Title: Global Citizens: An International Concentration in Human Service Practice
Primary Contact: John Korsmo, Associate Professor, Human Services & Rehabilitation

A condition of accepting the WCE Innovation Toward Excellence Grant was the preparation of a 2-page report upon completion. Please accept this report to fulfill that condition.

Description: This proposal aimed to investigate the utility of creating an international course for students in the Human Services (HS) major. The project took advantage of an opportunity to co-teach a service learning course in South Africa, with Dr. Vernon Johnson, Professor of Political Science in WWU’s College of Humanities and Social Sciences. The course is “South Africa: Non-governmental Organizations in Development” While this project is not complete, considerable work has been done in a brief amount of time and, with very positive and informative outcomes. The scope of work for this project thus far has included:

Winter quarter 2012: Collaborated with Dr. Johnson to develop recruiting materials; recruited potential students through presentations and information sessions and speaking to student groups in various classes and clubs throughout campus; developed a student applicant screening tool and interview protocol; conducted interviews with 32 applicants; communicated with NGO partners in South Africa to finalize itinerary; communicated with representative of PATH (a potential future collaborator/sponsor) to initiate relationship and discuss future collaborative efforts (there is need for continued dialogue and relationship building here).

Spring quarter 2012: Selected 17 students for the course (the maximum number we could effectively take on the trip), of which nine were Human Services majors; conducted an initial meeting and orientation for all students; finalized itinerary for international travels; communicated with HS colleagues to learn of their ideas and interests in this project, and their notions of how an international element may be of use for the program.

Summer quarter 2012: Co-created, and taught 3-day orientation course; prepare students for excursions to South Africa; co-taught the 12-credit “Service Learning in South Africa” course in South Africa (I was there for 4 weeks of the 7-week course); met with numerous representatives of NGO’s in South Africa, building relationships, and also learning more about how we can grow this course to become a more formal/intentional international element of the HS program. During those four weeks ‘on the ground’ I spent considerable time with community partners and residents, engaging with students on their service projects and research projects, and getting to know the needs, assets, and possibilities that exist in Kurland Village, and the surrounding areas. For instance, I had informational, and planning meetings with representatives of such organizations as:

- Bitou 10 Education Foundation (http://www.bitou10foundation.co.za/), which has as its mission to, “… support and develop initiatives that promote the holistic, integrated education journey of every Bitou [region] child.” This is an important organization that is supporting public education, and in many ways leading the charge for education reform in South Africa. I see this as a potential critical partner if we move this effort forward. More information about Bitou 10 can be found as Appendix 1.
- Dollars for Change (http://www.dollarsforchange.org/#), an organization that is supporting residents of Kurland Village by obtaining low-cost housing materials, and coordinating with volunteer laborers to conduct housing renovations/improvements (WWU students worked on behalf of this organization to make reparations on several homes this summer. Here is a link to their website, which includes photos of WWU students working on homes in 2011, http://www.dollarsforchange.blogspot.com/).

- Willing Workers in South Africa (http://www.wwisa.co.za/), a principal partner organization that leads up the coordination of service activities, and provides much of the direct linkages to the local township.

Additionally, considerable time was spent at a make-shift “Soup Kitchen”, an informal child care center, and an after school center, as well as investigating educational and recreational opportunities and outlets for our students.

**Fall quarter 2012:** Upon return from South Africa, I spent time meeting with and consulting with students to support them in their transition back home, and consulted with them on their research projects relating to their experiences in South Africa. In addition, I am communicating with the seven Human Services students who participated in the class, to consider the relevance of this experience within our curriculum, and to further explore how we can expand on or otherwise tailor this type of experience for the major.

After a successful experience in summer 2012, the Human Services and Rehabilitation Department unanimously decided to support a continuation of this work, and of this particular course. A New Course proposal was put forward to and accepted by the Human Services Program, the HSR Department, International Programs Advisory Council, Woodring Curriculum Council, and the ACC. The course will be offered cross listed by Human Services and Political Science. This is the first international Human Services to be offered in the history of the Human Services and Rehabilitation Department. Efforts are now underway to recruit students for the summer 2013 program. I continue to collaborate with Professor Johnson to build this course. We have had numerous meetings to discuss alterations for the next course offering, making some changes based on experiences in summer 2012. We are creating a new version of the Prep Course, which will take place on campus during Spring 2013 (as a one-credit course). We are collaborating with the international Programs office, as well as our principal NGO partner in South Africa, Willing Workers of South Africa, to solidify our itinerary and plans for the next course.

Additionally, efforts made through this Innovations grant include exploration of additional international opportunities/courses for our students. A course proposal is being created for a summer 2014 course in Lima Peru. Possibilities will be explored during summer, 2013 for a potential future course offering in Bolivia. Discussions are underway with a professor from the University of Victoria for a cross-border partnership offering an international experience for Human Services students and students from U-Vic.

In short, considerable work was done, and is being done to move this innovative offering forward. The successes we are having would not have been possible without the support from the Dean’s innovation grant. Thank you very much for your continued support, and encouragement in creating new and innovative opportunities for our students and faculty.
Appendix 1

Bitou 10 Foundation History

The Bitou 10 Education and Development Foundation has evolved from the Cadbury School Development Initiative (CSDI) which was established in 2001 in response to then president Nelson Mandela’s challenge to change the education landscape of how children set about learning and teachers set about teaching. The focus of the CSDI initiative was the cluster of ten state schools in the Bitou municipal area; these schools represent a small-scale model of South Africa’s education whole. Eight of the ten schools are non fee paying schools as they cater for children from historically disadvantaged communities. The cluster model is based on the philosophy that “Together we can do so much more”.

Following the 2001 Baseline Study of the situation in all the B10F schools, the CSDI embarked on an ambitious project to change the education landscape through whole school development. In order to build local ownership of this project we became The Bitou 10 Education and Development Foundation in March 2006 with the principals of the ten schools forming our Board of Directors.

During 2008/2009, B10F entered into a process of Review and Reflection – a holding year to determine and clarify which direction we should be taking involving the broad participation of the school communities. We are proud to say that we have made a difference! Both the JET Education Services (JET) Evaluation in 2007 and our self enquiry process in 2009 have confirmed that all the Expected Outcomes of the JET Baseline Study have been met.

On March 16 2010 our Founding Board tendered its resignation and approved the nominations for a new Board as had been agreed upon, and the agreement confirmed, at our 2 September, 2009 AGM in the Simunye Centre, Kwanokuthula. This marked the culmination of our holding year; our new Board was inaugurated on 31 March, 2010. It is our firm belief that we achieved much in this holding year.

If a process can be a product, and we believe it can be, we have a strong product to show for a year of only partial activity. We have a strong Board that has not only intellectual muscle, but also an appreciation of the relevance of The Bitou 10 Foundation as keen believer in, key contributor to, and able facilitator of building local community. Essentially, it is the authenticity of personal relationships that salvages, and thereby saves, not only the driving rationale, but much more importantly, the ultimate objective – meeting the challenge laid down to us by then president Nelson Mandela to change the landscape of how children set about learning and teachers set about teaching!

Thus our focus remains steadfastly on our children – if we do not have meaningful and enduring impact on the lives of our children not only has our work failed, but our nation will continue to pay the price for generations to come.

(taken from the Bitou 10 website, http://www.bitou10foundation.co.za/about-us/)