

## **NEWS RELEASE**

### **East Carolina University News Services**

**Contact: Dr. Elmer Poe, assistant vice chancellor for Emerging Academic Initiatives,**  
[poee@ecu.edu](mailto:poee@ecu.edu), 252-328-9066

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### **ECU students receive awards in Global Climate Change competition**

GREENVILLE, N.C. (Dec. 14, 2010) — Several East Carolina University students received awards for fall semester projects that addressed reducing electricity usage to mitigate greenhouse gas emissions around the world.

The students were participating in a Global Climate Change course taught at ECU in partnership with universities from China, India, Mexico and Brazil. The students worked in groups of six to eight students with representatives from each country involved in every group.

The Global Climate Change course, a component of an exclusive partnership between ECU and the U.S. Department of State, was taught at ECU for the second time this fall and featured 12 Honors College students and four geography and/or atmospheric science majors.

Katie Engeman and Richard Barlow, the two ECU students on the winning team, said this was an amazing chance to collaborate with students from around the globe to achieve a common goal.

“Many times, as Americans, we don't ever take the time to think about what it would be like to live in another country or culture,” said Engeman, a first-year student. “However, because of this course, not only was I exposed to my perspective of issues as an elementary and special education major at East Carolina University, but I was also exposed to the perspective, for example, of an advanced chemistry major from China and an agronomist from Brazil, which was extremely fascinating to me.”

One of the biggest challenges for all participating students was the communication between groups. Each country has different time zones, some 12 hours apart, and so students communicated through Centra (a Web-conferencing program), Facebook, e-mail and text messages.

“It was a challenge dealing with the language, time and culture differences, but in the end it was very rewarding,” said Barlow, also a first-year student. “And for ECU, it strengthens our relationships with these other universities, raises awareness of climate change, and we were able to create very innovative projects.”

Students from each university presented group projects to representatives at their home campuses. Along with ECU officials, professors from the departments of geography, management and political science, as well as program sponsors from Greenville Utilities, North Carolina's Eastern Region and Electricities attended the student presentations and awarded first-, second-, third- and honorable-mention prizes to students.

Barlow and Engeman's project, “Quest for the Cup: A Global Electricity Competition,” won a first-place

certificate as well as \$500 cash given by the sponsors.

“ECU is taking the phrase 'global education' to a higher level by bringing it into action,” said Dr. Rosana Nieto-Ferreira, an applied atmospheric science professor from the ECU Department of Geography who was a course instructor along with Dr. Andrew Herdman (management) and Dr. Bob Thompson (political science). “The students got to meet, work with, and share knowledge and experiences with students around the world without leaving home, a unique opportunity to learn global skills and knowledge that will help them succeed in the global economy.”

Herdman agreed that the course has been a great opportunity for students and believes the experience will be an invaluable one as they transition from college to the professional world.

“Watching our students embrace and work through the many challenges associated with leading a global project team with members from five different countries and very diverse cultures, was very gratifying,” said Herdman. “They were presented with a rare and invaluable opportunity to develop skills and perspective that will benefit them throughout their lives, and they made the most of it.”

For more information about the ECU Global Climate Course or to see the student’s projects, go to <http://gcc.aos.ecu.edu/fall-2010/>. Dr. Elmer Poe, assistant vice chancellor for Emerging Academic Initiatives may be reached at 252-328-9066.

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