



**RURAL
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE**

**INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE RURAL POLICY
STUDIES (ICRPS) PROGRAMME**

September 27, 2006



**BRANDON
UNIVERSITY**

Founded 1899





Rural Development Institute, Brandon University

Brandon University established the Rural Development Institute in 1989 as an academic research center and a leading source of information on issues affecting rural communities in Western Canada and elsewhere.

RDI functions as a not-for-profit research and development organization designed to promote, facilitate, coordinate, initiate and conduct multi-disciplinary academic and applied research on rural issues. The Institute provides an interface between academic research efforts and the community by acting as a conduit of rural research information and by facilitating community involvement in rural development. RDI projects are characterized by cooperative and collaborative efforts of multi-stakeholders.

The Institute has diverse research affiliations, and multiple community and government linkages related to its rural development mandate. RDI disseminates information to a variety of constituents and stakeholders and makes research information and results widely available to the public either in printed form or by means of public lectures, seminars, workshops and conferences.

For more information, please visit www.brandonu.ca/rdi.

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Executive Summary

Brandon University's Department of Rural Development and the Rural Development Institute hosted the third annual International Comparative Rural Policy Studies (ICRPS) programme, June 24th to July 15th, 2006. The ICRPS programme is the product of collaborative efforts by faculty and academic institutions from Europe, Canada and the United States. Doug Ramsey, Department of Rural Development, Brandon University, has been involved with the programme since the early, founding conversations; through his efforts Brandon University received the honour of hosting students and faculty from around the world this summer. Student mobility grants from the EU and Canada enabled students to come together.

The charm and hospitality of the Canadian prairies made this year's summer programme a truly memorable experience for students and guests. A total of 26 students attended this year's programme; students came from a variety of traditional disciplines at either a masters or doctoral level, the programme also encourages and accepts professionals working in rural related areas interested in furthering their educational experiences. The programme is composed of 5 core faculty members from the University of Guelph, Brandon University, the University of Highlands and Islands, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona and the University of Missouri. Over 20 guest speakers and lecturers joined the programme from around Canada, Europe and the United States. A number of Canadian federal, provincial, regional, and municipal public servants joined ICRPS as guest students and participants. The programme spent the first 2 weeks located on the Brandon University campus, utilizing a highly modern classroom in the newly renovated Health Studies building. Students and faculty stayed either on campus in residence or in local bed and breakfasts and hotels. Many meals were provided by the University's ancillary services. An excellent job done by all! ICRPS hit the road for the last week of classes. The programme's hosts at the Duck Mountain Lodge, in the Saskatchewan Duck Mountain provincial park, provided a classroom in the field. Students were able to experience the countryside and enjoy a rural lodge in its peak season. Over the years Duck Mountain Lodge has proven itself to be an excellent location to hold workshops and meetings, the facilities are inviting and staff members are friendly and accommodating, completing the rural experience.

This year's ICRPS programme reflected the unique characteristics of life and travel on the prairies; therefore, policy discussions and debates enabled students to gain perspective on the comparative nature of the ICRPS programme. An objective of the programme is to encourage students to complete 2 consecutive summer sessions, enriching their own experiences, as well as those of first year students. Brandon University has consistently maintained 2 first year and 2 returning second year students in each ICRPS summer programme. In 2005 4 Brandon University Master of Rural Development students traveled to the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven in Belgium, 2 from that particular group participated as second year students in the Brandon University programme.

This year's programme touched upon several key themes and issues confronted by many rural areas, such as watershed management, rural and agricultural diversification, rural tourism, community economic development, immigration, international trade and policy development, new rural governance, natural resource and park management, as well as various related research techniques. Classroom time was highly interactive; students were encouraged to actively involve faculty and guests in discussion and debate both inside and out of the classroom. Several public functions and presentations were held on campus in order to engage community members. Next year's summer programme will be hosted

by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, a much anticipated event after the success of the 2006 programme at Brandon University!



Students

The ICRPS programme enables graduate students from Canadian, European and American universities to come together to examine policy formulation and analysis in a rural context. ICRPS participants are a mix of professionals seeking continuing education and graduate students from 3 Canadian universities, 3 European universities and 1 American university. A key objective of the summer school is rural policy comparison; therefore, a number of students will attend both one session in Europe and one session in Canada.



