of them here and some from UT Knoxville.  
There

11 are no deaf or hard of hearing individuals as far  
as we

12 know coming from Greece or the Netherlands. At  
this

13 point we will have two different sign languages.  
The

14 folks from Sweden are bringing Swedish sign  
language

15 interpreters with them. These are the individuals  
I

16 want to recognize, all of the developers on the

team.

17 It has been a wonderful, wonderful group of people,

18 absolutely marvelous. So that's the general

19 background.

20 Let me jump at this point to showing you the

21 actual structure that we developed. Let me just close

22 this down and bring up the course.

23 We set up the course in this manner, so we

24 have announcements which come up and stay over a period

25 of time. The faculty information shows a picture of

7

1 each of the faculty individuals along with contact

2 information, the communication allows us to communicate

3 with different groups. So we can communicate with

4 everybody in the entire course with only teaching

5 assistants, with select groups. So we might

6 communicate with only our NTID faculty or with the

7 American students in general. If we go to groups,

8 within the groups we can select, and we have

divided

9 each of these areas up into units. So new over there

10 indicates that I've been away for the weekend and

11 haven't read a lot of things that have come up. Each

12 of the students in our group has been writing essays,

13 putting them up, and other students and faculty comment

14 upon these. This is all within National Technical

15 Institute for the Deaf group only and this discussion

16 is not across the whole course. However, let's go now

17 to the syllabus. This is now for everybody. There is

18 a syllabus put up within each country. So we are not

19 following the syllabus put up by faculty in Greece.

20 But the guidelines are the same for everyone. We have

21 a survey which all of the students take. Blackboard is

22 a very easy system to use but it is limiting in some

23 ways and this is one of the areas that I define  
24 limiting. The students are answering the survey  
but as  
25 yet we can't identify which student made which  
8  
1 answers. We ask questions, like what has been  
your  
2 experience across cultures, so forth? In the end  
we  
3 get a general picture of the entire class. That's  
4 something I would like to see played with, the  
5 happening experience that describes what's  
coming up.  
6 We are not yet making use particularly of the  
7 user tools, the drop box, calendar. We had a  
meeting  
8 and we may very well get to that. The virtual  
9 classroom, and again, a simultaneous chat  
becomes  
10 extremely difficult over time zone changes. So  
we were  
11 not able to use that, at least not so far. Let me  
go  
12 to the course material and get to some  
interesting  
13 stuff here. Each unit has contributions from  
every

14 country. So there are approximately 20 pages of text

15 within the language unit. It is divided up European

16 unit, the United States and an assignment which is

17 common to the entire course, which is to go to the

18 discussion board and start talking. If we come in

19 here, we see what's required by all of us to read about

20 Greece, what has been submitted there for all of us to

21 read about the topic of language. I hope this isn't a

22 terribly long one. I didn't look at the length. One

23 of the challenges has been the decision to make the

24 text in English because it was the only language that

25 could be shared by all of the countries involved. But

9

1 that puts the others at a tremendous disadvantage,

2 faculty and students. So the faculty had to produce

3 papers and documents that were either already

written

4 in English or they had to translate. It is a

5 monumental task.

6 But we are all reading all of this material.

7 About 20 pages from each country, about 80  
pages for a

8 unit, quite a challenge for people for whom  
English may

9 be their second, third or even fourth language.

10 When they finish reading all of those, then

11 their assignment is to go to the discussion board.  
I

12 will show you some of these. For example, we  
had a

13 student, one of our students here asking this

14 question. The challenge of technology and why  
do

15 people really need to learn sign language.

16 We had a number of questions and responses to

17 that. Greg Immerton, faculty member here,  
through up a

18 challenge. Most of the world is hearing. Learning  
a

19 new language may indeed be seen to be more of  
a martyr

20 if you suspect that technology can take care of

this.

21 I will jump over to Sangita is a faculty

22 member in Sweden. She always contributes quite  
a lot.

23 In this case she said technology has a very  
strong

24 influence. Then I will show you what she said  
later.

25 I'd like to know what a deaf member of this  
learning

10

1 community thinks. So one of the deaf students

2 replied. In summary, the technology at this point

3 isn't up to par. Perhaps in the future we can have

4 more advanced technology that really will be  
helpful.

