



Shared Futures Global Learning Forum

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

March 19-21, 2009

Globalization, Wealth, and Poverty

Questions:

- How do we define or redefine the idea of community vis-à-vis globalization? How do conceptions of individualism vs. state fit into this?
- Given that we are on the verge of redefining socially what the word “liberal” means, and thus what liberal education means, what kinds of things does it take to teach such broad topics as globalization, wealth, and poverty (especially given that “liberal” means very different things in different parts of the world).

Big Ideas:

- History and globalization in historical context can be used as an example of how disciplines should borrow from each other.
- Given the breadth of the topic, there is concern over students’ feelings of impotence in the face of action – they are cynical.
- Within the context of the topic, there is an opportunity to create and connect knowledge and learning that can result in habits learning and engagement in social action.
- Students must have knowledge across disciplines to answer the big questions surrounding wealth and poverty, and often struggle with a half-empty mindset.
- Institutions work together to create wealth and poverty – it is a “structural, systemic” issue and should be taught as such.
- Need an “intellectual shock” campaign to broaden global learning:
 - Get students and faculty “out there” into the community.
 - Bring the community to campus
 - Reveal that the campus itself and the community around it is in fact an “out there” all its own, and needs to be examined.
- Things that we want students to learn/develop include the following:
 - Empathetic understanding of the world and their place in it
 - Dependency vs. modernization theories; the causes of wealth and poverty.
 - An ability to engage contrary viewpoints
 - An ability to analyze and contextualize empirical data relating to globalization.
- Ways that we believe some of these can be achieved include:
 - Short-term study abroad
 - Distance learning
 - Debates, advocacy, moot court, etc.
 - Study of media, video, use of technology, etc. across borders
 - Simulation exercises and experiential learning
- Could integrate the current economic conditions into discussions about globalization, wealth, and poverty in the classroom. It is happening every day, is part of the students’ lives, and affects their decisions in real ways.

Faculty/Institutional Development:

- Compiled best practices include: hands-on learning, collaborative teaching and learning, student initiated projects, creative use of technology, tangible and public opportunities to understand where knowledge can be practiced, having the cocurricular embedded within the curriculum.