American Students

The University of Missouri sent 2 first year ICRPS representatives. One student also represented the Universidad Nacional de Colombia as a Master of Economic Science. The other student also represented the Banco do Nordeste do Brasil.

Canadian Students

4 ICRPS participants were from Brandon University's Master of Rural Development programme, 2 were first time ICRPS participants, 2 were second year students that had had the opportunity to complete their first ICRPS session during the summer of 2005 at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. The University of Guelph sent 6 student representatives, 1 of which was a returning second year student. ICRPS students from the University of Guelph come from a variety of disciplines both at a masters and doctoral level. The Université du Québec à Rimouski sent 2 representatives to Brandon, both first year ICRPS participants. Both students study regional development, at a doctoral level and at a masters level.

European ICRPS Students

This year the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona sent 10 ICRPS participants to Brandon University. Of those 10 students, 4 were returning as second year ICRPS students. One returning ICRPS student had successfully completed their Ph.D and joined ICRPS as both as a second year student and as a new professor. The Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona ICRPS participants are all doctoral students from a range of disciplines related to rural development. The Katholieke Universiteit Leuven sent 1 first year ICRPS student studying European Politics and Policies at a master's level; unfortunately neither second year representative from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven was able to attend the 2006 ICRPS programme. The University of the Highlands & Islands sent 1 student; this particular participant joined ICRPS as a professional seeking continuing education and contributed both as a speaker and as a student.

Faculty

The International Comparative Rural Policy Studies Programme (ICRPS) was developed jointly by the Arkleton Institute, University of Aberdeen, with colleagues at the University of Guelph Canada, the University of Missouri-Columbia, USA, and the Budapest University of Economics and Public Administration, Hungary. Aberdeen and Guelph then collaborated in a successful proposal for student mobility funding associated with ICRPS to the Joint EU-Canada programme for collaboration in higher and further education. The EU-Canada bid enlarged the partnership to include the Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain, and Leuven University KN, Belgium on the EU side, and the Universities of Quebec (à Rimouski) and Brandon Manitoba in Canada. During the programme, two further partners were added in Europe: The University of the Highlands and Islands in Inverness, and the Corvinus University, Budapest, Hungary.

Core faculty members actively involved in the 2006 ICRPS programme hosted by Brandon University include Doug Ramsey, Brandon University; Tony Fuller, University of Guelph; John Bryden, University of Aberdeen; Lourdes Viladomiu, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; and Tom Johnson, University of Missouri.



Guest Faculty & Speakers

Several guest faculty and speakers participated in the 2006 ICRPS programme from a wide range of disciplines and areas of expertise, thus, enhancing the student experience. Guest speakers and participants joined ICRPS from Europe, the United States and Canada. Guest faculty members included: Robert Annis, Rural Development Institute, Brandon University; Gemma Frances and Yancy Valliant, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona; Karen Morrison, University of Guelph; Myriam Martins Gistelink, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven; Laurent van de Poele, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven; Judith Stallman, University of Missouri; and Verdie Craig, Morehead State University

Guest speakers included: Cynthia Neudoerffer, University of Guelph; Phil Beard, Maitland Valley Conservation, Ontario; Loni Scott, Agri-Env Knowledge Centre, Manitoba; Robert Sopuck, Delta Waterfowl Foundation, Manitoba; Henry Venema, International Institute of Sustainable Development, Manitoba; Richard Robertson, University of Highlands & Islands; Stewart Hiltz, University of Guelph; Paul Tarleton, Riding Mountain Ecosystem Manager, Manitoba; Ray Bollman, Statistics Canada; Sterling Evans, Brandon University; Dale Johnston, Western Diversification, Manitoba; Roger Guy, Wheatbelt Community Futures Development Corporation, Manitoba; David Douglas, University of Guelph; Ken Yakielashek, Rancher's Choice Beef Cooperative, Manitoba; Narish Singh, Canadian International Development Agency, Ontario; and Lloyd Axworthy, University of Winnipeg.

The Planning Process

The planning process for the 2006 ICRPS gained momentum late in the fall of 2005. Brandon University formed an ICRPS planning committee that included Doug Ramsey, Department of Rural Development; Robert Annis, Rural Development Institute; Bev Lischka, Rural Development Institute; Sylvia Henry, Rural Development Institute; Clive Lovett, Brandon University; and Alison Moss, Rural Development Institute. Core ICRPS faculty members and the Brandon staff actively worked together during the course of the winter and spring to develop the 2006 curriculum and budget. The Brandon University planning committee secured all logistical arrangements both on and off campus. A number of meetings and conference calls were held to enable a team effort in preparing for the 2006 International Comparative Rural Policy Studies programme.