5 There have been -- obviously there is a new  
discussion

6 going on about bye-bye approaches, when I'm  
anxious to

7 get to. I haven't read some of that yet. We have  
had

8 discussions -- I did want to say something else.

9 Greg's answer to that response was an important  
one.

10 We have been there before, here at NTID, and  
the

11 combination of economics and political issues  
had an

12 impact. It's not here any more. So we are trying  
to

13 get into an in depth discussion about how any  
one issue

14 within deaf education is influenced by factors of

15 language, social history, politics and the like.

16 I will leave that for a moment but I will see

17 if I can remember any of the other. Yes, there  
was a

18 long discussion about the fact that in other  
countries

19 education is free, right up through university.  
Why is

20 it not in our country? And then we had a lot of

21 student interaction about how hard they have to  
work

22 here, how many hours they have to work in  
order to earn

23 enough money to go to school. And then one of  
our

24 students, who was of cube and extraction, said  
oh, the

25 United States is one place and it is not all the  
same.

11

1 In the CUBAN culture, families completely support



their

2 children all the way through education. And that is

3 not the same as what -- you cannot say there is  
one

4 American approach. We have a different  
approach. So

5 that brought beautifully to the fore the concept  
that

6 the United States is a very diverse culture and  
country

7 with many cultures, I should say, and it's not so  
much

8 so in the other countries that we are dealing with  
and

9 interacting with.

10 We also talked about another discussion

11 centered around the fact that in Sweden deaf  
students

12 are required to have two extra years in order to

13 complete their preuniversity education. So there  
is a

14 question as to, is this universally so? Does every

15 country require? Is it allowed? So a lovely set of

16 discussions.

17 Now, what I should say, going back to the

18 language issue, is that so far we have had no

19 participants from the Netherlands on the discussion

20 board. We have had participants from Greece but it is

21 limited. The faculty member and one of the students.

22 The Swedish students, a couple of them have

23 contributed, mostly the faculty member. In her case I

24 believe what she is doing in the seminar format, she is

25 collecting the discussion that's ongoing and posting it

12

1 for us. They are all operating in their second, third

2 or fourth language. So it is a real challenge for them

3 and for us in terms of how do we get this discussion

4 really going. We will see them here in two weeks. I

5 think then we will have a completely different

6 dynamic. So let me move quickly to the kinds of things

7 that we discovered so far. And we may be wrong in what

8 we think we are seeing. But let me start with

9 logistics. We had some real challenges logistically

in

10 conducting an across country program like this.

11 For example, differing criteria at different

12 universities for how to assign credits. What does  
four

13 credits in a system mean at UT in a semester let  
alone

14 in other countries? We have ton able to satisfy  
the

15 universities so that they will award credits. That  
was

16 a challenge.

17 Another thing that has been a very

18 interesting issue is the problem of the differing

19 levels of resources. We have six participating  
faculty

20 members on our team. There is one in Greece,  
two in

21 Sweden, one really in the Netherlands. We had  
such

22 support. We had the computers, the support  
staff,

23 graduate students. We have such a lot of  
support. We

24 divided them up soap that each one of us wrote  
a whole

25 unit. And it was written for this course.

13

1 We couldn't possibly expect that of  
2 individuals in other countries.  
3 So instead their emphasis was upon pulling  
4 together documents that already existed. As I said  
5 before, it had to already be in English or  
somebody had  
6 to translate. No small task. So our units are  
7 language, social history and so forth. Their units,  
8 writing may go over several of the units. We had  
to be  
9 very sensitive to that difference in resources and  
10 power. Some of the things that I wanted to  
touch on  
11 before closing. We are beginning to get a sense  
of how  
12 not only how inclusion is viewed differently  
across the  
13 different countries but how it is accomplished,  
what  
14 the approach is. For example, in the  
Netherlands, they  
15 have had a long history of stress on oral  
approach to  
16 education. It is changing now but still a very  
strong  
17 factor. They also believe very strongly in

freedom of

18 choice. It is a very strong value. Anyone can

19 establish a school. They have 65 percent of their

20 schools are private. It's a huge number. They  
can

21 teach anything they want and they can teach in  
any way

22 that they want, although they do have to meet  
national

23 standards at the end.

