2008-2009 Global Learning Awards

Dr. Thierry Léger

Ben M‘Sik: Creating Community in Casablanca

In January 2005, Dr. Betty Siegel (then president of Kennesaw State University) participated in a trip to Morocco where she met Dr. Rahma Bourquia (President of Université Hassan II Mohammedia) and began discussions about how to build a partnership between our two universities and countries. The Ben M‘Sik neighborhood of Casablanca—the location of one of Hassan II’s campuses—was identified as a priority for development and research. This proposal is specifically targeted at meeting a primary objective of jointly developed research goals between Hassan II and KSU for the Ben M‘Sik community: creating the Community Museum of Ben M‘Sik, the first of its kind in the Islamic World. The Global Learning Outcomes which are central to KSU’s mission also form the core of the Ben M‘Sik Museum’s mission: to understand and respect traditional culture, develop the skills that foster productive collaborations, and promote the vanishing history of one of Morocco’s poorest, yet most vibrant neighborhoods. For the Faculty Global Learning Grant, I am requesting funding on behalf of a project team in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences to create the Community Museum’s initial exhibition and to bring one of the project coordinators from Hassan II to Kennesaw State University to attend the opening event, teach three undergraduate classes, and give a series of public lectures at KSU. The exhibition will remain on display in the new museum and subsequently will tour Morocco and the United States for the following five years. The project—conceived, researched, and administered by an international team of students, professors, politicians, and university staff—has the potential to be seen by more than 500,000 people in both the United States and Morocco and would be worthy of KSU’s support.

Dr. Maia Carter Hallward

Engaging Research, Researching how to Engage: A Joint Project on Human Rights, Citizenship, and Legal Activism in the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict

This project has the dual objectives of a) strengthening student research capacity through focused sessions with the instructor on research design, methodology, information gathering and analysis, and b) increasing student knowledge about the different ways rights-based claims are deployed in the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. While the project’s topic—the comparative interaction of human rights and citizenship in different contexts—is of significant global concern and contributes directly to the primary investigator’s existing courses and research agenda, the process and design of the project is equally important. This proposal outlines a win-win strategy...
for addressing student and faculty needs by providing a) advanced students with faculty time for interaction on more intensive research opportunities than is possible in a standard course, b) students with funding to offset the time commitment involved in such projects, and c) faculty with research support not typically available. The project is designed to coincide with a proposed directed study for Spring 2009 focusing on a related subject, which will provide the students with critical background knowledge for conducting the research. The proposal seeks funding for student research assistants in Spring 2009 and for travel funds to conduct interviews based on initial findings in Spring or Summer 2009.

Dr. Mark Patterson

Measuring the Impacts of Study Abroad on Global Learning for Engaged Citizenship

Study abroad programs can provide a unique opportunity for students to enhance their global learning experience. Such programs that include a community service project (CSP) may have a better chance at achieving global learning for an engaged citizenship. This proposal uses a mixed methods approach to assess the impact study abroad and a CSP have on students’ global learning outcomes (GLOs), as defined by KSU’s QEP, Get Global. By designing a survey based on the GLOs of knowledge, skills and attitudes and administering it to students before and after the program, the impact will be quantitatively measured and analyzed using a Chi-squared test. Students will also submit a journal in which they record their activities and thoughts on their experiences. These journals will be qualitatively analyzed using content analysis to gain more insight into the students’ quest to become globally competent. Used together, these techniques will provide a more comprehensive picture regarding the use of study abroad programs and CSPs as an avenue to global learning. Results and findings from these analyses will be written up and submitted for publication, which will ultimately contribute to a relatively young, but growing body of knowledge. Finally, the use of a CSP and analyses of its impact on global learning for engaged citizenship and can be used as a model/template for other study abroad programs.

Dr. William Baker

Local Government Response to Immigration: The Case of Gainesville, Georgia

Grappling, coping, adjusting, and evolving to the recent rise in immigration has many cities and communities in a quandary. Immigration, especially from Mexico, has changed the demographics of many areas before it is officially recognized. Indeed, many areas are being transformed so rapidly and radically that local policy makers have little comparative history to draw from in trying to balance competing interests. No longer are these immigration issues top items of border cities and communities; immigrants are finding new destinations throughout the
nation particularly in the south. These new destinations are not just large metropolitan areas but in small and middle size communities as well.

This proposal is to conduct an intensive case study of a local government response to immigration. The City of Gainesville (pop. 25,000) and Hall County (pop. 173,000), Georgia, known as the “Poultry Capital of the World”, has over fifteen years experience dealing with significant immigration as a result of the demand for a labor-intensive local industry. The in-depth study endeavors to produce evidence of how the local governments have worked to incorporate Latinos into the Georgia political sphere. It will also focus on the activities of the local governments in trying to balance the needs of the new residents with the demands of the settled community.

Dr. Jesse Benjamin

Global Race and Ethnicity Documentary Project

After a decade of teaching “Race and Ethnicity” [SOCI 3314] using a global, 500-year, epistemological perspective, I have begun to shoot video footage to develop into a Documentary film tentatively titled “Racism 101.” The course provides an intensively dialogical, interpersonally searching, and truly global engagement with the issues of race and ethnicity that helps students gain global knowledge, intercultural communication skills, and enhanced capacity for responsible global citizenship. I am applying for this grant for several reasons: to gain additional hardware for both post-production and additional footage capture; to hire a professional editorial consultant; and to request course releases to provide sufficient time for this ambitious project. I believe my project can make significant contributions to the scholarship and pedagogy of this challenging subject.

Dr. Nancy Hoalst-Pullen and Dr. Ernesto Silva

Examining Perceptions of Environment and Culture in Bolivia and Peru

This project is a cross-cultural study comparing global and local perspectives inhabitants in the Bolivia and Peru have regarding geography, environment and culture (including cultural products such as the media). We will examine the knowledge Bolivians and Peruvians have concerning their own vernacular (everyday) physical and cultural landscapes, as well as assess their knowledge (and generalizations) of other countries involved in this study. In addition, we will examine how individuals believe they are perceived by others in terms of their environmental and cultural surroundings (self-perception). We are interested in seeing how geographic location and culture influences an individual’s perceptions of the environment at local, national and international scales. Overall, this research will help define and redefine both accepted and culturally-identified generalizations and stereotypes imposed or acknowledged by individuals of a country regarding environmental perceptions.
In a KSU study abroad program created for Maymester 2009, students will conduct surveys to identify perceptions of environment and culture. This grant will provide funding for the investigators to set up necessary accommodations and meetings for the success of this project during the study abroad program. The end outcomes will include a faculty-led global learning opportunity for students that fulfills several aspects of the University’s Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP), as well as conference presentations and the submission of a peer-reviewed publication.

Dr. Susan K. Smith

Analysis of Human Skeletal Remains from Two Late Bronze Age Chamber Tombs from the Athenian Agora Excavations in Athens, Greece

I propose to examine human skeletal remains from one of the early ancient international cultures, Late Bronze Age Mycenaean Greece. These skeletons came from two recently excavated chamber tombs from the Agora excavations in Athens, Greece. The results from this research will be integrated into work I have completed on previously excavated Late Bronze Age tombs from this site. Beyond the study of an ancient culture, this research will contribute to the QEP goal of Global Learning for Engaged Citizenship because I will be involved in international research in Greece with a colleague from a Canadian University, Dr. Maria Liston. I will be able to take my international experience back to the classroom to assist my students in reaching their learning objective for Global Perspectives.