

ETHICAL VISITING EXERCISE AND CUYAMA SCAVENGER HUNT

ISU, Summer 2019 / Prof. Kevin Lair / May 15 - 30

Design for Change (Dsn446) / 4-6 credits

14 students

OBJECTIVE

To reflect on what it means to be to be an ethical visitor, borrowing critical tools of observation and community co-creation from visiting artists Claudia Borfiga, Nicole Lavelle, and Mary Welcome to consider the following:

Over the course of your visit, how and what might you contribute to (or potentially extract from) this place or these communities? In exchange for your visit, what perspectives, skills, or resources might you be able to offer? What relationships might you be able to build? What will you learn?

MATERIALS

Full group activities: 14 Cuyama Pattern Hunter Guides, 14 copies of *Questions for Visiting (Artists)*, drawing materials, 11x17 paper, and large sticky sheets for final reflection meeting.

Small Group Activities: (A) \$20 bill; (B) blank postcards, colored pencils/drawing materials + \$1.40 for 3 postcard stamps; (C) BSC card (for buying pistachios w/ staff member); (D) \$10.50 for 4 Buckhorn drinks + tax + tip

INTRODUCTION

Begin by posting a large sticky paper at the front of the room (the Design Room is best for this activity) and give each student a small square of paper and pens. Give them 5-8 minutes to reflect on the following questions and write responses to share with the group and Blue Sky Center staff: *(Have these questions pre-written on the large sticky paper with space below each for student answers)*

1. Why am I here?
2. What will I learn?
3. What can I give? (or *What can I offer in exchange?*)

Explain that we want to know the answers to these questions so we can design the course around their interests -- and also that people in town will ask them these questions and that each person should be prepared to answer, especially the "Why are

you here?” question. Once students are finished, have a student volunteer to be a notetaker. Then go around the room and get 1-2 answers from each student to copy on the large paper. Tell the students that we’re collecting the class answers and need to get as many answers as possible to represent why the class is here, what the class will learn, and what the class can give.

Next, pass out copies of the *Questions for Visiting (Artists)* essay and mindmap by [Nicole Lavelle](#) and [Mary Welcome](#). Explain that this document was created by visiting artists in 2018 and that we continue to use it as a way to guide visitors to think about how to exist and “be” as outsiders to this small community. Split the class into small groups of three and have them spread out into the warehouse space to read the essay and mindmap together and have a short discussion in response to the document. Give them 10-15 minutes for this.

While they’re reading and discussing, post two large sticky papers on the wall. At the top of one, write “Questions or Reflections” and at the top of the other write “As visitors, we:.”

When students are done, have groups share the questions or reflections they had upon reading the essay and mindmap, or if there were any “Questions for Visiting” that struck a chord with them. Have them refer back to their own answers to the “Why am I here? / What will I learn? / What can I give” exercise.

Once everyone has shared, turn to the “As visitors, we:” paper and tell the class that we’re going to create a class pact for how we want to exist in the community as visitors (as guided by Nicole and Mary’s critical questions). Go around the room to have each person contribute something to the pact. When all ideas have been collected, ask the group to collectively agree on the pact for visiting. Once you’ve agreed, move on to the scavenger hunt portion of the session.

ASSIGNMENT

Split into small groups of 3-4 (can be same as reading groups from the activity above). Each team member will receive their own Pattern Hunters’ Guide to Cuyama. Each team will also receive a copy of *Questions for Visiting (Artists)* along with a creative challenge that will require them to respectfully observe and explore the townsite of New Cuyama. Have the following prompts printed as slips of paper you can give to each group along with an envelope or bag of related materials. For any group spending money, explain that they’ll need to return their envelope with any change and an itemized receipt from their purchase.

Group A (4 students)

Browse the shelves of C & H Market. As a group you must design a balanced snack to share with the rest of the group, spending no more than \$20 to purchase four or more ingredients (at least one being a fruit or vegetable). Once

you've found and secured your ingredients, go back to the Khalili Cantina and prepare your snack together.

Group B (3 students)

Visit Richardson Park. Taking your blank postcards, draw an advertisement for the community of New Cuyama based on something special you found while at the park or making your way there. Once you've finished your postcards, go to the post office, buy some stamps from Postman Steve, and mail your postcard to someone. (Take a picture of your postcards before you send so you can share with the group!)

Group C (3 students)

Visit the Santa Barbara Pistachio Store (with a BSC staff member). On your way there and back, keep track of the number of a) semi trucks you see and b) the number of different crops you can see growing in the fields or orchards (list of the different crops you think you see). At the store, sample all of the pistachio flavors and as a group decide which flavor to buy to bring back for a group snack.

Group D (4 students)

Go to the Cuyama Buckhorn and order lemonade, iced tea, or soda. Sit in a booth and find a cattle brand to copy. As a group, write your own story for what the brand symbolizes, or create a story by pairing multiple brands together. If it's appropriate, engage in conversation with someone at the restaurant you don't know (the waitstaff are an easy way to start if you're feeling shy).

CONCLUSION

Meet back as a group at a given time to share snacks, stories, and observations. After a group conversation, create either:

1. A mindmap that responds to Nicole Lavelle's map.
2. A mindmap that builds on your observations from your scavenger hunt activity.
3. An idea for your own guide/tool for ethical visiting for students, artists, or tourists new to the Cuyama Valley.

We'll meet back together to share our mindmaps / tools with the group.