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Roll up Your Sleeves & Learn: Service-Learners’ Alternative Spring Break

L200 Journal Entry, 22 March, 2004:
All of the initial reading on non-violence we did helped to give us a mindset to go onto the trip, but nothing could have adequately prepared us for what happened. We went into the jungle and up a mountain and I understood: non-violence begins, not with peace rallies and letter-writing campaigns, but with an internal change, with a basic acceptance and a deep belief that we make a difference and that if each of us works together the whole world really might change.”—Ashley Paynter, L200 “Constructing a Culture of Nonviolence: Costa Rica in Service”

If academic objectives can be matched to outcomes in a one-to-one correspondence and Bloom’s and Anderson’s taxonomies of learning can be checked off in a list of sequenced progression,

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Cate Hart’s “Voices of Poverty” students applied their understanding of civic engagement in Washington, D.C., along the spectrum of direct service to advocacy. Here students meet with Indiana Representative Julia Carson.
Alternative Spring Break 2004

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then it’s relatively certain that the class in question is not an Alternative Spring Break course. The 6- to 8-week courses offered annually through ISS’s office of Community Outreach and Partnerships in Service-Learning (COPSL) and Collins Living Learning Center never seem to accomplish what they set out to do; they always deliver more.

“It’s that ‘lagniappe’ our hosts in the east Baton Rouge schools in Louisiana kept showing us, the ‘something more’ that the students who take these alternative spring break service-learning classes always come away with,” observes Claire King, director of COPSL and co-instructor with Margaret Gilbride of L200 “Exploring Inclusive Communities: A Southern Exemplar.”

Students in Gilbride and King’s Baton Rouge class studied issues of poverty and disability alongside best practices of inclusion involving person-centered planning, but never imagined that they would return from their experiences working in failing schools with a plan to investigate and publicize the consequences of the No Child Left Behind Act for low-income children with disabilities.

“I’m raising awareness of education mandates as a result of what we experienced and will definitely advocate for the use of accommodation and a variety of assessment strategies for children with disabilities—something that the No Child Left Behind Act does not permit. I’m not an education major, but I’ve got to become more vocal about the politics of education in order to help change the policies,” states junior violin performance major Emily Herdeman, who worked in east Baton Rouge and Acadiana Parish special education classrooms.

The course, one of five Alternative Spring Break classes offered this year, was suggested by Beth Hannon, a 2003 IU graduate and former Advocate for Community Engagement (ACE). Now in Teach for America, she helped to place IU service-learners with special needs students in Baton Rouge schools facing corrective action.

It’s not unusual that Alternative Spring Break courses follow the trajectories of others who have experienced them in previous years. This year’s “Spring Break for Kids” class, which worked with children at the Rise, a local transitional housing shelter for women and children who have been victims of domestic violence, was taught for Collins by former IU service-learner, Monte Simonton.

Rebecca Jimenez’ course on Non-violence was conceived by Catherine Gray, former assistant director of COPSL, who was living in the Quaker community of Monteverde, Costa Rica. Gray realized that the experience the students could gain working with the children of “tico” coffee farmers and living among the Quakers of Costa Rica could be invaluable when folded into the context of a course on the history and traditions of peacemaking.

For the past three years, Cate Hart led her “Voices of Poverty” students to the legislative offices and neighborhood centers of Washington, D.C., and in his fourth year of teaching “Mexico: Culture and Service,” Russ Salmon prepared his class for a week of direct service in Guanajuato, Mexico.

Salmon’s students study the history and traditions of Mexico and put their Spanish skills to use communicating with their host families and with the people they work with, including elder women, preschool children and patients at the IU School of Optometry eye clinic in the small town located an hour south of Mexico City.

“We were able to see how Mexico’s past still impacts its citizens today and were able to provide better, more culturally sensitive service to the people we worked with because of the knowledge we gained in the classroom. Russ Salmon is an amazing teacher,” says Communications major Mamie Doyle, “He knows how to make those connections happen.”

Cate Hart’s “Voices of Poverty” students, accompanied by graduate assistant Kenndra Thomas, applied their understanding of civic engagement along the spectrum of direct service to advocacy, working in the Emmaus House social service agency and meeting with former Congressman Lee Hamilton, Representative Julia Carson and staff.
of Senator Richard Lugar’s office about issues impacting people who are, in many cases, closer to homelessness and unemployment than their demeanor would suggest.

“This definitely changed students’ perceptions of politics in general,” states Hart. “For two hours Lee Hamilton answered the students’ questions and concerns as if he hadn’t any other more pressing business. And Senator Lugar’s aides showed the same respect for us.”