2006 ICRPS Programme

The 2006 ICRPS programme consisted of several key themes and topics, engaging students in a wide range of rural issues, thus, ensuring the student experience was well-rounded. Assignments reflected topic material; students worked both individually and in groups.

The ICRPS group met in Winnipeg, Manitoba. From there students and faculty travelled as a group to Brandon University, taking the opportunity to experience the prairie landscape; stops were made in Plum Coulee, Winkler, and Carberry, students and faculty discussed a range of issues, from heritage preservation and rural tourism to rural immigration. During the course of the first week, new ICRPS students each made a brief presentation introducing themselves, their home institutions and research interests.

Introductory lectures were given introducing comparative rural policy methods, multifunctionality, government and power structures. The last portion of the first week consisted of a special session dealing with rural issues related to environmental goods and services and watershed management. Several guest speakers were invited and participated in panel sessions; the assignment for the week necessitated students work together in groups, engaging all guest speakers in short interviews. Students worked in small groups, seeking creative solutions for mock watershed management scenarios, short reports and presentations were prepared. The week was concluded in Riding Mountain National park where the group spent the day with the park's ecosystem manager; a classroom in the field was provided by the Elkhorn resort. Over the weekend students had the opportunity to experience Canada Day and partake in community celebrations.

The second week of the programme began with a field trip to the International Peace Gardens, as well as several stops in rural communities along the way. Topics discussed during the second week ranged from international relations and policy, rural and agricultural connections, community and regional development, research methods, rural governance, and international trade. The week concluded with the World Trade Organization simulation exercise. Guest faculty members from the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven joined the group to share their perspectives and insights into international trade, specifically related to the movement of agricultural goods. Students were assigned countries and worked together in coalitions to represent their countries position related to the WTO and trade. First year students prepared short papers outlining their particular country and coalition's position. Second year students were responsible for acting as coalition spokespersons and debating the issues.

The last week of ICRPS was spent in a classroom located in the field. ICRPS was hosted by Madge Lake Lodge, in Duck Mountain Provincial Park, Saskatchewan. Topics covered the final week included heritage preservation, models for First Nations self government, economic development, park policy and resource management, crisis response, evaluation and research techniques. Second year students presented ongoing ICRPS research projects; first year students presented research ideas for their final ICRPS projects.

Venue

The Victoria Inn in Winnipeg, Manitoba provided a meeting place for ICRPS participants due to its close proximity to the Winnipeg International Airport. A meet and greet planned for the evening of June 24th provided students and faculty to start getting to know one another. The first two weeks of the programme were held on the Brandon University campus. A classroom in the Health Studies building providing a central meeting ground for the group. Students were housed on campus in McMaster Hall, breakfast and lunches were provided for the entire group by Brandon University's ancillary services. An IRPS computer lab was created to ensure that students had 24 hour access to the Internet and library resources. During the final week of the programme, ICRPS became mobile and traveled to Duck Mountain Lodge. There the Madge Lake Lodge hosted the group; a resort meeting room provided classroom space.

Evaluation

Summary

The results of the final survey indicate that the 3rd ICRPS summer school was a great success. The school met the participants' reasons for attending and met their expectations of the school. Fifty percent of the participants had no negative experience and activities or exercises that were identified by some as being less than helpful or positive were seen as being positive for other students.

All activities added to the participants' knowledge of rural development and the program was a success in meeting the goals of providing an international comparative perspective and an interdisciplinary perspective. The program also helped develop the participants' critical appreciation for the concepts behind rural development and policy making issues, for the factors involved in rural change and for interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approaches.

The organization and learning environment provided met the needs of the students and the specific activities met the goal of increasing awareness of rural policy issues. The number of guest speakers was viewed as being just right and the speakers allowed for an increased understanding of the subject matter being taught.

The ICRPS program has had a positive impact on the future of its participants. The participants feel that the program will help them in work and future research.

There are some areas of the school that can be addressed for future programs. These concerns are not major as most students were extremely positive about their attendance at the school, but still they need addressing in order to improve the learning experience.

