Global Citizenship Task Force Report:

How Should We Promote and Structure Global Engagement at the University of Washington?

How Should We Recognize and Reward Students As Global Learners?

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Global Citizenship

Today’s undergraduates are global learners.

UW undergraduate Nick Fusso’s 2006 fall quarter class inspired a global learning opportunity. With insights from classroom discussions, he organized a campus-wide social movement around the principle of sustainable living. Nick’s website attracted international visibility—from Seattle to Thailand. Al Gore sent a letter to Nick six months later, praising his efforts in promoting sustainable practices.

The UW Global Citizenship Task Force defines global citizenship to capture the ways students, like Nick, actively engage their world.

“UW undergraduates are global citizens. They understand, respect and learn from cultural differences; they recognize the interconnections and inequalities that define global life; and they think and act as responsible members of their global and local communities.”

In the words of ASUW President and Task Force Member Cullen White, “the role of the university should be to offer as many pathways as possible for global engagement and to reach the greatest number of students in this effort.”

How should we promote and structure global engagement at the University of Washington? How should we recognize and reward students as global learners?

Institutions of higher education adopt diverse strategies to globalize the undergraduate experience. For example, Duke University’s new public/private partnership (DukeEngage) supports student learning in civic engagement projects, locally and globally. The University of Minnesota and the University of Kansas provide academic recognition (in detailed transcripts and certificate programs) for students engaged in global learning.

We recommend adopting a multi-faceted strategy for global citizenship education appropriate to UW’s global expertise, and institutional strengths.
UW Strengths

The University of Washington is uniquely positioned to provide global learning opportunities to all undergraduates.

Languages. The UW offers students access to over 70 different languages vital to global learning and engagement. Our university is nationally recognized as a leader in global language instruction.

Sustainable Development. UW’s unique and emerging programs in global health, the environment, and poverty studies cross disciplinary lines and connect students to the research expertise of our faculty. As students ponder the global effects of climate change and why bees are not returning to their hives, the experts are local.

Global Trade. Our location in a “trading state,” with both hi-tech, and agricultural exports to the global economy, and a growing identity as a sustainable region offer rich experiences for student learning---as interns at the World Affairs Council, translators at Microsoft, biologists at Hood Canal, researchers at the Nordic Heritage Museum, and legislative assistants in Olympia.

Infrastructure and Partnerships. The UW Rome Center provides student and faculty housing, classrooms, and computer access in a global learning environment. Students engage with UW faculty, across multiple disciplines, in small, intensive themed courses.

The UW’s partnerships with global institutions of higher education extend the learning environment to new sites, providing rich opportunities for faculty-led global coursework and service learning projects from South Africa (Comparative History of Ideas Program, CHID) to Athens (Department of Communication) and Copenhagen (Department of Scandinavian Studies).

And the Office of International Programs and Exchanges works with each individual student to identify specific global learning opportunities anywhere in the world it is safe to study.

What Should Students Know When They Graduate?

Global learning goals (what students should know when they graduate) include: (1) the knowledge of at least one new language and culture; (2) a recognition of interdependence among societies; (3) respect for other places and cultures; and (4) knowledge of critical transnational issues and problems, such as sustainable development.
Ideally, our undergraduates will: understand how one’s cultural background shapes experiences, values, and beliefs about the world and of one’s place in it; acquire some degree of proficiency in a language other than English; be familiar with the world’s geography, nations, peoples, cultures, and governments and their historical contexts; understand global issues in the local perspective afforded by our unique perspective in the Pacific Northwest; understand the interdependencies of ecologies, economics, health, media and politics in societies around the world; understand social categories such as gender, race, class, ethnicity, national identity, religion, sexuality, and disability in comparative perspective; respect people of other places and cultures as agents of knowledge from whom we can learn; and engage in service learning locally or abroad that involves close collaboration with people of diverse background and cultures, resulting in a sense of shared community, responsibility, and accountability for social justice.

Recommendations

Set Expectations for Global Learning

Adopt global learning goals for the UW campus.

Develop measures to assess global student learning and report the findings to the Provost’s Office each year.