“Students kept pointing out how surprised they were at the level of care they encountered among elected officials on the Hill and the social service workers and in the neighborhoods. Probably we left, though, with more questions about why, with those signs of commitment, people are still living in a persistent cycle of poverty.”

The Alternative Spring Break courses seem to answer a need of the students to gain credits while providing service and having a fun break away from campus routine. Although the class numbers are comparatively small, with over 50 students enrolled, the experience yields a “high stakes” learning environment that is powerful and lasting in its intensity.

Evidence for the value of the program comes in the form of student engagement and career choices that the students attribute to the potency of their Spring Break classes.

Several of Salmon’s students have joined the Peace Corps and Teach for America. One is studying ophthalmology after translating at the eye clinic. Others have gone on to law school to study human rights legalities. “It’s life-changing,” says Jimenez, of her students’ colorful experiences in the rain forests of Costa Rica. “It brings so much of the students’ prior experiences, beliefs and concerns to the table.”

“That’s what I love about the Alternative Spring Break courses,” says COPSL director Claire King. “They contextualize the learning in a very deliberate and compressed way. And the service the students perform is not what I’d call ‘drive-by’ service—instead, the students recognize that what they are doing is simply and thoughtfully contributing to a larger picture of what it takes to make sustainable, lasting social change.”

Journal Entry 22 March 2004:

I was telling someone with frustration about this class, before going to Monteverde, saying, ‘I don’t get why it’s hard for me; there’s Ashley the anal retentive, compulsive student, and there’s reflective Ashley who belongs on a retreat somewhere, but I just can’t learn both ways at the same time. This trip was a good marriage of those two sides of me. The richness of what I learned goes almost beyond words.” – Ashley Paynter

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**Service-Learning Summer Institute**

The Office of Community Outreach and Partnerships in Service-Learning will hold a Summer Institute the mornings of May 12, 13, and 14, in the IMU University Club Faculty Room. The registration deadline is May 5. To register, contact COPSL: 856-6011, copsl@indiana.edu. For additional information, please visit [http://www.indiana.edu/~copsl/](http://www.indiana.edu/~copsl/).

The tentative schedule follows.

**Day 1: Motivational**
- Keynote Address: Civic Engagement
- Faculty Presentations of Successful Models of Service-Learning
- Student Video on Service-Learning at Hilltop Garden–Nature Center
- Role of Advocates for Community Engagement (ACEs)

**Day II: Technical (How to Implement Service-Learning)**
- Address, “What I Wish I Knew” (experiences of faculty with service-learning courses)
- Community Partner Perspective
- Reflection

**Day III: Workshop**
- Developing a Semester Plan
- Developing Syllabi
- Matching Course Objectives with Appropriate Activities
New Video Documents Folk Healing

Soon students of Assistant Professor of Anthropology Sarah Phillips will be learning fundamental lessons about anthropology and ethnography from folk healers in western Ukraine. “Shapes in the Wax: Tradition and Faith among Folk Medicine Practitioners in Rural Ukraine,” a documentary video co-produced by Phillips and ISS Media Production, features footage Phillips shot in Ukraine in 1999 of female healers called babky (Ukrainian for grandmothers) explaining their healing rituals and performing them on patients. Media Production’s Tim Miller co-produced the video, which is narrated by WFIU announcer Diane Iauco.

Phillips’ intent for the project was to develop “a learning tool for students that I could show to my classes,” conveying anthropological points about ritual, religion, and tradition, especially “the different ways in which tradition takes on meanings in certain political and social contexts.” In Ukraine, formerly a part of the Soviet Union, “where things Ukrainian were repressed, where people were discouraged from speaking the Ukrainian language, where religion was repressed, and where the very folk healing techniques that I’m documenting were repressed, people make a political statement when they start practicing these rituals.”

“In cultures around the world, shamans become very relevant and shamanistic practice becomes very relevant in times of social upheaval,” Phillips explains. “These women are addressing social problems as they perform these rituals, because they make the patient who has come to them for help think about their relationships, and about their place in the community.” The babky also meet a growing need for treatment; because the state system of healthcare has declined since the fall of the Soviet Union, Ukrainians must look to alternative ways of treating illness.

In 1998, Phillips’ research for her dissertation, which combined “interest in health and in Ukrainian culture in general,” took her to Western Ukraine, to study healing strategies used by people after the Chernobyl nuclear power plant disaster. When the opportunity to participate in a scientific expedition down the Dniester River arose, she joined ethnographers, as well as chemists, botanists, and other natural scientists, studying the river and the villages along its banks.