While the ICRPS program added to the understanding of rural policy issues, scores for adding to an understanding of international rural comparative policy issues were always lower. This was because some exercises formed a theoretical background for later comparative work and thus may not have been conducive to introducing comparative studies at the time. More thought into the content, particularly comparative rural policies should solve this minor problem.

Pre-course material was generally received in a timely manner. However, this material was not used very often by the students and was considered not very helpful to students. This may be addressed by sending the materials out earlier, as suggested by students, and by indicating in what way the documents will be used during the program. Another concern expressed by students was about the evaluation of work completed. A suggestion for ongoing evaluation during the program would help with this problem.

Finally, all participants found something of value in the program. However, while some were positive about aspects of the school, others had negative feelings about the same aspect. This negative and positive feedback often follows the individual research interests of the participant. As such, maybe a list of themes or topics for future schools should be collated and distributed before the school begins. If this were possible participants who would gain the most out of the program would attend.

Introduction

This document presents an evaluation, by participants, of the third International Comparative Rural Policy Studies program (ICRPS) that was hosted by Brandon University in June and July 2006. This evaluation was completed at the end of the summer school. In order to address any logistical problems, a shorter questionnaire was administered at the half-way point of the summer school. A separate report was prepared for the interim survey. This document analyses the final questionnaire.

Participants

There were a total of 26 participants in the Brandon ICRPS program. Seven students were completing their second year and the remainder were first year students. Only 18 surveys were completed and returned. One student had already returned home after the second week of the school.

Procedures

The survey was self-administered and anonymous. The survey consisted of closed, open-ended and Likert style questions. The survey was divided into six sections that would provide a student perspective on a general overview of the school, an evaluation of the pre-school materials, an evaluation of the learning opportunities and organization of the school, the importance placed on specific activities, an evaluation of the topics discussed by guest speakers and invitees, and finally some general comments on how the school may effect the student's future (see attached survey).

Results

Section 1 – GENERAL OVERVIEW:

This section asked questions that would determine:

- Reasons for participating and whether they were met
- Expectations and whether they were met
- Positive and negative experiences
- Skills and knowledge attained from attending the course
- Whether the students developed a critical appreciation for rural development policy and concepts

Reasons for participating varied and can be grouped into five categories (Table 1). The main reason for participating was to improve knowledge of rural development policies and issues. No matter the reason for participating, all students indicated that the program met their reasons for attendance.

Participants also indicated that their expectations for the summer school were met. These expectations were mainly based upon the need to learn about rural development from differing national and interdisciplinary perspectives (Table 2).

Table 1: What was your reason for participating in the program? (n=16)

Reason for Participating	Number of Responses
Learning about rural development issues, policy and perspectives	8
To learn about rural development issues, policy and perspectives	3
Course requirement	2
To engage colleagues on rural development issues	1
To learn more about comparative analysis	1
Unknown	1

Table 2: What were your expectations for the summer school? (n = 15)

Expectations	Number of Responses
Learn about rural development in a global perspective	7
Learn more about theory and policy and issues	4
To meet new colleagues	1
To understand the rural world and water management	1
To have hands on training	1
Great expectations	1

When asked about the activities that were a positive experience to the participants the reasons for selecting the activities were predominantly based upon the activity introducing them to a new learning experience or that the activity addressed issues that were of interest to the participant. Other explanations included comments on the niceness of the learning environments, the beautiful parks, that the activity provided theory and practice and that the field trips offered a real life scenario. The most positive experiences were provided by the World Trade Organization scenario and the field trips (Table 3).

Table 3: Name one activity that was a positive experience for you? (n=18)

Activity	Number of Responses
WTO exercise	6
Field Trips	4
Watershed exercise	3
Duck Mountain residence	2
Policy comparison, local governance	2
Presentations	1

Not surprisingly, some of the activities that were considered positive experiences by some were considered negative by others. This particularly refers to the WTO and Watershed exercises. Reasons given for negative experiences were few but were specific to the activity (Table 4). On a more positive note, the highest number of responses for this question was the answer “none” or no response. Nine participants indicated that they had no negative experiences.

Table 4: Name one activity that was a negative experience for you? Why was this experience negative?

Activity	Number of Responses	Reason for negative response
No negative experience	9	
WTO	2	Didn't understand. Disappointed in own involvement.
Missing the farm trip	2	Unexpected trip to airport
Watershed	1	Too long
Language Barrier	1	Felt left out
The Pas trip	1	Too far for too little
Statistics Canada presentation	1	No point and too narrow a focus
Web based research	1	Waste of time. Should have been talking.

