Robert Sanders, Roma Angel, Damiana Gibbons-Pyles
End of Project Report
"Thematic Interdisciplinary, Global Learning Study Away Program Model Development" QEP proposal

1. PROGRESS AND RESULTS.
(a) Describe the progress made toward the goals and objectives as stated in the grant proposal.

The primary goal of this project was to develop and pilot a sustainable model for a graduate level, interdisciplinary learning experience (lesson, unit, course) that could be used by other faculty and staff interested in developing and leading thematic interdisciplinary study away experiences focused on global learning and specifically, the following QEP Learning Community goals:

- Increase awareness of global learning opportunities that are already available on and off-campus, and to develop additional opportunities through collaboration across multiple units and disciplines on campus.
- Provide opportunities for faculty and staff to network with each other and with international partners.
- Promote the infusion of global content and perspectives into curricular and co-curricular offerings, and encourage more extensive linkages to partner institutions through stronger faculty/staff connections.

This goal was achieved through the successful development and implementation of a professional development institute for faculty and staff that modeled the student study-away experience. The institute was offered June 6-10, 2016 and was structured in such a way that the participants had an intensive local/global study-away learning experience that served as a model for the development of their own, longer term study away experience for their future students.

Through an immersive learning experience, the faculty and staff participants engaged in a model study-away project focused on “The Rural Experience” through readings, field trips, and interactions with campus resources. Interdisciplinary connections were encouraged and fostered, and opportunities were provided for the participants to design and develop their own study-away projects that built upon this new network of colleagues.

(b) Summarize your key evaluation results related to your funded project.

The proposed assessment plan called for a professional development institute that involved 20 ASU faculty and staff. In the end, we involved 12 faculty and staff, representing five of the six academic colleges on campus (Education, Business, Arts and Sciences, Health, and Music). Furthermore, the study-away planning model was further codified by the feedback received by these participants. Long-term assessment of the project will focus on the dissemination and successful utilization of the model by the participants and other campus faculty and staff.

Additionally, a “four-square” evaluation tool was used to solicit feedback on the institute. The
overall evaluation was extremely positive, including responses such as:

I learned
- Multiple ways to develop, courses, programs, etc. by developing a study away experience;
- About the expanse of knowledge in faculty regarding [their] interest in study away;
- What others are doing about opportunities to collaborate;
- About helpful resources in the community and at AppState to enhance student learning;
- What I expected and so much more – specific ideas for actual study away, a lot of logistics related to it, and an idea of co-creating reinforced!
- What is possible and how to integrate study-aways in my program;
- New ideas and new perspectives; and,
- That our program is actively involved in these initiatives but I had not placed them in this study away context.

2. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES.
(a) Describe the significant successes and challenges you experienced related to your project.

Overall, the most significant success of the project was the interest, excitement, and engaged participation of those who attended. The twelve participants were a diverse group that actively and enthusiastically participated in the discussions, immersive experiences, group activities, and planning throughout the week. Since the end of the institute, I’ve continued conversations with some of the participants, and expect to see several of them submit presentation proposals to the Global Learning Symposium this fall and implement their study-away experiences soon after.

The most significant challenge faced was in the recruiting of 20 participants. While we have approximately 15 register for the institute, several backed out at the last minute. During the institute, the other challenge was to accomplish all that we included on the agenda. We planned for a series of 3-hour days but had enough planned to fill a series of 6-hour days.

(b) Describe successes and challenges related to the process of receiving and utilizing your grant funds.

Overall, we were able to receive and utilize the funds without any challenges other than two minor issues:
1) One expense we needed covered involved food for the institute participants. While the QEP funding could not be used for this, Garner was willing and able to cover this expense through a separate budget.
2) The timing of the institute (June) pushed the expenditures off to the last minute. While I believe all invoices were paid out of 2015-2016 funds, we had to cut it close.

3. LESSONS LEARNED.
Describe what you learned based upon the results, successes, and challenges reported in Questions 1 and 2. Address programmatic, evaluative, or project changes that will be made based upon these lessons learned.
Roma, Damiana, and I met following the institute and discussed ways in which we might offer the institute differently in future years:

- One option we would consider would be to spread the institute out over several weeks, perhaps by meeting once a week for 5 weeks (instead of daily for one week). That format would provide a more extended timeframe for participants to read in between meetings, reflect and respond to readings and discussions, and develop their own study-away experiences.
- We also discussed a more streamlined version of the institute that could be offered as a series of workshops through the FAD. This approach would omit the immersive experience and modularize the planning process for study-aways.
- Additionally, there are other resources (human and content) on campus that could prove relevant to study-away that we could introduce in subsequent workshops (including but not limited to: other faculty, other library resources, and the ACT office).

4. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.

As successful as this institute was in terms of meeting the proposed goals, the experience exceeded our expectations in terms of how the participants went beyond what we planned. By the end of the week, we observed extensions of what they were learning through us via:

- Their request for an email list/Google Group to facilitate ongoing discussions with one another regarding shared resources and future collaborations;
- Their interest in submitting proposals for the upcoming, fall Global Learning Symposium;
- Their overwhelming interest in pursuing interdisciplinary connections with one another (in particular, around the idea of working with refugee communities in the Greensboro area); and,
- Their interest in the use and sharing of media resources related to the project, including videos and PPTs (Swamp Sistas and Farm Café and Appalachian Culture)
  - [https://drive.google.com/a/appstate.edu/file/d/0B8HnAlIsjsQ_aWEstekZER3k1N3c/view?ts=5759a241](https://drive.google.com/a/appstate.edu/file/d/0B8HnAlIsjsQ_aWEstekZER3k1N3c/view?ts=5759a241)
  - [https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1L6_0hvJjEK5PMB9YS8JiqSPSOmm78QPmjSwObiVXfQo/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1L6_0hvJjEK5PMB9YS8JiqSPSOmm78QPmjSwObiVXfQo/edit?usp=sharing)