

Report on the Advanced Research and Training Seminars (ARTS) 2008

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The ARTS Program

The Advanced Research Training Seminars (ARTS) program, co-sponsored by the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP), the International Association of Cross-Cultural Psychology (IACCP), and the International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS), provides intensive training in research methodologies and new directions in psychological science to early career scholars from low income countries. ARTS seminars have been held biennially since 1992, in conjunction with major international congresses of psychology (the International Congress of Psychology, the International Congress of Applied Psychology and the International Congress of Cross-cultural Psychology).

Objectives of the ARTS program

The ARTS program has three main objectives:

- (i) to enhance the research skills and knowledge of scholars (normally early career) from low income countries through advanced research training

- (ii) to bring to international congresses scholars from low-income countries who might otherwise be financially unable to attend

- (iii) to provide a space where researchers from different countries may learn from each other, develop collaborative networks, and develop a more international understanding.

In addition the ARTS program enriches international psychology in a number of ways. It provides an important but rare opportunity for interaction and shared experiences among colleagues from low-income and other countries, it helps ensure the representation of psychology from all countries at international congresses and it contributes to a broader perspective on theory and method by allowing different perspectives on psychology to be shared among scholars from different regions of the world.

Selection of Topics and Conveners

The general aim of the ARTS program is to provide three different but complementary

seminars in a two-year cycle. Typically at least one seminar is focused on basic science or methodology, at least one addresses a substantive topic of relevance to potential participants. The third rounds out the selection. The coordinators attempt to work with conveners to develop seminars that have not been offered in recent ARTS programs.

In the two years year prior to ARTS 2008, proposals were solicited from potential conveners and were evaluated and selected by the coordinators. The selection of topics for the program was also based on information gathered at previous meetings with ARTS participants and ARTS alumni who are asked to provide feedback on the program and suggestions for future topics.

Three ARTS workshops were offered for 2008 in Germany (two in conjunction with the International Congress of Psychology (ICP, sponsored by IUPsyS) in Berlin, one in conjunction with the International Congress of Cross Cultural Psychology (IACCP, sponsored by IACCP) in Bremen.

ARTS SEMINAR #1: STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING WITH EQS 6.1.

Convener: Professor Peter Bentler, PhD, Distinguished Professor of Psychology and Statistics, University of California, Los Angeles

ARTS SEMINAR #2: LARGE-SCALE INTERNATIONAL DATA SETS

RELEVANT FOR RESEARCH IN EDUCATIONAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY. Conveners: Professors Judith Torney-Purta, University of Maryland, College Park, Maryland and Rainer Lehmann, Humboldt University of Berlin.

ARTS SEMINAR #3: QUALITATIVE AND MIXED METHOD RESEARCH IN CROSS-CULTURAL STUDIES. Convener:

Professor Thomas S. Weisner, University of California, Los Angeles

Selection of Participants for ARTS 2008

The ARTS program was advertised broadly (on the ARTS websites, see for example <http://www.iupsys.org/arts>; on the psychology congress websites and in association newsletters). Participants were selected according to a set of criteria including a match between the applicant's credentials and the specific seminar topic; an assessment that the participant would benefit from the seminar; a judgment that the participant's presence would lead to a 'multiplier' effect, that is, that it would carry forward to impact others (colleagues and students) in the applicant's home country, and geographical diversity.

There were about 80 applicants to ARTS 2008, with an age spread from under 30 to over 50. Of these, 50 participated (ARTS1: 23, ARTS2: 13, ARTS3: 14). The geographical distribution was broad. Applicants came from Bulgaria,

Cameroon, China, Colombia, Cuba, India, Kenya, Lesotho, Malaysia, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Russia, Singapore, Turkey, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

Although the goal of the program is to support younger psychologists, and although age is a desirable selection criterion, the normative age for applicants and participants was not chronologically 'young'. Fewer than 10% of the applicants were under age 30. Although substantial numbers were in their 30s, as in previous programs, the modal age was older, in the 40-49 age bracket.

Because of its capacity building focus, ARTS is aimed at scholars who are 'young' in terms of their research experience or position at the university. However, chronologically younger scholars do not apply in large numbers to ARTS, perhaps because psychologists in the process of establishing their careers have not yet begun to think of participation in international psychology.

As noted elsewhere in this report, listing on the Congress website seems to be one of most effective means of reaching potential participants, thereby confirming that interest in the International Congress is a likely precursor to their knowledge of and interest in the ARTS program.

ARTS support for Participants

Although no ARTS participant is ever fully

funded, the ARTS contribution to seminar participants is substantial. Each participant is supported for the seminar (tuition, course materials, seminar room), and receives accommodation for two or three nights, meals for two or three days, a travel grant for partial reimbursement of travel expenses, and, if required, help with transfer fares from the airport. In return, each participant is expected to raise at least a small proportion of the required travel and participation funds themselves. No support from the ARTS budget is provided for accommodation or meals during the associated international congresses (IACCP, ICAP, ICP), but every participant is encouraged to submit a paper or poster and to attend at least one of the congresses.