Skill development consisted of the acquisition of new knowledge and the improvement of already attained skills. These include the knowledge on the role of watershed planning, the evaluation, analysis and comparison of rural policies, the realization that there are different perspectives in rural development and that these exist beyond agriculture. The main skill improvement was identified by many European students who found that presenting and writing in English was of great benefit. Although the range of skills developed was not as wide as might have been expected the knowledge acquired by the students varied immensely. The knowledge gained depended upon the activity being taught. The information found most useful by students concerned:

- Rural policy
- International Trade
- Differing opinions on rural development
- Learning about Canada and Manitoba (from experts and via field trips)
- Evaluation techniques
- Activity methods (presentations, literature, and group work)
- Watershed planning
- Issues related to governance and agriculture
- Case studies
- CFDCs
- World Trade Organization

The participants were asked to name the task or assignment that they found the most useful and least useful while attending the summer school. There is some overlap between the results of this question and the previous question that asked students to identify the activity that allowed for the most positive and negative experience. Some students identified more than one task or assignment.

The most useful activity category was dominated by the WTO exercise and the watershed exercise. Interestingly, the WTO exercise also ranked highly in the least useful activity (Table 6 and 7).

Table 6: What task or assignment did you find most useful?

Task/Assignment	Number of Responses
Watershed/EGAS	8
WTO exercise	5
Individual project/presentation	3
None	1

Table 7: What task or assignment did you find least useful?

Task/Assignment	Number of Responses
WTO exercise	5
Watershed/EGAS	3
None	2
Entrepreneurship	1
The Pas	1
Research Proposal	1
Evaluation of Mexican tourism	1
Conference on Poverty	1

The participants identified numerous potential changes that could have been made to this year's summer school. These changes included:

- More careful planning of technical visits
- Shorter period of time for school (2 weeks)
- Hold all activities and exercises at Duck Mountain
- Replace or shorten the watershed assignment
- Have longer time for meals
- Have a wrap up session at the end of the day that pulls everything together
- More information about less developed countries
- Shorter field trips – less bus time
- WTO took up too much time and is not rural development
- Add visit to farm holding

The next set of questions asked whether the program provided an interdisciplinary and international perspective to rural development issues and whether the participants had achieved a critical appreciation of the topics being discussed and presented. These were Likert style questions. A summary of the results can be seen below (Table 8). In all cases there was a 72 percent of better positive response (a positive response being an answer of 4 or 5 on the Likert scale). No participant responded with a negative response (1 or 2 on the Likert scale).

Table 8: General Overview Likert Questions

Score	To what extent has the program provided		To what extent has this program helped you develop a critical appreciation of			
	An international comparative perspective	An interdisciplinary perspective	The concepts behind rural development	The concepts behind the policy making process	The different factors involved in rural change	Inter-disciplinary and cross-cultural approaches
Completely 5	2	1	2	0	2	5
4	13	11	14	14	12	9
3	3	6	2	3	3	4
2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not At All 1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Section 2 – PRE-SUMMER SCHOOL INTRODUCTORY MATERIALS:

This section of the survey asked whether introductory reading materials were supplied well enough in advance of the summer school and how helpful the materials were in interpreting the topics discussed at the school.

14 of the 18 participants indicated that the reading materials were received in a timely manner. The four participants who indicated that the materials were not received well enough in advance suggested that the materials be distributed earlier with one participant suggesting that the materials arrive at least six weeks before the start of the summer school. Two participants suggested that the materials be received together rather than by several emails.

Although the materials were received in a timely manner, the materials were used infrequently by the students and responses were neutral when being asked about the materials helpfulness in preparing students for the school (Table 9).

Table 9: Did you use the introductory materials? Did you find the introductory materials helpful?

Score	Did you use the introductory materials?	Did you find the introductory materials helpful?
Very Often 5	2	2
4	0	1
3	7	10
2	6	2
Not At All 1	2	0

Section 3: LEARNING and ORGANIZATION:

This section of the survey was used to determine whether students were encouraged to participate and share knowledge and whether the tasks and assignments were well prepared and organized.

