Collaborating with Strangers Workshop: Communication and Education
April 5th, 2016

A Collaboration with Strangers Workshop, or CoLAB, was held on Tuesday, April 5th, 2016, uniting graduate students predominantly from the College of Education and College of Journalism and Communications. The CoLAB was held from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. in the Marston Science Library. Fourteen participants responded to an eight question pre-workshop survey and fifteen responded to an 11 question post-workshop survey. Demographic information was obtained from profile signs completed by participants for use during the workshop. A demographic profile of the group and the results of the surveys are presented in this report.

Participants

Eighteen people participated in the workshop and fifteen profile signs were collected for analysis. Ten participants came from journalism and communication fields, 4 came from education fields, and 1 participant was listed as belonging to "Libraries/ Education." A more detailed breakdown of participants by department or research area is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1	
Department or Research Area	Number of Participants
Journalism	6
Advertising/ Communications	4
Education (Curriculum and Instruction, Teaching and Learning	4
Other (Libraries/ Education)	1

Pre-Workshop Survey

Fourteen participants completed the pre-workshop survey. The eight question survey consisted of 6 closed-ended items and 1 open-ended item. Two Likert scale items, a series of 5 multiple choices items, and a free-response item were included.

Survey Items 1 and 2: Likert Scale

1. I am comfortable in… **face-to-face conversations with others I do not know**

Table 2a				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
3 21.43%	3 21.43%	6 42.86%	2 14.29%	0 0%

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2. I am comfortable in… **talking to "strangers" with interests, knowledge and skills different from my own**

Table 2b				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4 28.57%	5 35.71%	4 28.57%	1 7.14%	0 0%

Survey Items 3-7: Multiple Choice

3. In a month, on average, with how many "strangers" do you have conversations about…**research**?

Table 3a			
0	1-2	3-4	5+
2 14.29%	8 57.14%	2 14.29%	2 14.29%

4. In a month, on average, with how many "strangers" do you have conversations about…**class assignments/ projects**?

Table 3b			
0	1-2	3-4	5+
1 7.14%	9 64.29%	2 14.29%	2 14.29%

5. In a month, on average, with how many "strangers" do you have conversations about…**career goals/ mentoring**?

Table 3c			
0	1-2	3-4	5+
4 28.57%	7 50%	1 7.14%	2 14.29%

6. In a month, on average, with how many "strangers" do you have conversations about…**professional passions (topics, issues that are important to you**?

Table 3d			
0	1-2	3-4	5+
1 7.14%	6 42.86%	6 42.86%	1 7.14%

7. In a month, on average, with how many "strangers" do you have conversations about…**projects or events**?

Table 3e			
0	1-2	3-4	5+
2	7	4	1

14.29%	50%	28.57%	7.14%

Survey Item 8: Free Response

8. Other comments on your experiences having conversations with "strangers" in general.

    For the final free response item, participants were given four lines to fill in their own response. Seven out of fourteen participants (50%) responded to the item. All recorded responses are provided below verbatim.

- *I suppose I think of "strangers" as people in bars (which I don't frequent) or friends of friends at social events. Like, people who you know through friends but you aren't really friends with but need to socialize with…*
- *I think I probably avoid eye contact more than I should. I also definitely identify as an introvert. I need alone time to recharge and process.*
- *My definition of strangers here are people outside my program or people in public. It does not include acquaintances within the CIC*
- *Until I was asked about it on this survey I didn't realize or think about the fact that I don't talk to anyone outside my area on a regular basis. Just professors + classmates.*
- *I am a doctoral student. I spend most of my time studying. Being in a position to talk to someone new is unusual.*
- *I worked in news. I'm used to strangers.*
- *As a reporter and now an undergraduate advisor, I talk to a lot of strangers.*

Post-Workshop Survey

    Fifteen participants completed the post-workshop survey. The 11 question survey consisted of 7 closed-ended items and 4 open-ended items. One multiple choices item, three dichotomous items, three Likert scale items and four free-response item were included.

Survey Item 1: Multiple Choice

1. My overall CoLAB evaluation

Table 4			
Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
6 40%	9 60%	0	0

Survey Items 2-4: Dichotomous

    For items 2-4, respondents were asked to respond either Yes or No to a series of statements. The responses to all three items are summarized in Table 5 below.

