



# Social Networks Facilitate Interdisciplinary Collaboration

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## GK-12 Project Goal at AUP

Our goal was to research and understand environmental issues confronting Brooklyn, NY from an interdisciplinary perspective:

- 1) In Urban Ecology, we examined environmental issues from a physical sciences perspective, and
- 2) In Urban Geography, we examined environmental issues from a socio-historical perspective.

To facilitate this work, the GK-12 fellows used Ning.com, a free open-source social networking site private to our students. Ning allowed for greater student reflection, collaboration, and extension.

## Reflection

Early in the year when students were acquiring content knowledge and research skills and interests, the Ning network was useful for students to reflect on their classroom experiences through blogs, discussion boards, surveys and other written assignments.

100% Reply by corinne on December 10, 2009 at 3:40pm  
Send Message  
yes because even though it may be a trend to most people there is still a large amount of people that really do want better for the environment and there are some people that are willing to change I think its a great idea and everybody should go green and become a veggie

100% Reply by Miguel Valdes on December 10, 2009 at 6:16pm  
Send Message  
Alternative fuel vehicles definitely have a greater impact now than what it did 10 years ago. The "Go Green" movement have taken on a much heavier hit than what it did before. People are actually concern about the environment and are striving to do what ever it takes to preserve it. This movement is the catalyst for new alternative fuel vehicles, the willingness of people to help the environment will most likely lead them to buy hybrid and electrical cars.


100% Reply by Mickey on December 10, 2009 at 9:31pm  
Send Message  
Now that everyone is hearing Go Green more and more people are doing it. Its like the news in Fashion. If people was not hype about it then there wouldnt have much change. I think now people should do their best to make go green work, not for the money part but the fact we can make earth better. And really the electric car will be a big deal because everyone is using a car some way or another to move around.

100% Reply by kristen caston on December 10, 2009 at 10:40pm  
Send Message  
I believe go green can work because it has a better variety of people knowing about it and before there wasn't that many people that knew about it. Also it is a bigger problem now than it was before so if people want air pollution to be controlled and more people are going to be apart of the movement.

100% Reply by janyri nunes on December 11, 2009 at 12:10am  
Send Message  
The "Go Green" hype that exists today is making a impact then it did 10 years ago because of the rapid temperature changes. Many people are hearing that go green is important because its not only affecting us but also animals. Before making all of our cars hybrid and electric, we should think about our economy. Many people are going to lose their job, and this is something we should think about before making electrical cars, and hybrids.

100% Reply by Wag on December 11, 2009 at 2:22am  
Send Message  
I believe that the "Go Green" hype that currently exists in our society has a greater impact on the success of alternative vehicles then it did 10 years ago because now is when it needed it the most.

Videos



**Air Pollution Monologue**  
Added by Josh Lapidus  
★★★★★



**Lung Cancer Video**  
Added by Josh Lapidus  
★★★★★



**Manhattan Video 3**  
Added by Josh Lapidus

## Collaboration

This network has also been utilized as a platform for students to communicate with teachers, GK12 fellows, administrators and other students outside of the classroom environment. As research projects become more developed the site will serve as a stage and central location for students to share resources and advice and as a vehicle for research groups to coordinate efforts and share information.

## Access to Computers

We are grateful that access to the site was not major issue for our students. AUP Students have access to a computer lab connected to the Urban Geography classroom, both during class and after school, as well as access to computers at the public library next door.

At 12:03am on December 8, 2009, Mickey said...  
Mr I have a idea to make the site better. A Spelling Check box, where if you spell a word wrong it will show you the correct word/spelling. (You know like MW.) oh and one more thing after to spaces a fullstop (like the iphone) and after a fullstop, when you start typing its upper case. ( like MW)  
THANKZ

At 1:10am on December 5, 2009, Mickey said...  
Mr how am I doing in your class?

At 9:27pm on December 2, 2009, dominique said...  
y is it that my tranist letter is marked as i did not give it in because i did just like my coney isldn prestation m lookin at it right now the same for my letter and i handed it in

At 1:20pm on November 23, 2009, dominique said...  
Dear Ms tokyo letter' docx

At 5:16pm on November 19, 2009, Venise Morales said...  
Mr. Schwartz what is the HW- Big Chanfges in NYC? Because it seems like to teachease, I am missing it and my average is a 79!! I don't know whats go on. When you have time please talk to me about this.

## Extension

The Urban Sciences network has also proven useful as a tool for students to delve further into topics that have interested them through videos, web links and other media outlets. This vehicle has been adopted by several other 11th grade classrooms including advanced placement courses. This network has become a virtual community for students, teachers, GK12 fellows and administrators that has positively impacted the community within the Academy of Urban Planning's walls.

## Acknowledgments

Susannah Ceraldi (Urban Ecology) and Adam Schwartz (Urban Geography), our two primary teaching partners at AUP, were integral to the promotion and development of the Ning for these projects. Josh Lapidus, Devin Bambrick and AUP principal Monique Derrisaw also significantly contributed toward making the site a successful academic platform for the greater 11th grade.

Urban Sciences at AUP  
Uniting Ecology and Geography of the Urban Environment for Social Justice.

Main Inside My Page Groups Student Resources In Spanish Web/Science U.S. History Videos Manage

All Groups (5)

Urban Geography 100 members Last activity: Dec 16 Opening our eyes to the City and the Nation!	Urban Ecology 90 members Last activity: 1 day ago
USA 21 members Last activity: 1 day ago	U.S. Human Geography 21 members Last activity: 1 day ago One never ending quest to understand the world.
Kids Connect 10 members Last activity: 10 hours ago This group is for students participating in the Kids Connect program, which connects students in different countries through creative collaboration...	SAT Prep 15 members Last activity: Dec 10