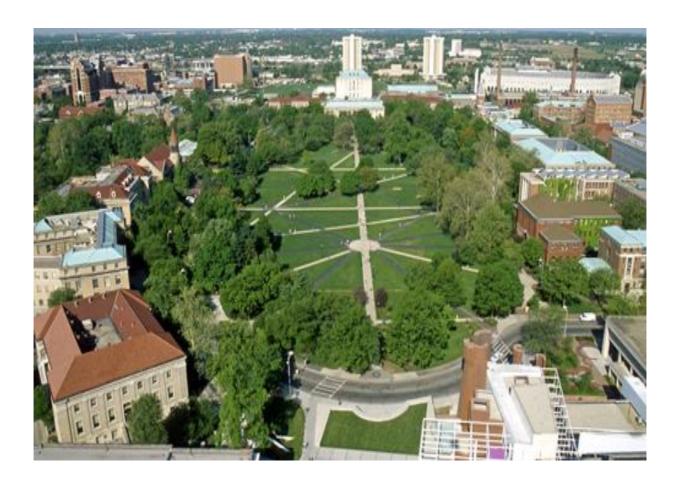
# Report from a semester at Ohio State University



Lena Ivarsson, PhD Assistant Professor in Education Department of Education Mid Sweden University (Mittuniversitetet) First of all I would like to express my thanks to The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education, STINT, for being selected for one of the grants during fall 2013. I also want to thank Mid Sweden University for nominating me.

When I, on December 19, received the news that I was going to go to Ohio State University as a visiting scholar, during fall 2013, I was surprised, happy and much grateful.

Columbus in Ohio is probably not a place I would have chosen to visit if it had not been for the grant! Now, when I look back at my semester in Columbus, I am so grateful for the opportunity to spend some month in Columbus. The State of Ohio contains of about 11,5 million people. The capital of Ohio is Columbus with a population of 800 000 people. Columbus is situated in the middle of Ohio. Cleveland, in the northern part of Ohio is the second biggest city with a population of about 400 000 people, and Cincinnati, at the southern part of Ohio has a population of about 300 000 people. Travelling around Ohio is interesting and there is a lot to see and experience. As Ohio State University (OSU) has campuses around the state, you often encounter the familiar red, black and white OSU signs when travelling around the state. Ohio State University consists of six campuses across the state. Besides Columbus there are campuses in Wooster, Lima, Mansfield, Marion and Newark. With 65 000 students and 40 000 faculty and staff, OSU is important for the state of Ohio. Ohio State University is among the top 20 universities in the country. The possibility to be a part of this great university has been very stimulating and interesting. In this report I will try to share some of my experiences. The report is divided into three parts: before, during and after the stay. Before the stay, consists of information concerning preparation, planning and housing. During the stay, focuses on activities during the semester, and the third part, after the stay contains comparisons between Ohio State University and Mid Sweden University as well as my thoughts about what to do with my new experiences.



(On a trip to take part of the Amish culture)

### Before the stay

## Preparation and planning

### Before the planning trip

Shortly after being informed about receiving the grant, I received information about contact persons at Ohio State University (OSU). I got in touch with them and we decided on dates for my planning visit. In March STINT organized a meeting in Stockholm, informing about the grant. Visiting scholars from last semester took part and shared their experiences with us.

At the beginning of April I went to Columbus and met with people at the department of Teaching and Learning. In advance I had scheduled meetings with all people I thought it would be good to meet. That was wise as most people seemed to be rather busy, and it was difficult for them to schedule a meeting with short notice. It is important to know that *you* are in charge of the scheduling of meetings.

### During the planning trip

I met with the head of the department, other persons responsible for offices and documents, teachers and researchers and persons at UCAT (University Center for Advancement in Teaching), and OIA (Office of International Affairs). The week was really full of meetings and it was difficult to keep hold of all persons and which departments they belonged to and their responsibilities! Going back to Sweden, I can't say everything was sorted out, but at least I had met the people of importance for me, and we could go on planning by using e-mail.