Table 5		
	Yes	No
2. I would attend a workshop like this again	11 73.33%	4 26.67%
3. I would recommend this collaboration process to other students/ faculty.	15 100%	0 0%
4. Has this experience helped you realize the value of speaking to people you do not know about their assets, skills and passions?	12 85.71%	2 14.29%

Survey Items 5-7: Likert Scale

5. I feel more confident in my ability to approach people I don't know.

Table 6a				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
0 0%	9 60%	5 33.33%	1 6.67%	0 0%

6. I am more comfortable talking to strangers in different disciplines.

Table 6b				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 6.67%	8 53.33%	6 40%	0 0%	0 0%

7. (If applicable) I am more comfortable talking to "strangers" in different positions in their academic or professional careers (e.g., student to faculty)

Table 6c				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1 7.14%	6 42.86%	7 50%	0 0%	0 0%

Survey Items 8-11: Free Response

8. Did the CoLAB facilitation process help you access new resources, knowledge and/or grantseeking information? If so, please describe.

For item number 8, participants were given three lines to fill in their own response. Twelve out of fifteen participants (80%) responded to the item. All recorded responses are provided below verbatim.

- *Yes- it helped me think of a new research topic (Instagram/Schools) and alerted me to an open access database.*
- *Yes, definitely! I got to see how my research relates to many other people's research.*
- *I noticed a lot of overlap between my projects and those of others- even if it was just a small fact.*
- *Yes. I learned about several new UF resources and have new ideas to explore for dissertation topics*
- *I was made aware of a new resource for text analysis*
- *New people to work with or use for gathering. Met people with similar interests outside my field!*
- *I intend to more intentionally review literature from journalism research and it's intersections with with my work on justice + activism in Teacher Education*
- *Not really*
- *Yes! There are many projects that people are involved with that are not recognized.*
- *Possibly. I'll contact a few people.*
- *Will be great to have sessions for FT working profs.*
- *Some participants told me about topics I was unaware of as well as suggested outside sources*

9. What was the most useful part of the workshop and why?

For item number 9, participants were given three lines to fill in their own response. Fourteen out of fifteen participants (93.33%) responded to the item. All recorded responses are provided below verbatim.

- *Talking!*
- *It was valuable to see others outside of my discipline validate what I do- I can get bogged down in my own stuff + forget how cool it really is!*
- *Being forced to dive right in*
- *Meeting other students from other areas*
- *Yes. It is a very effective one-time exchange of ideas*
- *Talking to other researchers; it gave me ideas for my current research*
- *Meeting everyone*
- *Deepening a connection between media and education*
- *It was nice meeting people, but my research interests are very dissimilar to everyone elses, even in my program*

- *Learning about others interests and how they intersect with mine*
- *Try to combine fields. New perspectives.*
- *Hear from peers on their interest*
- *Learning about new topics that others are studying*
- *Meet the people*

10. What surprised you the most about the speed meeting process?

For item number 10, participants were given two lines to fill in their own response. Twelve out of fifteen participants (80%) responded to the item. All recorded responses are provided below verbatim.

- *How little I had to talk if I asked questions.*
- *That it wasn't as painful as I expected. The 3 minute time period made talking to people bearable*
- *How much the disciplines had in common!*
- *Major differences and things to learn from those within my college as well*
- *Learning what other people are working on and who is advising them*
- *Nothing*
- *How quickly it went*
- *Easy, low pressure*
- *It was fast*
- *How quick the session went by! I was enjoying the conversations.*
- *Didn't know it was for research. IRB was kind of jarring.*
- *How much you learned in such a short time*

11. During the presentation, what information was most useful and/or interesting?

For item number 11, participants were given two lines to fill in their own response. Ten out of fifteen participants (66.67%) responded to the item. All recorded responses are provided below verbatim.
- *I think I probably avoid eye contact more than I should. I also definitely identify as an introvert. I need alone time to recharge and process.*
- *I liked the videos.*
- *The differences between cooperation, collaboration, etc.*
- *How quickly three minutes goes by.*
- *Differences btw. coordination and collaboration*
- *Ideating*
- *Example of incubater made with car parts: human-centered design*
- *What "collaboration" actually means*
- *Videos*
- *The goals/ overall mission of the project/ event*

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Numbers at a Glance

- 100% percent of participants rated the workshop good or excellent.
- When asked if they would attend a workshop like this again, 73.33% responded positively.
- 60% percent of participants reported they "felt more confident approaching people they do not know."
- 100% percent of participants responded that they would recommend the workshop to other students/faculty.