

Laura Anderson, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor of French  
Department of Humanities/Foreign Languages  
UW-Platteville

WTS 2005-06 SoTL Project Abstract  
Adapting Lesson Study to Fit an Interdisciplinary Model: A Case Study

I and several of my colleagues from UW-Platteville attended the sessions on lesson study at the 2005 Faculty College, and during our free time we started a discussion about how the practice of lesson study might be used on our campus. The UW-Platteville campus is a relatively small one, and many of us have few (if any) colleagues in our discipline, so our conversation rather naturally led us to consider what the implications would be if we were to form a truly interdisciplinary team to conduct a lesson study project. The session presenters, Dr. Bryan Kopp and Dr. Bill Cerbin, indicated that the faculty at UW-La Crosse had not yet fully explored the possibility of taking an interdisciplinary approach to lesson study, so we felt that the results of that type of investigation might contribute some valuable information to the UW-La Crosse/System project on lesson study.

In August 2005, I contacted via e-mail all the UW-P faculty members who had attended Faculty College and invited them to participate in this lesson study project. Of those faculty who had initially indicated an interest in working on this project, Dr. Rea Kirk and Dr. Tom Lo Guidice, both in the School of Education, agreed to form a lesson study team. After some discussion of the different types of classes that we would be teaching during the 2005-06 academic year, it was decided that our lesson study project would focus on the observation of instructor/student and student/student interaction in the classroom and the relationship these types of interaction have to the improvement of student learning. Through participation in this project, we hoped to address the following questions:

- Is it possible to successfully adapt lesson study to an interdisciplinary approach?
- What are the benefits of taking an interdisciplinary approach to lesson study?
- Are the benefits worth the time and energy that it takes to participate in lesson study?
- What impact on the approach does the presence of a team member who teaches in another language have?