(Ohio Union)

### Housing

One of the big concerns during the planning trip was to find somewhere to stay during the semester. I had looked up possibilities on-line and booked two meetings. Although, when looking at them, one house and one apartment, I didn't really like them. During a meeting with one of the colleagues at the department, I was informed that one of the professors at the department was going abroad for the semester (on a grant), bringing her family, and they were looking for somebody to rent their house. Contact was taken, I went to meet them and to look at the house, and it was great. Later on, in the summer, we agreed upon a leasing contract. One advice concerning housing is to ask at the department, use the craigslist or check the Internet. You can also join "Ohio State Visiting Scholars" on Facebook, for information about housing and other things concerning your stay in Columbus. It's good to have housing sorted as soon as possible.

The planning trip was very useful, and coming back in August, it felt good to already know Columbus and Ohio State University.



("Our" house)

# During the stay

# Activities during the semester

At first, my agenda was very empty and I felt stressed over this, but, after a while, when everything was settled, the agenda started to fill with exciting activities!

My son and I arrived in Columbus August 11, late evening. We lived in Upper Arlington, a lovely area, outside Columbus. It took about 10 minutes with car and 25 minutes by bike to OSU. I had scheduled a meeting with OIA (Office of International Affairs) at 10 am on Monday morning August 12, and we didn't have a car. I took the bike and, by the use of Google maps, easily found my way to OSU and the right building. I started with the J1-

scholar introduction meting, then took my papers to show them at another department and finally met with a secretary at my own department. Then, all paperwork was finally sorted.

Wednesday and Thursday, I took part in UCAT orientation days, primarily for new TA's, but I thought some of the content could be of value. There was some information about university rules, which were good, and then different workshops on teaching. Those were very basic and didn't add much to what I already knew, but anyway, attending the orientation days gave me a good start. I also met with the professor with whom I was going to co-teach a class during the semester. Already during the planning meeting I expressed my wish to co-teach, as I think that is the best way to learn new ways of teaching. If I teach a course on my own I will probably do exactly as I do back home. As professors at the department work rather individually, and as there are no common "fikarum" and coffee breaks, you do not meet other faculty regularly. Co-teaching gave me the opportunity to discuss teaching and learning, and to take part of other ways of teaching. Both Professor Wilkinson and I learnt a lot from co-teaching. The students were also pleased with the arrangement.

### **Teaching**

### Working conditions at the department

Most professors at the department teach two or three courses per semester. Depending on if it's an undergraduate or a graduate course, students meet once or twice a week for about one or two hours per meeting. If you, as a faculty, have research founding, you can buy yourself free from a part of your teaching.

There is also a group of teachers called TA's (Teacher Assistants) they are mostly graduate students or doctoral students teaching undergraduate courses.

A big difference compared with my university in Sweden is that it is mostly one teacher teaching each course. At my university there can be many teachers in one course, doing things they are specialized in. I prefer the way they work here as it makes planning easy and it's nice to meet only one or two groups of students instead of five groups or more.

### The course I was co-teaching

The course I was teaching and also responsible for, together with Professor Ian Wilkinson, is called "Trends and issues in teaching reading". It's a graduate course with meetings once a week, on Tuesdays, 4.30pm-6.50pm. There were seventeen students, mostly master students, but also doctoral students and teachers from schools doing their reading endorsement. Ian and I planned the course together, and I really felt involved. It was our course, not he's with me as an additional lecturer. We taught about half of the course each, but we were both present at all sessions. This was good both for us and for the students. It was especially good for me as it felt safe to have Ian to explain things directly connected to US or Ohio, or Columbus, that I didn't know about, for example, Common Core State Standards and Third Grade Guarantee. Our course was divided into two parts, the first part dealt with the history of literacy research in the U.S., and the second part was about different topics, such as International studies, dyslexia, precocious readers, to mention a few. During the first part students, in groups, read different reports on literacy research and presented those as posters. In the second part of the course the students read three to five research articles connected to each topic. In every session a group of students served as facilitators, and ran a discussion. Professor Wilkinson and I started the sessions and summed them up at the end, but students led

every session. This made the students much involved in the process of teaching and learning. During the second part of the course, the students wrote three reaction papers, and the final assessment was a literature review.

