The Blue and Orange Initiative
Connecting Penn State and the University of Florida

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Elaine Turner with Tracy Hoover.
November 13, 2016

The Deans are in Austin for the annual meeting of the Association of Public and Land Grant Universities (APLU). We found some unique flora on the walking trails along Lady Bird Lake.
The Blue and Orange Initiative coupled two courses of similar content and delivery style:

- Penn State's HORT 150 course (Plants in the Human Context) is a three-credit general education introductory plant science course with approximately 60 students of all majors enrolled each semester.

- The University of Florida's ORH 1030 (Plants Gardening & You) is a one-credit introductory plant science course with approximately 200+ students of all majors enrolled each semester.
Some ways to foster the development of this information exchange included the following:

1. Encourage student interactions between HORT 150 and ORH 1030 through a common Facebook site.
2. Provide students with extra credit opportunities to facilitate interactions between students in each course and to become plant friends.
3. Exchange plant material between the courses
4. Initiate the Blue and Orange Faculty and Student Exchange
1. Encourage student interactions between HORT 150 and ORH 1030 through a common Facebook site.
Natural Blue Orange Comparisons/Contrasts

Jelena Novaković
November 7, 2016

Fall is beautiful in State College 🍁

Lexi Cunio
November 7, 2016

It's a beautiful, sunny, palm tree-filled day here in Gainesville! #orangechallenge
Natural Blue Orange Comparisons/Contrasts

Tarrah Geszvain
January 31 - State College, PA

Scenes from my office at PSU today! One of our students just repotted my Gator Glory coleus for me. How nice! And as much as we "complain" about snow, it is pretty, isn't it?

OB Initiative in Gainesville, Florida.  
February 1

Hey Blue! I just thought I'd send you a sun bolt picture over my greenhouse this morning. This is where we have 76,000 coleus seedlings growing right now - LOTS of photosynthesis going on for sure! Have a great day and stay warm! Dave
2. Provide students with extra credit opportunities to facilitate interactions between students in each course and to become plant friends.
Extra Credit Opportunities

Season Challenges

Ex. Fall

OB Initiative
November 2, 2016

Blue Challenge of the Week: The foliage season is at peak in Central PA. I am challenging the Penn State students to post pictures of the colorful foliage around campus and State College. 2 extra credit points towards either your midterm or final will be awarded to each person who posts.

Dennis Decoteau

Like Comment Share

You and 3 others

Nicolette Zangara We don't have much fall color here. I'm originally from Chicago and those trees look like home to me 😊

Like · Reply · 1 · November 2, 2016 at 9:47am
Bright colored tree in PA

UF sending tropical vibes~ #orangechallenge
Extra Credit Opportunities
Season Challenges
Ex. Winter

Good Morning Orange... It's a beautiful morning in Happy Valley. Six inches of fresh snow and a relatively unheard of 2 hour delay for Penn State. Life doesn't get much better than that for us. Have a great day and best wishes.

Blue members feel free to post your own photos of the new snow.

Dennis

It's a cool, sunny day today. Time to study at Library West!
Extra Credit Opportunities

Season Challenges

Ex. Spring

The next Blue Challenge of the Week is actually for the next two weeks. First of all I wish all the Blue Orange a successful last couple of weeks of the semester. For the Blue, I have appreciated and enjoyed spending the last 12 weeks or so with you.

The Blue Challenge is to document newly emerging/growing or budding out/greening plants on campus. This could be bushes and trees budding/flowering or bulbs flowering. Just continue to use your imagination. Please label your picture so we can enjoy your post appropriately. I borrowed the attached photo from the Penn State website (please only submit original photos for the extra credit)

2 extra credit points towards either your midterm or final will be awarded to each person who posts.

Thanks again for all that you have done this semester.

Sincerely and with much respect. Dennis
Extra Credit Opportunities

Holiday Challenges

Ex. Thanksgiving

Hey Blue and Orange: Remember to look at your surroundings during this upcoming break, and capture any images you would like to share with the group for the #BlueChallenge or #OrangeChallenge. You can also take pictures of your holiday meal with your favorite food containing plants for both challenges!

Also keep in mind that this week is a great opportunity to connect with others and become Plant Pals! You can turn this holiday into FriendsGiving, all while you help this group grow.

Most importantly, have fun and stay safe!

Happy Thanksgiving!

This year we used plants as decorations to set the table before Thanksgiving, as seen on this place setting.
Extra Credit Opportunities
Milestone Challenges

Ex. Spring Break

OB Initiative
March 3

The next Blue Challenge of the Week is actually for next week (Spring Break here at Penn State) #BlueChallenge:

First of all I wish all the members of the Blue Orange Initiative a restful Spring Break (if you're traveling to a warm tropical location - like Florida - or on a school or church mission trip, or spending time with family and friends back home, please be safe). We look forward to seeing you back on campus after the break for the final half of the semester.

