Integrating Service-Learning and International Study into the Traditional Degree Program

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Quint Newcomer
Director, UGA Costa Rica
1) Integrating International Study into Degree Programs
2) UGA Costa Rica
3) International Service-Learning
Study Abroad as an Integrated Feature of Degree Programs
Study Abroad
Program Types

• Faculty-Driven Niche
• Departmental Commitment
Faculty-Driven Niche Programs

• Generally short duration (1 - 3 weeks abroad)
  – Part of term-length course
  – Maymester / Jan-term
• One or two courses (1 - 6 credit hrs)
• Discipline or problem oriented / capstone
  – Not just a tack-on elective course
• Identify optimal course(s) and term based on the target audience & degree program
Niche Programs

Challenges for semester courses with study abroad component:

Funding: students need funds for travel to enroll in course

Timing: program must either run during break (e.g., spring break) or must get buy in from faculty in other areas (e.g., Texas program)

Continuity: faculty availability shifts from year to year
School/College Commitment

- Longer in duration (e.g., full semester, full summer)
- Multiple courses, 12 – 18 hours, with multiple professors
- Courses address degree requirements
  - Core curriculum requirements
  - Upper-level, research-oriented, teach advanced content plus technical skills
e.g., UGA Costa Rica’s Fall, Spring, and Summer Semester Programs

• 12 – 18 credit hours (9 - 12 in summer)
• Target audiences:
  – Ecology: ecology majors, minors
  – Environment & Design: junior year for majors
  – Spring: freshman and sophomores
  – Summer: LACSI, SPAN, SPIA, INTB, ALDR
School/College Commitment

Challenges include:

- Finding multiple professors
- Funding multiple professors
  - Buyouts and/or (summer) salary
  - Requires minimum number of students, but large programs are much more challenging to manage & harder to keep student quality
School/College Commitment

• Faculty recognition!!!!
  – Teaching abroad is rigorous and exhausting (as well as fun and creative!)
• Recognition of value at the top with core group of committed faculty
School/College Commitment

• How do Schools/Colleges view study abroad?
  – Add-on alternative to primary educational goals vs. integrated into curriculum planning
  – Permission vs. ownership
  – Department oversight of study abroad curriculum and coursework & Dean’s approval
UGA’s Costa Rica Campus
**Population:**
USA: ~305 million
GA: ~10 million
CR: ~4.2 million
Atlanta metro: ~5.4 million
Atlanta city: ~500,000
San Jose metro: ~1.4 million
San Jose city: ~350,000

**Area:**
GA: 152,629km²
CR: 51,100km²
We’re too busy preserving nature to even think about preserving any military.
UGA Costa Rica Campus
PanAmerican Highway, ~35km below
Pájaro Campana
Biological Corridor
Carbon Offset Purchase Certificate

UGA Costa Rica sincerely thanks and commends

for making a voluntary carbon purchase to help offset
the climate change impact of air and ground
transportation related to their educational travel
experience in Costa Rica. 100% of each carbon
purchase through the UGA Costa Rica Carbon Program
is used for reforestation in the Pájaro Campana
Biological Corridor.

New forests planted through the UGA Costa Rica Carbon Program have multiple benefits:

- Forests capture carbon from the atmosphere, thus helping to reduce the concentration of atmospheric CO₂
- New forests restore lost habitat for migratory birds and other animals, including threatened species within the Pájaro Campana Biological Corridor
- Forests help protect the integrity of local streams, rivers, and springs
- Forests enhance recreational opportunities

These new forests are establishing long-term research sites for scientists studying the effects of climate change and many other aspects of the Pájaro Campana Biological Corridor.

This carbon purchase leaves a lasting legacy for future generations and makes a statement about your dedicated stewardship to our shared Planet Earth.

http://www.uga.edu/costarica/campus_sustainability_carbon.htm
The University of Georgia – UGA Costa Rica
The University of Georgia
Costa Rica Campus & Ecolodge San Luis
San Luis, Costa Rica

155 acres
(62.8 ha)
SENDERO CAMINO REAL
CAMINO REAL TRAIL
JARDIN BOTANICO
SAN LUIS
JARDIN MEDICINAL MEDICINAL GARDEN
Crassulaceae
Kalanchoe pinnata
Hoja del Aire
Lifeplant

Planta nativa: no
PUESTO de SALUD
de San Luis
UGA Costa Rica
International Service-Learning Protocol

Connecting Academic Instruction with Community Service

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For
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Office of Service-Learning, UGA

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Components of Global Service-Learning Programs (Kiley 2005)

1) Pre-Program Orientation
2) Effective Community Partnerships & Involvement
   - Significant involvement and control of design, implementation, evaluation of S-L activities
   - On-going relationships
3) Useful Service
   - Draws on local knowledge
   - Addresses needs identified by local community
   - Realistic expectations – most problems can’t be solved in one semester
Components of Global Service-Learning Programs (Kiley 2005)

4) Rigorous Academic Learning
   • Structured activities to connect service to curriculum

5) Connection Between Service & Learning

6) Cultural Immersion (out of the comfort zone)

7) Structured Reflection
   • Individual & group

8) Faculty Mentorship
Components of Global Service-Learning Programs (Kiley 2005)

9) Logistics (safety & risk management)

10) Evaluation
   • Before, during, after
   • Quality of interactions, application of learning in practical situations & new contexts

11) Reporting & Recognition
   • Involve students in reporting
   • To community partners and broader (via newspapers, articles, presentations, etc. to increase global awareness)
Nature & Environmental Design

CAFE CONNECTIONS: A Service-Learning Study Abroad Class in Costa Rica
During the summer of 2009, Fanning Institute faculty created and led a service-learning component for the College of Environment and Design's Costa Rica study abroad program. Using the community-based asset development protocol developed through Project Riverway, eleven graduate and undergraduate landscape architecture students were able to provide significant design assistance to three families in the Finca la Bella (Beautiful Farm) community seeking to increase eco-tourism on their lands. It is important to know how vital tourism is to these families as it provides significant income, and, just as important, allows them to continue a multi-generational tradition of working the land.

Students created new resources such as pamphlets, maps, and landscape designs, to help increase the tourism on each farm through improved wayfinding, inexpensive publicity, and simple, cost-effective site improvements. In addition, a bilingual web site has been constructed that tells the story of Finca la Bella and of these three families and their farms. While these products may seem to be fairly simple tools, they were created in response to the needs and requests of the Finca la Belle farmers: we listened to what they needed and responded.

The integration of service-learning at the Costa Rican campus allowed the students to gain a unique and important experience that has transformed the way they see their individual skills and use their academic training, and we at the Fanning Institute look forward to continuing our partnership with the College of Environment and Design as our program continues to grow for years to come.
ALVARO'S ORGANIC FARM TOUR

Alvaro has an established farm tour. It is unique in that he has a 100 plus year old refined sugar cane press called a "mender" in Spanish, as his center piece. It sits under a covered open air building overlooking a sweeping view of the Gulf of Nicoya. He takes visitors through the process of growing harvesting and processing sugar cane into a variety of products including molasses, cane sugar and even mead (beer from honey). Also included in the tour is a look at his vegetable garden and a visit to his home where hand-made cafés are sold.
Language & Culture Service Learning
What do we do?

Three courses - interconnected thematically

• Week 1: Language and Environment
• Week 2: Language and Identity
• Week 3: Language and Globalization
• Week 4: Language, Literacy and Power
Service-Learning: Putting theory into practice

• Work with children (supporting Costa Rican curriculum), parents and other adults in their environments
• Run “English Summer Camp”
• Begin “Readers’ Circles”
• Support local library
Thank You!

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