### **Assessments and grading**

The course had five requirements, which gave a total of 100 points. The requirements were as follows:

- 1. Participation (10 points)
- 2. Group presentation on synthesis report (10 points, not graded)
- 3. Facilitate discussion of topic (10 points, not graded)
- 4. Three reaction papers (10 points each, a total of 30 points)
- 5. Review of research (40 points)

Students will receive a grade based on the instructor's judgment as to whether the student has satisfied the stated objectives of the course in the following manner:

Α	93-	B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%
	100%						
A-	90-92%	В	83-86%	С	73-76%	D	60-66%
		B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	Е	59% or
							less

I find this way of grading easy and clear both for teachers and students.

Teachers spend a lot of time on course work, and, for example, reactions papers that are handed in by students on a Tuesday will be commented on and given back the following Tuesday. This makes it possible for students to improve their coming reaction papers.

### Other activities related to teaching

I have taken part in a graduate course on Second Language Acquisition, both as an observer and as a lecturer. I observed teaching and learning at two different occasions and held a lecture on second language acquisition in Sweden. The students showed a great interest in the topic and were interested in the Swedish perspective, which led to an engaging and interesting session.

I have also observed a course on Reading foundation, for undergraduate students. That is because I'd like to see if and how teaching and learning strategies differs when it comes to undergraduates and graduates. The teacher of this class was a doctoral student and she gave me permission to observe and also wanted my opinion on her teaching, which I gave her after the session.

### **Seminars**

### Ethnography of literacy and related perspectives on researching literacy(ies)

Some things that I took part in was not planned from the beginning but in one-way or another I got involved. One of the seminars I took part in became known to me when I had a meeting about the course in Second Language Acquisition, with Professor Leslie Moore. After our meeting she was going to a seminar on literacy, and asked me to accompany her, which I did. The seminar was a cooperation between OSU and a

university in Brasil. The seminar was an advanced seminar/course called "Ethnography of Literacy and Related Perspectives on Researching Literacy(ies)" and it was planned to go on during the fall semester. As I found the content very interesting I asked to join and was accepted. The participants were professors and doctoral students from both universities. The meetings were through videoconferencing. Prior to each class we all read relevant articles. The seminar was divided into four main parts: a). At each university we discussed and summed up what was discussed the week before. b). Somebody from one of the universities held a lecture on todays topic, there could also be invited researchers (a couple of times Brian Street from UK held a lecture and the following discussion. This was very exciting for me as he is a well-known researcher in this field). c). We discussed the content of the lecture at each university and came up with some common questions to discuss. d). Professors and students from both universities got together on videoconference and discussed the questions. This is a good way of meeting many professors and doctoral students from the department as well as from Brasil. It's also a good example on cooperation between universities.

### The Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy

"The Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy is a research laboratory dedicated to conducting high-quality empirical research on child development and early education. Our research team is distinctly multi-disciplinary, bringing together individuals from diverse disciplines, including speech-language pathology, psychology, reading, special education, and elementary education. In the lab, we focus our efforts on answering questions for which answers will make direct and immediate contributions to educational and clinical practices with children and their families." (www.xxex.ehe.osu.edu).

I have attended the following seminars organized by "The Crane Center for Early Childhood Research and Policy":

- Childhood obesity
- Cooparenting and young children's development
- > Children with autism spectrum disorders
- Learning progressions in elementary school mathematics

#### Getting your research published

In this seminar researchers and editors from six different departments at Ohio State University gave advice on publishing. A lot of useful information on writing and publishing research in international journals was given.

### **Seminars on technology**

As I have an interest in how to use technology for teaching and learning, I attended an unconference, a seminar and a workshop on the topic.

The unconference, called Exploring Learning Technologies Unconference were held for the sixth time. The unconference, which was a half-day conference, were organized by Ohio State University but people from outside the university, with an interest for technology and education were also invited. The interesting thing with this unconference was that we started off by making the schedule for the day. In before hand we had sent in topics we were interested in discussing. With those topics as a starting point we (about 60 people!) create a schedule that we all could agree upon, thereafter

we met to discuss the different topics on the schedule. This was a very interesting way in organizing a conference, and even though nobody was in charge of each session, there were a lot of discussions and sharing going on. At the unconference Prof. Rhodus talked about how he uses i-pads in his class, and, later on during the semester, I went to talk to him about this.