Equipped only with a tape recorder, Phillips interviewed the babky “who are the heroines of this video.” Though she was very happy with the audio data collected on the trip, she “realized that it just wasn’t enough, that you just couldn’t get across what it felt like to have one of these folk healers do a prayer over you or do the wax ritual, which is the focus of the film.” And so Phillips returned a year later with a video camera, and captured the babky on videotape. During a semester at the University of the South, Phillips and an independent-study student, Brooke Swafford, assembled a rough cut of her footage in Apple i-Movie, along with “a very rough script.”

When Phillips approached Department of Anthropology chair Jean Sept for a recommendation on how to proceed with the project, she suggested Media Production. While Phillips initially sought only advice from Media Production, Director Ralph Zuzolo was impressed by the rough cut, and given Miller’s interest in and facility with documentaries, found funding for the video.

In addition to all the components of a documentary—narration, subtitling, maps and other graphics—Phillips and Miller faced the issue of the video format of the footage. Shot in hi-8, a now-outdated technology, the footage had to be digitized and augmented by Miller, before the rough cut could be reassembled and polished on the AVID editing suite.

Miller was impressed by Phillips’ camerawork, especially given the limitations of the format. “Sarah did a really good job with the camera out in the field,” he observes. For her part, Phillips notes that Miller improved “immensely” on her rough script.

“Shapes in the Wax” combines two of Miller’s interests: medicine and anthropological documentary. A college course on “Anthropology through Film” was a strong influence, especially the television series “Faces of Culture,” screened in the class: “I thought it would be great to produce a show of my own like it some day,” he notes. “This is just the sort of proj-
or the pouring forth of wax, has to Phillips' knowledge never been filmed before in Ukraine. In performing it, the babka melts candle wax into a bowl of holy water (both the water and the candles have been blessed by a priest), making the sign of the cross over it with a knife. She then takes the resulting hardened piece of wax from the water, and interprets the shapes in it, to discover what is ailing a patient.

Phillips identifies this practice as a “syncretic healing ritual” that “combines Christian idioms like the trinity, the Lord’s prayer, the sign of the cross, with pre-Christian idioms—calling on the natural elements, talking about witches and various unclean forces.” The babky’s other healing practices captured in the video include herbal therapy and massage (employed to cure ulcers, for example).

Phillips intends the video to introduce students to different ways of thinking about illness, to suggest that “sickness is a cultural matter,” not just a physical one, and that “illnesses are very different across cultures.”

The babky treat ailments not recognized by western medicine, what we might think of as psychosomatic illnesses, such as insomnia, depression, nervousness. They also address afflictions that don’t exist in the West, such as “fear sickness,” prevalent in Slavic countries. “The argument could be made that these are also illnesses that have a large social component,” says Phillips. “People get sick when their relationships are spoiled.”

In carrying out her research, Phillips interviewed practitioners of many different alternative healing methods, including homeopathy and iridology (in which the healer looks at the iris of the eye to diagnose illness) and was herself treated by some of the women. “I must say, I was very impressed with the results,” she reports. “I went into this research a little skeptical, and now I’m less so, because I really think that, for whatever reason . . . these practices work.”

“Shapes in the Wax” is targeted towards three of Phillips’ classes: Medical Anthropology, Social and Cultural Anthropology, and Anthropology of Russia and Eastern Europe. Phillips will show the video in class to generate discussion. In April, Phillips and Miller will screen the video at the annualASN (Association for the Study of Nationalities) conference at Columbia University. The leading venue for scholars specializing in former Soviet Union countries, particularly Ukraine, the conference will be an ideal forum to gather reactions to the film.

“I’m extremely grateful to Ralph and Tim, that they took on this project,” Phillips concludes; “Tim has done a fabulous job.”

ISS Diversity and Learning Guide

In response to faculty requests, ISS has begun work on a Diversity and Learning Guide. A new web page lists Indiana University resources designed to help instructors address diversity issues in the classroom: [http://www.indiana.edu/~iss/diversity.html](http://www.indiana.edu/~iss/diversity.html).

In 2004–2005, look for a series of campus workshops for faculty that will address unique ways of teaching for diversity in the IUB climate. Approaches and discussions arising from these workshops will be shaped into prose resources, such as examples, suggestions, case studies, and transcripts. These perspectives will then become part of the permanent teaching fabric of IUB.