Emphasize global learning priorities in admissions materials, websites, application requirements (the essay) and UW publications.

Coordinate a Freshman Convocation, with Deans, Provosts and the President, welcoming all entering students to the campus. Emphasize the importance of global citizenship and the expectations for student engagement in service learning activities. Invite a returning Bonderman Fellow to share their global learning experiences with the members of the entering class at the Freshman Convocation.

Invite faculty to apply for course development funds to develop new courses with global and service learning opportunities for students.

Create New UW Centers for Global Learning

Extend the UW Rome Center idea to other global sites (such as China, Africa, the Middle East and India).
Work with existing partners to expand UW’s global reach. For example, coordinate access to the UW Rome Center for University of Bergen faculty and students, in exchange for UW access to the Nordic Centers in South Africa and China.

Create global service learning opportunities, undergraduate research, and innovative site-specific programs at each new global site.

Globalize the FIGS and TRIGS

Provide global leadership and content to FIGs and TRIGs.

Freshman interest groups (FIGS) and Transfer Interest Groups (TRIGS) are led by peer instructors and engage the majority of entering students around a common curriculum. Organize debates around the theme(s) of the UW Common Book. Recruit peer instructors with global and/or service learning experience.

“G” Courses

Require two “G” Courses.

Similar to the Writing Initiative, or “W” course requirement, require “G” courses for all undergraduates.

Expand the Diversity of Global Learning Opportunities

Create new internships, undergraduate research and service learning opportunities at a greater diversity of global sites.

Offer global learning in unexpected places. Professor Steven Lamy (USC) requires students to conduct interviews with embassy officials in Washington, D.C. to develop an understanding of comparative foreign policy making and cultural values. The UW’s Henry Jackson School of International Studies invites prominent global policy makers to campus to critically review the Task Force reports of graduating seniors.

Support UW global classrooms (KANE 19) to facilitate more interactive teaching, and student engagement across cultures, similar to the UW-University of Iceland Summer Institute Program.

The Global Washington Project’s data base (2007) is a valuable resource for building “hands on” global learning experiences for UW students across Washington State.
Provide Access for Global Learners

Develop institutional resources to support underrepresented students, and those who cannot afford to study abroad.

Work with partners in the community to provide scholarships for students seeking global engagement (for example, the UW SCAN DESIGN Fellowships).

Advise students about global learning opportunities, when access to high demand undergraduate courses (such as Spanish) is a challenge.

Recognize and Reward Global Citizenship Education

Reward global learning, leadership and service by including all activities on co-curricular student transcripts.

Include global education in faculty merit reviews, and support departments and colleges to develop innovative global undergraduate learning opportunities.

Collect annual data from departments, programs and chairs on global education activity.

Develop a certificate program in Global Citizenship.

Honor students for exceptional global citizenship by creating a new award administered by the Office of the Vice Provost of Global Affairs.

Coordinate Global Learning for Students

Coordinate and administer global learning opportunities in a central area of campus. Re-evaluate the separation of offices and units committed to global learning and civic engagement.

Create a central website for students to readily locate global learning opportunities, and connect with faculty mentors.

Establish a Washington State Global Learning Commons

Partner with Washington State colleges and universities to create a Global Learning Commons. Reciprocity agreements between institutions facilitate rich and diverse opportunities for our students. A UW student admitted to the Gonzaga in Florence Program allows a Gonzaga University student to attend UW Professor Godoy’s global service learning program in Guatemala. Seattle University’s sustainable coffee program led by a Chemistry professor attracts a UW student; and a SU student travels with our Architecture Program to Rome.
Conclusion

Global education prepares students for citizenship in a complex and challenging multicultural world. The undergraduate curriculum of tomorrow invites students to be a global citizen, provides multiple pathways, and supports global engagement for every student.

The Global Citizenship Task Force envisions:

“UW students crossing borders, living and working in a global community, and engaging in an experiential project (research, service, or field work) that makes a difference to the students, and those who are the participating partners.”

And the members of the Global Citizenship Task Force are willing to support efforts to implement the ideas and recommendations in this report, and to present our recommendations to the UW leadership team for the benefit of our global learners.
Sources


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