The Department of Teaching and Learning (my department) held a half-day workshop on Technology. Here we had the possibility to learn about different on-line computer programs and applications for i-pads that could easily be used in the classroom. I learnt a lot from this workshop, especially some good applications to try out. Finally I went to a seminar called i-pads in the classroom, and got even more information about i-pads, i-tunesU, applications and how to use them in the classroom. Those three activities on technology gave me a lot of new knowledge within the area.

#### **Practice**

As I work with teacher education at Mid Sweden University, I was interested in meeting supervisors, who work with students doing their practice in schools. I first met with the person in charge of the supervisors, and thereafter regularly attended their meetings once a week. Unfortunately, we could only organize one visit to a school, and that was to a model pre-school. Anyhow I enjoyed this visit, especially as the pre-school were very different from pre-schools I have visited in Sweden. The biggest difference was that this pre-school, as a model school, had big glass windows overlooking the rooms where the activities took place. You could, with permission, sit there and observe the activities. You could also use a headset to hear what they talked about or how teachers gave instructions or whatever you wanted to focus on. During the meetings with the supervisors I had the possibility to ask questions and learn how they worked, good information to bring back to my department at Mid Sweden University.

### UCAT - University Center for the Advancement of Teaching

UCAT is a department at the Ohio State University, which "exists to assist all those who teach at The Ohio State University to excel in teaching, support student learning, and experience the satisfaction that results from teaching well" (ucat.osu.edu/about). During this fall I have taken part in some of their events, reported in more detail below.

#### **Seminars**

The introduction days, described at the beginning of this report, were organized by UCAT. During the semester I have taken part in one seminar on facilitating classroom discussion. The seminars are set up so that somebody from UCAT starts with a short lecture, and then the participants are involved in the session by sharing their own experiences and knowledge with their colleagues.

#### **Teaching Consulting**

Consultants work with faculty and TA's to take a scholarly approach to teaching, informed by research and based on the process of asking questions, gathering data, and planning responses. Consultations can be either individual or for a whole unit. All individual consultations are voluntary.

First, I took part in a consultation with a faculty member. He had, himself, asked for help, and the consultant and I met with him for two talks, where we were informed about the problems he experienced. The consultant asked questions that made him reflect upon

his teaching and the students learning. (My role was as an observer and I did not take part in the talks, but listened and could discuss my thoughts with the consultant after the meeting). Next step was to meet with the students and ask them to evaluate their learning. The evaluation took part in small groups, and they discussed three questions concerning learning in the classroom in this specific class (What facilitates learning? What makes learning difficult? Suggestions on changes?) The teacher was not present during the meeting with the students. Thereafter the students' answers were put together into a document, and the consultant and I met the faculty again and discussed the evaluation document, trying to find ways to change things that didn't work well, and keep to things that worked. After being able to take part in the process I asked the consultant to come and observe me teaching and to ask my students to evaluate my teaching and their learning. It was very interesting to take part of their comments, which were all very positive. Things that I evaluate and that I try to keep to during teaching, were also mentioned by the students, which made me feel that I had succeeded. I now have a document where my teaching is evaluated. This document will be a part of my CV.

### OIA - Office of International Affairs

The Office of International Affairs takes care of international students and scholars. When international students and scholars first arrive at Ohio State, the Office of International Affairs is one of the initial points of contact. Things concerning the J1-Visa and DS-2019 document are being handled by the OIA. Except from this, OIA offers a lot of activities for visiting scholars, for example English conversation (see below), movie nights, parties and field trips. During my stay at Ohio State University I have been to a Halloween party, a football game at Champps restaurant, a gallery-hop night, a trip to Circleville pumpkin show, a weekend trip to Cincinnati, five-after-five, and Columbus zoo, all organized by OIA. Taking part in their activities also gives a great opportunity to meet other visiting scholars, and to explore things you would probably not do on your own. I am surprised by all events organized by OIA for visiting scholars, and I'm pleased to have had the possibility to take part in as many as I have done.



(Circleville Pumpkin Festival)

### **Conversation groups**

#### **Swedish**

Swedish is the only Scandinavian language offered at Ohio State University. As an additional way to practice their Swedish, students were invited to a lunch meeting once a week. I took part in these lunch meetings and that was highly appreciated. It was interesting for the students to talk with people from Sweden, and it was also interesting for me to meet and talk to those students, of which some hade been studying in Sweden, some had been au-pairs, and some just had an interest in Swedish and Scandinavia. At the end of the semester a Christmas party was organized including Lucia and a traditional Swedish "julbord".

