

ASPPH Presents

WEBINAR

Ensuring Valuable Global Experiences for Undergraduates
Thursday, August 31, 2017, 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EDT

AU Nairobi: Experiential Community-Centered Learning in Undergraduate Public Health Study Abroad, presented by Jolynn K Gardner, PhD, CHES, Department of Health Studies, and Sara Dumont, DPhil, AU Abroad, American University

Learning Objectives:

- Describe important issues and considerations associated with creating Public Health study abroad programs; and,
- Integrate insights from the AU Nairobi experience into plans for crafting similar study abroad programs in Public Health.

Experiential community-centered learning is an important feature of undergraduate public health education. Additionally, study abroad is increasingly understood to be an essential component of any undergraduate program. Recognizing these two relevant factors, American University has developed a model semester-long study abroad program in Nairobi, Kenya that combines an engaging yet rigorous Public Health curriculum with community-based research and internship experiences.

AU has partnered with the University of Nairobi School of Public Health to provide students with a stimulating curriculum highlighting not only essentials of public health, but also unique issues in Kenya/East Africa specifically and the developing world in general. The curriculum includes coursework in Epidemiology, Community Health Diagnosis, and Environmental Health. Recognizing the importance of understanding local context for working within communities, students also study Swahili, Kenyan culture and history. Students complete internships with urban public health organizations and clinics as well as create and administer a community health survey in a rural community. Thus, while they are learning about Public Health, they are also practicing it. For most students, this is a transformative experience.

This presentation will highlight the features of the AU Nairobi program and provide insights from faculty, staff, and students. Best practices – gleaned from “lessons learned” – will be discussed regarding program development and administration, curriculum formation, and partnership cultivation. Reflections from students will be shared, illustrating the incredible insights they’ve gained and growth they’ve experienced during the Nairobi semester.

Experience the World - Assessing Experiential Global Health Opportunities for Undergraduate Students: Setting Ethical Goals, Scaffolding Student Experiences, and Leveraging Community Partnerships, presented by Caryl E. Waggett, PhD, Global Health Studies, Allegheny College

Learning Objectives:

- Evaluate the academic scaffolding and assessment necessary to support student learning in experiential programming;
- Reflect on parallel goals and structures necessary to ensure robust community partner outcomes;
- Identify creative approaches used to strengthen experiential opportunities for students under financial constraints; and
- Examine their own home institution's assessment of and effectiveness at reaching optimal community-standards and student learning in all types of experiential learning settings.

The explosive growth of undergraduate programs supporting majors or minors in global public health has led to a parallel growth of experiential offerings to meet the increased demand. Both domestic and international experiences have been developed or expanded by both academic institutions and third party providers to serve students. These programs operate for different lengths of time and at different scales of student engagement and faculty preparation, including class projects, stand-alone faculty led short term courses, semester or extended study away programming, summer internships, and individually-identified volunteer programs. Thoughtful development and oversight of these experiences is essential to maximize student learning and to ensure the ethical and engaged community participation.

This session will review the field as a whole and the ongoing professional development opportunities to strengthen home institutional capacity as student demand for experiential opportunities increases. We will examine some of the most challenging aspects of these engaged experiences as identified by faculty and staff at a wide range of institutions and identify creative approaches that are being used to strengthen their offerings. We will showcase the various strategies that departments and programs are using within the academic infrastructure to scaffold the student experiences to ensure that students are prepared. We will examine the challenges of offering tailored programs in tight fiscal environments and ways in which different academic institutions are partnering with one another to ensure more consistent experiences. Finally, we will evaluate the modest set of tools and competencies that have been developed for the holistic assessment of experiential opportunities, including metrics of student learning and engagement, evaluations of mentors and host organizations' experiences and feedback; and sustainability of programs as a whole.

Creating Collaborative Global Relationships and Service-Learning Opportunities: University of South Carolina Global Health Program in Costa Rica, presented by Myriam Torres, PhD, MSPH, Department of Epidemiology and Biostatistics, University of South Carolina, Arnold School of Public Health

Learning Objectives:

- Articulate the need for cross-cultural and global perspectives in undergraduate education
- Identify the steps USC Arnold School faculty used to develop a global health program in Costa Rica
- Justify the need for practice-based service learning experiences in global settings across disciplines to include epidemiology, biostatistics, health administration, medical care service delivery, and medical anthropology

We live in a world of intensified globalization where the flow of information, goods, capital and people across political and economic boundaries is unprecedented. The accelerated pace of globalization has particular implications for public health with regard to understanding health issues from a cross-cultural perspective as well as finding novel ways to train students and develop collaborative relationships with global partners.

PURPOSE: To describe the development of a global health program based in Costa Rica and highlight developing collaborative relationships as well as service-learning opportunities for students using the class Introduction to Epidemiology as a case study.

METHODS: The Introduction to Epidemiology course had a service-learning component where students applied the concepts from the class to the creation of a database for the *Hogar Geriátrico Carlos María Ulloa*, a Nursing Home in San José, in coordination with the staff of the Center. Initially, the group created a form to gather the data from the medical record and, based on that, we created the database. The data includes demographic information, personal history, functional assessment, medical diagnoses and various evaluations such as: the Exton-Smith scale for Predicting Pressure Ulcer Risk, the Geriatric Depression Scale, the Cognitive Evaluation (MMSE), ADLs (Barthel Index) and IADLs (Lawton and Brody Scale).

RESULTS: As part of the class, the students did an in-depth review of the scales looking for reliability and validity and their ability to predict morbidity and mortality.

CONCLUSIONS: Based on the students' positive evaluations, the course will be offered again to finish data entry and create new databases for the Center.