Information about the workshop series and other news on the Diversity and Learning Guide will appear on the web page and in future issues of this newsletter.
Turnitin.com Pilot Continues

The last few years have brought an increase in the number of reported cases of students plagiarizing written work in classes taught at IUB, according to the Office of Student Ethics and Anti-Harassment, and the English Department’s Composition Program. Fueled in part by the proliferation of web-based essay-mills, some of whom will even produce papers tailored to particular assignments, today’s plagiarism presents unique pedagogical and technological challenges to teachers.

Instructors who assign writing in their classes can nevertheless take steps both to prevent and to identify plagiarism, from crafting plagiarism-resistant assignments, to monitoring the composition process, to establishing grading rubrics that emphasize adherence to assignment criteria, to using plagiarism-detecting software.

In spring 2003 Teaching and Learning Technologies Centers (a partnership of ISS, UITS, and the IUB Libraries) began a pilot project to test Turnitin.com, a web-based plagiarism-detection service, on the IUB campus. Other IU campuses are also testing this service. Students in participating sections submit papers electronically to the Turnitin.com website, which compares them to its database of papers, and to text posted elsewhere on the Internet. Originality Reports, which can be made available to students as well as to instructors, highlight the passages found in another text and indicate the location of the original.

Since 2003, the IUB pilot has grown to include 147 instructors in 37 departments, including faculty members and AIs. As of March 26, 4,033 papers have been submitted.

In November the Bloomington Faculty Council authorized the pilot to continue, with the stipulation that Turnitin.com be presented as a pedagogical tool, not simply a means for policing students. While pedagogy has informed the pilot from the beginning, ISS has worked this spring to heighten the emphasis.

“What is as important as seeing a reduction in plagiarism is an increase in the discussion of intellectual property and academic responsibilities,” explains TLTC director David Goodrum.

This semester, with the help of Department of English Associate Chair Kathy Smith and Composition Director Christine Farris, ISS’s Campus Writing Program and the TLTC have worked closely with 10 English AIs teaching 20 sections of W131 Elementary Composition, helping them to draft a syllabus section on plagiarism and Turnitin.com, to create assignments that include use of the service, and to train students to use the tool. TLTC staff visited all 20 W131 sections to introduce Turnitin.com to students.

TLTC and CWP have solicited feedback from the English AIs and will seek input from all the pilot participants later this spring. Reactions from the AIs have been largely positive. Importantly, they have found Turnitin to be a useful tool for students learning how to work with source materials. It helps them gain experience with the intricacies of citing correctly by reminding them what they did or did not include in citations.

The AIs’ experience suggests that Turnitin.com “raises students’ awareness about issues of being too close to a source, documenting your sources, but also quoting accurately,” according to Campus Writing Program director Laura Plummer. “What seemed to be happening in their classrooms was what we had intended to have happen,” adds TLTC consultant Amy Lawson; “students discussed plagiarism early, they got started on citation mechanics and issues very early, so that when the classes move toward their larger writing projects later on in the semester the students are already equipped to deal with these issues.” The more AIs have integrated Turnitin.com into their syllabuses, using reports in in-class exercises, for example, the more students have accepted the service as a pedagogical tool.

Instructors report that incorporating Turnitin.com has not changed the tenor of classes, and has led to only minor extra work in dealing with logistics, e.g., students forgetting to submit their work or having trouble logging in. And although reading Turnitin.com reports takes time, many instructors are already devoting considerable effort to running suspect student writing through Internet search engines such as Google.

Most instructors in the W131 group think that Turnitin.com would be most useful if adopted at an institutional level, because the campuswide paper database that would result could reduce the amount of cross-class and cross-semester plagiarism. (Because papers plagiarized from papers written for other IU classes are not detected by Turnitin.com unless the original paper has been submitted, the service will become more useful the longer it is used and the more widely it is used on campus.) They also suspect that students would view Turnitin.com less as a surveillance tool and more as a learning tool if it were used throughout the university.

If you are interested in participating in the Turnitin.com pilot, or simply want more information, please visit

http://www.indiana.edu/~turnitin/
ISS Grant Recipients Announced

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Ann Carmichael, Associate Professor, Department of History, will develop an interactive, computerized learning game to lead students through materials in the final section of H333 Epidemics in History.

Yoonmee Chang, Assistant Professor, Department of English, will integrate a central project for L374 Culture, Crime, Curios and Cuisine?: Representations of American Chinatowns, in which students create websites of Chinatown that manipulate the conventions of hypertext and other web technology in order to create antidotes to current exoticizing representations.

Richard Durisen, Professor and Chair, Department of Astronomy, will create for E105 The Search for Habitable Planets a web-based interactive program to simulate a launch from Earth’s vicinity to Mars so that students can experience the practical difficulties of Solar System exploration in an instructive but entertaining game-like environment.