### **English**

The office of international affairs offers an English conversation group at lunch time, once a week. The session is run by one Ryan Walker, and starts with a presentation on American culture, such as "High school, American food, shopping, Thanksgiving, Ohio State University". After the presentation we split into smaller groups and discussed the topic of the day. This is a good way of getting to know a little more about American culture but also to meet Visiting Scholars from all over the world, and to practice your English.

### After the stay

### Comparison between OSU and MIUN

Areas for comparison	Ohio State University	Mid Sweden University	
Campuses	6	3	
Programs - undergraduate	175	45	
Master's degree programs	133	35	
Doctoral degree programs	112	22 (subjects/areas)	
Courses	12000	550	
Employed	43630	1000	
Total amount of students	63964	15000	

As shown in the table above, there are significant differences between the universities when it comes to size, courses, employees and students.

### Everyday life on campus

#### OSU

There are always a lot of students at campus. There are a lot of common areas where they can sit and work or chat. Many dorms are situated in the campus area, which means, most students live close to campus and spend their whole semester on campus. There are four bus lines operating within the campus, these buses are free for students and staff. Even though there are many hundred buildings at campus there are only a couple of them related to your college, department and subject.

There are a lot of activities offered all around campus. Ohio State University has a good way of informing about activities going on. There is a daily newsletter called OSU Today, which are e-mailed every morning. It contains of activities such as seminars, lectures, but also, other kind of information such as road works at campus, cultural arrangements and more. From the college of education and human ecology where my department belong, there is a weekly newsletter with information about activities more closely connected with the college. As a visiting scholar you have good use of the information in the newsletters as it gives you opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities offered.

#### MIUN

At campus Härnösand students come to campus four times a semester, each time consist of four to five days. This means that some weeks, campus is full of students and other weeks it's almost empty. Faculties have their offices in a separate building so if you don't teach you don't really see or meet any students. We do not have dorms and life at campus is not very lively. As there are mostly distance students, there are not a lot of activities offered at campus Härnösand. The campuses in Sundsvall and Östersund are bigger and also livelier, with more students and staff present, and also more activities going on.

Information about activities at the university is announced on the web page. Activities concerning the department are announced by the head of the department in the weekly letter, and by people in charge of different activities through e-mails.

#### Relation between research and education

### OSU

The relation between research and education is strong. Professors teach the same area as they are researching. Having a broad perspective, as I have, is not favorable. The first thing you are asked about is your area of research and then it is assumed that this is also the area you teach, and nothing else.

Students are invited to take part in research projects. The undergraduate research office facilitate for students and researchers to collaborate. Notable is that undergraduate students voluntarily work in research projects as they think it will be a good experience for them!

#### MIUN

The relation between research and education is strong, but not as strong as at OSU. Both breadth and depth is valued, and needed, to be able to teach both in your specific area (where you also conduct research), but also in more common areas within your subject of teaching. Very rarely undergraduate students are involved in research.

### Competence development for teachers

#### OSU

There are great opportunities for teachers to take part in courses for competence development offered by different departments/offices at the university. UCAT (university center for the advancement of teaching) provides workshops, seminars, courses and consultation, (see earlier description of UCAT). The office of the chief

information officer provides Instructional Technology Services through seminars, workshops, conferences and personal meetings.

Sabbatical is another form of competence development. Every seventh year professors can apply for sabbatical, which means they can have a full semester off, fully paid. Most professors use this semester for research.

#### MIUN

There are few courses offered at the university concerning professional development. There are leadership programs for leaders, and occasionally other programs or courses that professors can apply to, but no regular offers as from UCAT.

At MIUN there is an office called LRC (Learning Resource Center), which provides technological help and workshops and seminars concerning the use of technology. LRC serves both faculty and students.

Higher seminars are regularly organized at the department and can be seen as a part of the faculty's competence development.

### Working conditions for teachers

#### OSU

At the department of teaching and learning the average professor (assistant, associate or full) work full time, and the time is divided on teaching 40 percent, research 40 percent and service 20 percent. Each course is taught by one professor, (or TA, which is a graduate- or PhD student). If a professor has external research funding, his/her teaching will get reduced. The 20 percent service is used for different kinds of groups, committees and meetings.