The goal of the school to provide a stimulating and challenging learning environment was met. When asked whether the program was intellectually challenging and stimulating, 76 percent of the respondents answered positively (a score of 4 or 5 on the Likert scale). Questions asking how well prepared and explained were the course materials, were the students encourage to participate in discussions or to express their own ideas, and how often were students invited to share their ideas and knowledge all exceeded the positive 76 percent response (Table 10). The only question that did not receive a strong response concerned the evaluation of student’s work. 46 percent responded with a neutral or lower score (3 or less on the Likert scale). Two student’s answered, “Don’t know yet”, suggesting that maybe some of the lower scores reflected the fact that student’s had not received all their marks at the time of completing the survey.

Score	Intellectually challenged	Course material well prepared	Encouraged to participate in discussions	Invited to share ideas and knowledge	Encouraged to express their own ideas	Rate the method of evaluating student’s work
Very often						
5	5	5	9	11	11	0
4	9	8	8	4	4	7
3	2	3	1	2	2	5
2	0	1	0	0	0	1
Not at All	0	0	0	0	0	0

The participants were asked to name two aspects of the summer camp that they benefited from and why and two aspects that could be improved and why (Table 11). By far, the aspect that students benefited from the most was the ability to compare rural development between different countries. The greatest issue concerning aspects of the school that could be improved upon was related to logistical and organizational components of the school. These included: shorter time period for the school, less written work in English for non-English speaking students, more time to read and ask questions, too much travel, the need for ongoing assessment, a more modular timetable, more detail given to assignments and that pre-course materials need to be distributed earlier. Very little in the way of course content was critiqued. The WTO exercise and the watershed exercise were criticized as not necessarily being connected to rural development and that there should be more policy analysis within the program.

Table 11: Aspects of the Summer School

Activity Benefited From	Why? Comments	Activity Needing Improvement	Why? Comments
International Comparisons	Broader perspective, Different approaches, New knowledge, Learn about new policy and planning within rural development	Logistical, organizational factors	Better selection of places to visit, too long a time to take off work – shorten school, more detailed instructions for assignments, earlier distribution of pre-course materials needed, topics were not related, too much travel, more policy analysis
Interdisciplinary Approach	Not often discussed when examining rural development	Food	
Field Trips	Made things a reality, taught us about park policy, more realistic view	Field Trips	Introduce more talks from stakeholders,
Invited Speakers	Gave a sense of the real world, broader perspective	Watershed	Too much time, not really rural development
Watershed/EGAS	I am working on this topic, my background, something new	WTO	Not correlated with other topics
Tasks/Assignments	Different disciplines, allowed asking of questions, helped interpret information		
Living together	allowed us to work better		
WTO	Negotiation skills and WTO importance		
Local development and governance	Personal interest, interesting		
New Rural Development Approach	Useful for my research		
Other disciplines			
Differing policies			

Section 4: SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES:

This section asked participants to indicate which classroom activities or assignments increased an awareness of rural policy issues and which classroom activities or assignments increased an understanding of international comparative policy issue. It was the goal of this section to 1) to see if the school met the criteria of teaching about rural policy issues and 2) whether the school met its goal of presenting a forum of international comparative studies.

When examining the goal of an increased awareness of rural policy issues, the results are very positive. In most cases more than two thirds (12 out of 18) of the students indicated that specific activities had achieved this goal (Table 13). The evening presentations by guests Cynthia Neudoerffer and Phil Beard only received 8 and 9 votes respectively. These were the lowest scores for this question. However, both of these presentations were introductory guest lectures for the Watershed/EGAS exercise. The Watershed/EGAS exercise received 15 out of 18 positive responses from participants.

Scores for the goal of presenting an understanding of international comparative policy issues were lower for all activities except the WTO exercise, which increased from 13 to 15 out of 18 responses, and for Dr. Van Der Poele's guest lecture which remained the same at 13 responses (Table 13). These lowering of scores can be expected as many of the lectures were designed to give a theoretical background for future discussions, such as the *Introduction to Policy Issues* session and the *Rural Policy: Where does agriculture fit in?* session.

This section also included an evaluation of non-classroom activities. As with the classroom activities, participants were to indicate which activities had helped to enhance the understanding of rural issues and policy in Canada. Of six activities, the visit to Riding Mountain National Park, the Inglis Grain Elevators, and Dauphin were the most helpful with 16, 15 and 17 positive responses out of 18 respectively (Table 12).

Table 12: Non-classroom activities that helped enhance the understanding of rural issues and policy in Canada.