Jacques Merceron, Associate Professor, Department of French and Italian, will digitize around 900 slide images and create web-based image galleries for each lesson in F361/F463 French Medieval and Renaissance Civilization, for in-class illustration and discussion, and for out-of-class student access for analysis, review, group projects, and reflective writing.

TLTC has also offered to work with all of the grant applicants to advance their projects for their IUB classes.

Service-Learning

The Office of Community Outreach and Partnerships in Service-Learning is pleased to announce the recipients of its Service-Learning Grants, awarded for course plans that employ service-learning to develop greater student engagement with critical thinking and deepen student understanding of the context of social issues.

Joan Pong Linton, Associate Professor, Department of English, and graduate intern Sara Biggs Chaney will partner with Girls Inc., Project Pride at Bloomington High School South, and the Crestmont Boys and Girls Club on a variety of student writing projects for W240 Community Service Writing (topic: writers as citizen critics on poverty and possibilities).

James Reidhaar, Associate Professor, Graphic Design, and graduate student Ambica Prakash will work with Bloomington Parks and Recreation on developing graphic symbols and informational guides to assist with outreach, for the class Graphic Design I.

TLTC Presents Summerfare 2004

The Teaching and Learning Technologies Centers (TLTC) present the Summerfare 2004 Faculty Development Series, an opportunity for faculty to learn more about the intersection of pedagogy and technologies.

The Summerfare series, presented by and for faculty, demonstrates how technologies are integrated into teaching. Presentations offer the faculty perspective on instructional technologies development and integration, while hands-on sessions build skills.

In the opening session, “IUB Faculty Project Showcase,” faculty demonstrate how thoughtfully designed technologies projects help achieve instructional objectives. Showcased projects illustrate strategies for engaging students, share innovations in overcoming instructional roadblocks, and provide inspiration for instructors across disciplines who face similar pedagogical challenges. The faculty projects are often examples of grant-funded projects or pilot projects for grant proposals.

During Summerfare, faculty can

• explore IUB instructional technologies projects through the experiences of their peers
• learn multimedia software in hands-on sessions
• familiarize themselves with support available from services such as UITS, ISS and IUB Libraries
• discover funding opportunities
• examine current issues in teaching and learning that are affected by technologies.

IUB faculty, instructors, and their instructional support staff are invited to register for and attend Summerfare workshops and presentations. TLTC staff will follow up with attendees throughout the summer to develop classroom projects for School Year 2004–05. TLTC Summerfare joins the Technologies Integration Series in providing development sessions throughout the school year. Workshop descriptions and registration will be available in April through the TLTC website: http://www.indiana.edu/~tltc/ (click on Workshops at the bottom of the screen).

TLTC staff are available to answer questions about the upcoming summer sessions, and other workshops and presentations. Call 855-7829 or explore the TLTC website.
ISS Grant Recipients Announced

Campus Writing Program
The Campus Writing Program is pleased to announce the recipients of the 2004 Summer Writing-Teaching Grants. Each summer, the Campus Writing Program offers grants to help faculty design undergraduate courses that use writing in innovative ways to require students to express, reformulate, or apply the concepts of an academic discipline.

Bruce Burgun, Associate Professor, Department of Theatre and Drama, intends to develop a journal component for his Acting Classes (T120, T220, T320) to help students gain awareness of the kinds of processes, reflections, and visions necessary to refine and develop their instinctual creative practice.

Julia R. Fox, Assistant Professor, Department of Telecommunications, plans to revise the writing intensive section of T311 Media History to guide students through the research writing process by incorporating discrete tasks, peer discussion, and instructor feedback via minimum marking.

Phaedra C. Pezzullo, Assistant Professor, Department of Communication and Culture, intends to shift the evaluative focus of C340 The Rhetoric of Social Movements from an exam format to a paper format in order to increase student appreciation for the complexities of the topic.

Raja Sooriamurthi, Clinical Assistant Professor of Information Systems, the Kelley School of Business, plans to incorporate writing in S308 Business Application Development to foster the communication skills needed by students once they enter the workforce.

For further information about the summer grant program, please visit http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/cwp/grants.html.

TLTC
The Teaching & Learning Technologies Centers are pleased to announce the recipients of the 2004 Teaching & Learning Technology Grants. Sixteen proposals were reviewed by a committee of IUB faculty members; the following four proposals were awarded up to $1,500 to support instructional technology projects designed to increase student engagement.

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