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A Visual Tool for Interdisciplinary Investigations

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A Visual Tool for Interdisciplinary Investigations

Abstract

Interdisciplinary investigations using the Gapminder dynamic interactive software will be the focus of this seminar.

Full Description

Lesley's Visual Literacy Project resulted in many interdisciplinary activities in CLAS and LUCAD. One interdisciplinary visual activity that has been very engaging for students involves a software application called Gapminder. Gapminder is a free dynamic scatter plot tool that allows students to observe trends over time in the relationships between different variables for over 200 countries and territories. The user selects both independent and dependent variables from an extensive list, and then controls the timeline slider to show changes in the variables over time, starting (for many variables) in the 1800s. Students look for trends that they would like to study further, and conduct research regarding the historical, social, environmental or cultural explanations for the patterns they observe. Student work with Gapminder will be displayed and discussed in this presentation, especially as regards the way that this visualization enhances interdisciplinary thinking. Participants will also have the opportunity to try out Gapminder for themselves.

Program Description

Gapminder is a dynamic scatter plot tool that allows students to observe trends over time in the relationships between different variables for over 200 countries and territories. Students look for trends that they would like to study further, and conduct research regarding the historical, social, environmental or cultural explanations for the patterns they observe. Student work with Gapminder will be displayed and discussed in this presentation, and participants will have a chance to explore Gapminder.