



# Middlebury

Middlebury College  
Middlebury, Vermont 05753

April 25, 2014

Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS)

To Whom It May Concern:

Leadership Perspectives on Intercultural Communication: Body and Earth

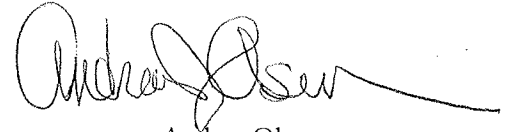
My Body and Earth course curriculum at Middlebury College has been revised over the last three years to include a focus on intercultural communications, building skills for global involvement. This innovative curriculum addresses undergraduates in our increasingly diverse international population at Middlebury and graduate students in our new connection with the Monterey Institute of International Studies.

The Body and Earth course is designed for students with an interest in the dialogue between the science of body and the science of place. Its goals are to enhance movement efficiency through experiential anatomy and to heighten participants' sensitivity to natural processes and forms in the Vermont bioregion and globally. Weekly movement sessions, essays by nature writers, and writing assignments about place encourage synthesis of personal experience with factual information.

Last spring I became the first Middlebury College faculty member to be a semester-long Visiting Scholar at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, a graduate school, which is now part of Middlebury. As well as offering my own weekend intensive Body and Earth workshops, I co-taught two full-credit seminars with Professor Nukhet Kardam in the Masters in Public Administration program: Grassroots Leadership and Social Needs Assessment. In this role, integrating environmental perspectives into both seminars, I helped develop specific "tools" for effective communication. Skills involve the body (enhancing the process of perception through understanding the nervous system) and of Earth (considering earth systems as "stakeholders" in conversations and negotiations).

In 2003 I published *Body and Earth: An Experiential Guide* as part of the Middlebury College Bicentennial Series on the Environment. This text is now used in a significant number of dance and environmental studies programs, including colleagues at Wesleyan University, Oberlin College, Prescott College, Smith College, the University of North Carolina at Asheville, Columbia College, and in graduate programs at the University of Illinois, the Ohio State University, and Schumacher College in England. International training programs in the Body and Earth curriculum have also been offered annually over the past decade with colleague Caryn McHose. Alumni teach the work in a variety of academic and community settings in Europe, South America, New Zealand, and the U.S.

The revision/addition to the core curriculum addresses cultural diversity, embodied approaches to effective international communication in challenging situations, and graduate-level interdisciplinary coursework linking geological, biological, cultural, familial, and personal lenses making it an innovative and groundbreaking curriculum at Middlebury College and in higher education.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea Olsen", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Andrea Olsen

Professor of Dance and Faculty in Environmental Studies

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