Faculty can choose to work from their office or from home.

There are no common "fikaraster" and you don't meet your colleagues very often. As they teach courses on their own there is not much collaborations. It can, once in a while, be a bit lonely. Of course some faculty have research projects together and take part in activities at the department, but they don't meet regularly more than a couple of times during a semester.

During my semester at the Department of Education, there was one faculty meeting and one workshop.

Meetings with students are scheduled and can for example be between 15.00 och 17.00 every Tuesday.

### MIUN

At the department of education there is no set percentages between teaching, research and service. It depends on how the semester looks like when it comes to amount of students, external research funding and so on. Every semester is different and also a faculty's workload. When it comes to external research funding, it will, just as at OSU, have an effect on your amount of teaching.

At the department of education there are always more than one teacher teaching a course, which means that there are many meetings concerning planning of courses. At the department of education we also have "fikaraster" twice a day, which gives faculty and staff a possibility to meet and discuss work or other things. Fikaraster is a nice way to meet colleagues on an everyday basis, and gives you the feeling of being part of a team.

There are regular meetings at the department (about once a month). There are no workshops, but seminars.

### Student life

### OSU

Students usually take five courses per semester. Undergraduate courses meet about an hour twice a week, and graduate students meet for two hours once a week. In between classes they have to prepare by reading and writing so students are rather busy all the time. Most students live in dorms at campus and when they don't study, there are a great variety of activities to take part in. Most students stay at campus for the whole semester. The cost for tuition and fees for a full academic year (two semesters) is \$ 10 037 if you come from Ohio and \$ 25 445 if you are from outside Ohio. The cost for room and food is \$ 10 392 for everybody. This means that a year as a student at Ohio State University will cost approximately 144 500 SEK if you are from Ohio and 254 000 SEK if you are from outside Ohio. This is a common fee for a well-known and highly valued university as Ohio State. Students can apply for and receive a scholarship to finance their studies. This is common for students with high grades, and for athletes.

There are a lot of clubs and groups to join as a student.

If you have problems with your academic studies you can seek help at DLC (Dennis Learning Center). DLC provide academic learning service and support to students. This is done through courses, workshops, personal meetings and online resources. DLC assist in the development of study skills, time management, test-taking strategies, learning from text, note-taking, and self-regulation strategies.

### MIUN

Students usually takes one course at a time, and can focus on that course totally. As we mostly have distance students at the department, the students will be engaged in lectures, seminars and workshops when they are at campus, and study by themselves (in collaboration with peers via learning-platforms) while they are home.

There is no cost for enrollment in university courses in Sweden. There are of course costs for literature and living. Students can apply for a study loan.

There are not many clubs and groups for students to join, mainly because there are few on campus students.

If students have problems with their academic studies they can turn to LRC (Learning Resource Center) for help, very similar to the help OSU offers to their students.

#### **Athletics**

#### OSU

Athletics is a big part of most American universities, OSU make no exception. Interesting to know is that you can be accepted for studies at the university by being good at a sport. Many athletes are offered scholarships, which make it possible for them both to develop as athletes and as academics. As athletes practice a lot and tour big parts of the country to compete, their studies may take longer time than the stipulated years. At Dennis Learning Center, there is a special department providing academic help to athletes. The most famous team at OSU is the football team, called "The Buckeye's". The whole university and the whole city and surroundings are engaged in Buckeye's. When it's game day most people get dressed in Buckeye's colors, scarlet and grey. The

football arena, which is situated in the middle of the campus area, accommodates 105 000 visitors!

#### MIUN

We do not have any special arrangements for athletes at the department of education. At campus Östersund, although, there are different programs on sports, and many of Sweden's most famous cross country skiers have been students at campus Östersund. Whether they have special arrangements and scholarships, I don't know.



(Buckeye's (the university football team) home arena, during a home game on September 9, 105 000 visitors)

### Forms of examination

#### OSU

The courses I've experienced differs depending on if there are undergraduate or graduate courses.

Undergraduate courses usually have quizzes every week or every second week. Quizzes are a way to measure students' knowledge about the content of the course. There are also oral presentations, and discussions based on what you've read. At the end of the semester there are finals, which, for example, can be a test or a paper.