The Blue Challenge is for during break and it is to document a festive use of plants at your home or hometown or wherever you are spending next week. This could be an ornamental use such as cut flowers to brighten the home atmosphere or your favorite food from plants (mashed potatoes or pumpkin pie as examples). Just continue to use your imagination. Family members or friends in the pictures are encouraged but not required. Please label your picture so we can enjoy your post appropriately.

2 extra credit points towards either your midterm or final will be awarded to each person who posts.

Please have a great break and thanks for all that you have done this semester.

Sincerely and with much respect. Dennis
But not everything worked – surprise!!!
So alternatives were developed

Student Postcards

Student thoughts
Positive Thoughts (majority)

To: Maggie Fitzhett
From: Stem Swanson
Architect
Soph
Building Design
I think it is awesome that the 2 universities have a joint program.
ORH1030 Spring 2017

Concerned Insightful Thoughts (???)

To: Henry B.
From: Gabriela Weichselbaum
Industrial and Systems Engineering
3rd yr.

My Major:
Industrial and Systems Engineering
My Year:
3rd yr.
My Interests:
space, piano, art
My Thoughts:
Good luck this semester!

To: Daniel B.
From: Kyle Soch
Philosophy and Classical Studies
Junior
My Major:
Philosophy and Classical Studies
My Year:
Junior
My Interests:
Pat Daddy's trash bar
My Thoughts:
Don't trust people who wear sunglasses in class

To: Emilio Carrion
From: Samantha Nutti
Biochemistry
4
Suffering
Don't major in biochemistry
Helpless Thoughts (only a few thankfully)

Out of the Box – Maybe You Know This Person Thoughts (most enjoyable)
3. Exchange plant material between the courses
Remember to vote for your favorite Gator Glory coleus before the end of the semester. Help out your Plant Pals at Penn State University and give the best photos a like!
A real life Apples to Oranges Comparison

Part 1. “Nittany” Apples to Florida
A real life Apples to Oranges Comparison

Part 2. Oranges to Penn State
Strawberry Ice Cream for the Blue in Honor of Dave’s Lecture in Florida

Blue...The Strawberry Ice Cream is in the house. Dave’s lecture for tomorrow in Gainesville is “All About Strawberries”. So to allow us (the Blue) to feel a part of his lecture he has graciously provided for us to get Strawberry Penn State Creamery Ice Cream for class today.

Orange...As Dave will attest (since he’s an alumnus of Penn State) Penn State Creamery Ice Cream is some of the best in the world. It’s a little known fact (if you’re not from Penn State) that Ben and Jerry learned how to make ice cream from a Creamery short course (Oh what would life be like without Cherry Garcia??). Thank you Dave and the Orange for such a nice gift. Lecture is at 2:30 today (when the Blue will get their ice cream) so soon after class I’ll try to post pictures of the Blue with their treats.

Thanks again...Dennis
Again not everything worked

Strawberry Ice Cream sent to the Orange

Dennis,

Don’t make it a round of PSU ice cream because it doesn’t travel very well (attached) 😊

Come to think of it, I guess you probably wouldn’t hold up in a Styrofoam box for 5 days either!

Dave
4. Initiate the Blue and Orange Faculty and Student Exchange
The Blue was in Orange’s house and it was fun (and educational)!
It was a true cultural exchange for Katelyn.
Why the Orange visit is set for the Fall
Results - Overall

- The Blue and Orange Initiative effectively coupled two courses of similar content and delivery style from Penn State University and the University of Florida to improve the student experience at both universities.
Results – Student Activity

• Over 400 students joined the Facebook group since it was initiated during the 10th week of the Fall semester.
  – This resulted in 472 posts from 157 authors with 690 comments and 2600 likes of posts.
Results – Student Interactions

- Partnerships among students occurred through extra credit opportunities in a combined class Facebook site focused on
  - plant-based challenges (PSU fall color versus Florida palm trees),
  - plant and fruit exchanges (PSU apples to Florida and Florida citrus to PSU), and

Interactions leading to PSU and UF students becoming Blue and Orange Plant Pals (BOPPs).

The student postcards
Results - Exchanges

- Representatives from the Blue visited the University of Florida during the Spring semester to gain a better understanding of the ORH 1030 class dynamic and make personal connections with the 235 Orange students
Results – Student Comments

- Quantitative and open-ended questions from the course evaluations indicated that
  - the students from both universities enjoyed the hands on activities and friendly atmosphere,
  - the common interest and experiences in growing plants for class, and
  - appreciate the crossover information between liberal arts and science.
The word is getting out

This Blue Orange thing is growing. Who knew there were games already. This is from the Chik Fil A in State College. Go Blue Orange.....Dennis
Special Thanks

Hort 150

ORH 1030
This is how the Blue ended the Fall Semester
Sending our appreciation to the Orange

Any questions?

Thanks to you!