24 So there is freedom of choice as a very

25 strong value, and a great emphasis upon the use  
of

14

1 scientific research and technology as a way of

2 achieving inclusion. One of the students I was  
talking

3 to the other day was astonished. She thought we  
were

4 the tops in the world in technology. She was  
overcome

5 to discover and learn about the mobile learning  
device

6 in the Netherlands, a small device. If a person is  
out

7 in the community, a store, whatever, and has  
difficulty

8 communicating with someone, they can use this little

9 device, and I'm dying to see one. I don't know exactly

10 how it works. To contact an interpreter somewhere

11 else. This is a forum, I see it, as a form of

12 videoconferencing. They can use this so that the

13 interpreter can sign and speak through this little

14 device to facilitate the conversation going on in a

15 store someplace. The student was overwhelmed with the

16 excitement of that. They are using regularly

17 videoconferencing for tutoring of students who are at a

18 distance. They also stress in the Netherlands

19 collaboration. With all these different schools they

20 don't want a repetition of everything. So the heavy

21 stress on collaboration between different schools. In

22 Sweden there is a very heavy stress on consensus

23 models. The education is decided from the top by

24 consensus. Once it is decided, and in this case it is

25 the bilanguage approach to education and that's  
the

15

1 approach for the entire country. And the  
development

2 is given in skills in sign language for the teachers  
as

3 well as the students. So very difficult approaches

4 right there to inclusion. We seem to be more and  
more

5 heading in the direction of mainstreaming with  
support

6 services as a heavy way of increasing inclusion.  
So

7 this is simply fascinating. I think that I'd love to

8 show you more of the conversations but time is  
up. So

9 if there are any questions, I would be more than  
happy

10 to answer them, and Susan Foster is here. Yes.

11 >>A VOICE: Have you done any testing of the

12 learning yet or is it too early?

13 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: Too early. We have an

14 evaluation in process in place but too early for us  
to

15 formulate. Obviously we hit a lot of lumps  
already in

16 the road. The discussion hasn't been as lively as we

17 had hoped but there is a formidable obstacle in doing

18 that. Once the individuals get here in two weeks time,

19 I think we will have a much better sense of how this

20 part of it has gone. Then the two weeks is very

21 intense. We will be interacting as a learning

22 community all day long every day for two weeks. At the

23 end of that time we will know better. We will be doing

24 it again next year. Then the grant runs out unless we

25 can find some more money. Anything else I can

16

1 clarify.

2 >>A VOICE: Do you find yourself faced with a

3 question like, why doesn't the U. S. pay for education

4 after a certain point? Do you find yourself defensive

5 or editorializing or how do you handle that?

6 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: We tried very hard to

7 give the clearest factual answer that we can based



upon

8 cultural values. For example, that question hooks into

9 our very strong value given to individuality,

10 independence, our particular balance between what we

11 see as private responsibility or state and Federal

12 private individual and governmental, very different

13 balance than in the other countries that we are talking

14 to. Yes, Susan.

15 SUSAN:: I want to say I worked with Pat.

16 Just to add to that, it is a very interesting point

17 that you raise because part of what we have had to do

18 is to create a learning community where all of the

19 participants are comfortable discussing both the

20 positives and challenging aspects of their countries

21 and cultures and approaches to teaching deaf students.

22 In Sweden they have adopted this bilingual approach.

23 However, the research that they have put on line

24 indicates that deaf students who came through

learning

25 sign language at a very early age are not doing as well

17

1 as they had hoped in terms of learning the spoken

2 language of Sweden, Swedish written language. One of

3 the speculations was that there was great emphasis on

4 signing in the early years that teachers didn't have

5 the tools or the skills or the time to sufficiently

6 integrate the written version of Swedish into the

7 curriculum. And so they're now revisiting that.