Graduate courses can for example contain of oral presentations, discussions, poster presentations and writing of reaction papers during the semester. Graduate courses often have a paper or a report as the final exam.

Different activities during the semester are graded or given points, which will be used for the final grading (see example under teaching).

#### MIUN

Also here examinations and tasks are different between undergraduate and graduate

Undergraduate courses usually have oral presentations, group discussions, book seminars and written assignments. The examination is going on during the whole semester. Even though there is not a week for finals, usually the course is finished with a final exam such as a paper, a report or a test. All activities and exams are evaluated for a final grade.

For graduate courses, there are usually oral presentations, discussions and papers during the course, and the final assignment will mostly be a report or a paper. All activities during the semester form the basis for grading.

### Use of technology

At both universities there are offices concerning the use of technology. They offer courses, workshops and help. According to my experiences, both at OSU and MIUN, it is very personal how much technology you use. At both universities there are learning platforms to use. One thing that is different at OSU compared with MIUN is that most faculty and students use Apple products, and nobody discusses how to facilitate for students or faculty using other products. At MIUN students use a lot of different products from different companies, and it's more difficult to use an application or a program, if it's not available for all.

#### Distance education

I have much experience of distance education at MIUN but have not heard much about it during my time at OSU. There is an office for distance education and e-learning at OSU. My experience of distance education at OSU is the seminar on Ethnography that was taking part as collaboration between a university in Brasil, OSU, and Prof. Brian Street in UK.

### What will happen with my experiences?

I hope that Mid Sweden University, the faculty of humanities and the department of education will show interest in my knowledge and experiences from this semester at Ohio State University. My intention is to bring back good ideas, and try to develop them into something useful for the university, department and myself.

### University-wide

- Discussing the need for and the possibility to provide activities similar to the activities provided by UCAT (University Center for the Advancement of Teaching). After my semester at OSU I'm convinced that a center for the Advancement of Teaching is essential for the university. It's important to provide support within the area of teaching. We can assume that most faculties can develop as teachers.
- At OSU, seniors (pensionärer) are offered to enroll in courses for free, if the courses are not full. The seniors will read literature and take part in all activities but they will not do the exams and will not get a grade. I think seniors can be a good resource in a class as they can share their knowledge and experience with the younger students.
- Would it be possible with sabbaticals at a Swedish university? What effects, positive and negative would there be?

- ➤ How do we best inform of activities that are going on at the university? This is a special challenge for MIUN as we are a multi campus university.
- International collaborators must be looked for within universities similar to our own university. For example, OSU collaborate with Uppsala University, and that is the only university in Sweden where students from OSU can study and use their grades in their final diploma. If students chose to study at other universities, they can do it but their grades from those courses will not be paid any attention.

#### $\triangleright$

### Department

- ➤ The relation between teaching, research and service
- Making students more involved in their learning, by giving them more responsibilities in class
- ➤ More international collaborations on all levels
- ➤ A semester abroad for PhD students
- International collaborators must be looked for thoroughly. For example, OSU collaborate with Uppsala University, and that is the only university in Sweden where students from OSU can study and use their grades in their final diploma. If students chose to study at other universities, they can do it but their grades from those courses will not be paid any attention.
- > Teacher development
- Workshops

### Myself

- > Student involvement
- ➤ Change my teaching from lecturing to more student involvement
- ➤ Be a good role model for the students
- Planning and scheduling
- ➤ Keep to my area, which means do not get involved in everything but keep to what I'm good at. Let your area of research be your leading star!
- Take part in activities offered by the university
- > Try some new activities at my department

### Finally

Looking through my report I realize how much I have actually been able to do during this semester, and how much I have learnt. I have so many thoughts, experiences, knowledge and good ideas in my luggage to be shared at my university home in Sweden.

During my spare time, I have been trying to explore as much as possible of Columbus, Ohio, and other parts of the country. I think that is also important when you try to get to know a new country. As I had the possibility to be part of a book club and a gym group, I met a lot of American people outside of work, and also learnt a lot from them. Being part of these groups made me feel a part of the society in my neighborhood.

Finally, I am grateful for this opportunity, and once again thanks to STINT who made this possible for me.



(The Oval, outside the university library)

Upper Arlington, Ohio December 17, 2013

Lena Ivarsson