Activity	Positive Response (n=18)
The Pas	10
Immigration and Heritage: Plum Coulee, Winkler and Carberry	12
Canada/US Peace Gardens: Wawanesa, Boissevain, Killarney	10
Riding Mountain National Park	16
Inglis Elevators and Roman Orthodox Museum	15
Dauphin: Rancher's Choice Beef Cooperative and the Ferguson Farm	17

Table 12: Activities that increased awareness and understanding.

Activity	Increased Awareness of Rural Policy Issues	Increased Understanding of International Comparative Policy Issues
	Positive responses (n=18)	
Local Government (Stallman)	11	6
Watershed/EGAS (Morrison et al)	15	7
European Tourism (Frances)	15	12
Tobacco Farming (Ramsey & Craig)	15	11
From Federal to Local (Fuller, Annis & Valliant)	16	12
Rural Policy: Where does agriculture fit? (Bryden)	15	9
Rural Policy & Objectives (Bollman)	11	6
Local Governance (Douglas)	13	6
Intro to Policy Issues (Bryden & Johnson)	16	12
WTO simulation (Martins & Van Der Poele)	13	15
Evaluation & Delphi (Viladomiu)	13	10
Evening Public Lectures		
Van Der Poele	13	13
Neudoerffer	8	5
Beard	9	5
Evans	10	9

Section 5 – GUEST SPEAKERS AND INVITEES:

The students were asked to what extent did guest speakers add to an understanding of the topic being discussed and to what extent did the guest speakers allow for a greater understanding of comparative rural policies. Finally, the participants were asked their opinion on the number of guest speakers invited to the school.

The guest speakers undoubtedly added to an understanding of the subject matter being taught. All 18 respondents replied positively (a score of 5 on the Likert scale representing that the invited guest had completely fulfilled student requirements). One respondent gave a score of 5 while the other 17 responded with a score of 4.

When evaluating whether the guests had added to an understanding of comparative rural studies, the scores were positive but not as high for the first question. 13 out of 14 respondents gave a score of 4 or higher while three respondents gave a neutral score of 3 and one respondent a negative score of 2 (Table 14). Sixteen of the eighteen respondents thought that the number of guest speakers and invitees was just right with one stating that there were too few and one stating that there were too many.

Table 14: Guest speakers and invitees

Score	Add to an understanding of the subject matter being taught	Allow for a greater understanding of comparative rural policies
Completely 5	1	2
4	17	11
3	0	3
2	0	1
Not At All 1	0	0

Section 6: YOUR FUTURE and COMMENTS:

This section comprised of two open ended questions that allowed for the participants to express their opinion on how the school may have impacted their future research or career and in what way and allowed for the participants to leave some final comments about the school.

17 of the 18 respondents replied to how the school may have affected their future. Twelve of the respondents said yes the school had had an impact while one expressed more confidence in dealing with cross-sectoral work and four hoped that it would have an impact but seemed unsure as to what that impact would be. A synopsis of the comments follows:

- more confident about cross sectoral work and about new rural paradigm
- I hope so – helped me understand how policy analysis can be done in practice
- Yes, absolutely – building relations, learning from others, useful for my job
- Probably – gave me more ideas
- Hope so – line on my CV and some basic specialization that I could develop in the future
- Of course – a new view on rural policies
- Hopefully a paper in the future
- Broadened knowledge of different countries
- Yes – I work in ag and everything was useful – and for research too
- Yes – in terms of writing a policy brief

Below is a list of the comments made by respondents:

- Materials need to be sent out at least 4 weeks beforehand – overall it was excellent
- Non-classroom interaction with the professors was very helpful
- Group interactions could not be better
- Brandon's guys were superb – Doug, Clive and Alison. Thanks a lot.
- Excellent organization – excellent experience – better than Leuven
- Generally well organized – 2 weeks would be enough – last week not interesting
- Opportunity to build a professional network with different experts.
- In general really positive.
- Personal and academic improvement. Thank you very much.
- Good organization.
- Thank you very much for this wonderful experience.
- Thank you very much – I came 'empty' and go back home with friends and knowledge and experience.
- Good experience and perspectives for around the World
- Duck Mountain was great
- Should be individual faculty evaluations

RDI ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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The role of the RDI Advisory Committee is to provide general advice and direction to the Institute on matters of rural concern. On a semi-annual basis the Committee meets to share information about issues of mutual interest in rural Manitoba and foster linkages with the constituencies they represent.