Congress registration fees for ARTS participants have varied for each congress. A recent recommendation to the three sponsoring associations (IUPsyS, IAAP, and IACCP) was to develop a consistent registration concession policy that would be negotiated and apply to future congress organizers so that Congress attendance for ARTS participants is part of the Congress capacity building program, though not part of the ARTS budget. This year, some ARTS participants also received scholarship support to cover registration and accommodation costs during the congress (either for the IACCP Congress or for the ICP Congress). This is warmly welcomed as an enhancement of the

ARTS program and an incentive for participation in international congresses.

Contribution to ARTS and Fund Raising

The success of the ARTS program rests on donations from individuals and organizations. Until now, fundraising for ARTS has presented a major challenge as it has been carried out individually for each program in each ARTS year. Presently the supporting organizations and ARTS coordinators are developing strategies for more sustained and longer-term funding that would also enable more secure planning.

The 2008 ARTS were generously supported by the following organizations: **Sponsoring organizations:** International Union of Psychological Science; International Association of Applied Psychology; International Association for Cross-cultural Psychology. **Contributing Organizations:** American Psychological Association; US National Academies of Science (Psychology USNC); The Royal Society, UK; British Psychological Society; Canadian Psychological Association; German Psychological Society; Norwegian Psychological Association; Netherlands Institute of Psychologists. **Contributing Institutions:** These institutions made substantial contribution through staff time of those organizing the ARTS programme: University of Oxford, UK; University of Osnabrück, Germany; Humboldt

University, Berlin, Freie University Berlin, and University of Bremen, with local arrangements. The ARTS conveners and their home universities gave very generously of their time and efforts.

These supporters once again enabled the ARTS workshops to take place. Without their assistance the excellent program for ARTS would not have been possible.

Evaluation of ARTS 2008

The ARTS programs were evaluated the final day of each seminar by means of a questionnaire with open-ended items that provided feedback about general ARTS program functioning and about each specific ARTS seminar.

Evaluations for the 2008 ARTS were completed by 45 of the 50 participants (ARTS #1: 21 participants, ARTS #2: 12 participants, ARTS #3: 12 participants). The majority of participants responded that they were primarily informed about the ARTS program from internet sites or from the Congress website, suggesting the crucial importance of web-based advertising for the program. Most of the participants applied for the ARTS workshop because the topic was relevant to their research, or because they wished to extend their knowledge of cross-cultural and methodological issues. There was a range of expectations of the workshop (many related to methodological issues, and several

respondents stated a variant on ‘new methods, new ideas, new colleagues’). For most of the participants these expectations were met.

The instructors were overall rated very positively. Several participants appreciated the fact that the training included material from concrete research projects. Some suggested that material from ongoing research projects of the participants themselves might also be used in the exercises. There was also a general wish for more time to practice various methodological techniques. Overall, the open climate and fruitful opportunities for establishing networks with other participants was highly appreciated.

Some quotes from ARTS #1:

“the workshop was extremely rewarding for me; I have learned so much in 2 days”

“ excellent opportunities to learn new skills and for networking”

“ this was a wonderful experience to meet new colleagues, learn new skills and be able to attend the international congress”

Almost all the participants would definitely recommend the workshop and the ARTS program to others.

Some quotes from ARTS #2:

[Q: What did you find to be the best things about the seminar?] ...*“the caring attitudes of the leaders, the organizational skills of the*

leaders, meeting colleagues from all over the world”

“this really helped me in my own work, and I enjoyed the practical aspects and the presentations”

“I really liked the high level of interaction and participation”

“ the organizers helped give confidence to all participants”

Some quotes from ARTS#3:

[Q: Would you recommend this instructor and course to others?] *“..MOST DEFINITELY! I would love to have some of my students to attend this course”*

“The content of the seminar was very comprehensive and well organised. ... The time span for each session could be longer. ... I would rate it 9 on 10 as I really gained a lot”

[Q: What did you find to be the best things about the seminar?] *“..The openness & receptiveness of the presenters for our ideas. And the ‘hands on’ experience part”*

“I would rate it [the seminar experience] as good as I go to learn about so many techniques & methods of data analysis which I wasn’t aware of”.

Many of the participants formed collaborative networks, which they hoped to maintain on return to their home countries thus enabling research collaboration. This momentum will

be sustained by the creation of a network of ARTS Associates (former ARTS participants), which will enable research collaboration to be sustained and developed.

Suggested Topics for Future ARTS.

Several participants expressed a need for training on statistical analysis as well as qualitative and mixed-method research methodology including such topics as: data analysis, documentation and interpretation, the use of statistical packages, the use of software programs such as atlas.ti and ethnonote, research methodology in general, conducting cross-cultural studies, and various specific techniques, such as video analysis, ethnography, confirmatory factor analysis, and structural equation modeling. Clusters of other topics mentioned included (a) organizational behavior, developing leadership, and integrating research into

decision-making processes; (b) cross-cultural counseling, stress, behavior change and better self-efficacy; and (c) emic test construction and test development; (d) writing and publishing qualitative and mixed method studies. The challenge for the Coordinators is to match the skills and interests of volunteer conveners with the topics of interest to potential participants.

Conclusion

The three 2008 ARTS workshops were very positively evaluated, and appeared to result in significant learning, meaningful exchange and the formation of research networks and collaborations. A challenge for the programme continues to be fundraising, sustainability and maximizing impact. These challenges are being addressed by the Co-ordinators and capacity building committees in each of the sponsoring organizations.