8 That's a very sensitive topic, sensitive in Sweden and

9 sensitive on an international basis as well. But they

10 were comfortable posting that for discussion within our

11 course. And so we are trying, also, to be willing to

12 address problems that we are facing in this country and

13 how things that might not look as good as we would like

14 them to. That's part of the challenge of an

15 international course and part of its fascination as  
16 well.

17 >>A VOICE: I was wondering about the

18 education in the Netherlands because you talked  
about

19 how that education was 70 percent private.

20 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: 65.

21 >>A VOICE: What about the deaf students,

22 what's education like? What kind of situation are  
they

23 in, private deaf schools or models or mainstream

24 programs or what?

25 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: All of the above.

18

1 >>A VOICE: So many, many different options

2 in the Netherlands; is that correct?

3 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: Yes, and that's one of

4 the aspects related to the Netherlands in  
particular

5 that I would like to understand more about. How  
does

6 that work? How do people make choices? If  
anyone can

7 establish a school at any time with government  
support,

8 then do you have schools that are established by  
a

9 parent, for example? Perhaps equivalent to our  
charter

10 schools. What kind of public is -- Don, you may  
know.

11 Don: Indeed you start school in the

12 Netherlands but you have to be essentially  
credited by

13 the ministry of education. You can't just open the

14 door and say, come one come all. After a certain

15 period of preparation, you have to present your

16 curriculum, your results and then be certified by  
the

17 ministry of education.

18 Susan: Just to add to that's correct and I

19 may have misread this in the materials from the

20 Netherlands but position is not guaranteed to a

21 particular private school. If a parent feels they  
want

22 their child to go, for example, to an oral school

23 within their district that's private, they have to

24 apply, and then an evaluation board will review  
those

25 children's credentials and skills and determine  
whether

19

1 or not they are a good fit. That raises a whole other

2 interesting issue as well.

3 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: In Greece we had one of

4 the students explain. This was part of the discussion

5 about free education. There the discussion was

6 centered around everyone has the right to education.

7 One of the students said, well, it is not always a high

8 quality education. That began another whole thread of

9 conversation about which is ongoing, about what does

10 that mean. Again, back to Greece, they have been on

11 their own since 1974. They have been involved in wars,

12 and they have been invaded for so many centuries, that

13 it is only very recent that they have been able to

14 completely take up the reigns themselves. One, they

15 are a member of the EU, and so they're trying to meet

16 the requirements and recommendations

suggested there.

17 And at the same time they are redeveloping themselves,

18 holding on to their own culture and heritage at very,

19 very high speed.

20 SUSAN:: Just to add to that, Pat and I wrote

21 a paper presented last week at another conference on

22 Inclusion and in looking at Greece, we realized one of

23 the factors we need to consider in understanding how a

24 country develops a meaning for inclusion is to look at

25 their geography, a country that's been relatively

20

1 isolated, in the thick of everything, lots of time when

2 they have been overtaken and so on. We looked at

3 resources. We realized having a policy is one things

4 but having the resources to enact it is something else.

5 The conference I went to was an international

6 conference to present this paper. There was a

7 gentleman there from Russia saying we have  
great laws

8 that we have managed to push through but as  
you can

9 imagine, we haven't been able to implement really  
any

10 of them yet. So Inclusion is a very complex  
concept

11 not just for deaf students but for all citizens and  
12 countries.

13 >>PATRICIA DE CARO: Of course, note that we  
14 are not using the word "inclusion" in the jargon

15 sense. We are not speaking of the programmatic  
meaning

16 of the word as it is used in this country. We are  
17 speaking of a very broad sense of inclusion.  
What does

18 it mean to include deaf individuals into society  
and

19 education? But to return to the technology, this  
has

20 been thus far not as successful so far as we had  
hoped

21 but very, very useful, and we hope we can find  
ways and

22 times of improving it over the years. Thank you  
very

23 much. I appreciate your attention.

24 (Applause)

25 Use evaluation forms on the way out or a

21

1 preferable method is to go over to the Learning Center

2 and evaluation on line. We would like to thank Pat,

3 the interpreters and all the other crew members for

4 helping. Please do the evaluation that's necessary and

5 I would like to remind you that the reception included

6 in the package on floor level and you are all invited.

7 Thank you very much.

8 (Session concluded)

9 (applause).

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