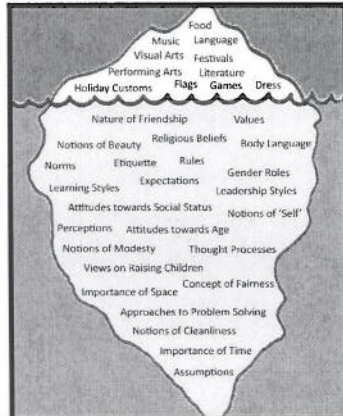


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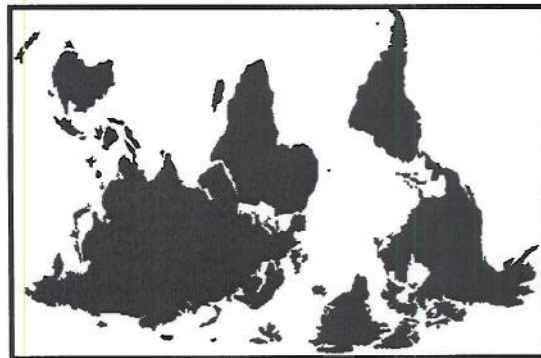
Round Table Discussion: Integrating Community-Based Learning into Intercultural Field Placements

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Our goal is to develop student teachers' capacity to explore below the surface of the cultural iceberg ...



... to do this, they must learn to examine the world from others' perspectives, gaining new insights into teaching, schools, families, communities, and life in this world.



Assertions on which Global Gateway Programs are Based

- ▶ Mere placement of student teachers in international or intercultural contexts does not ensure that meaningful learning and growth will occur.
- ▶ Pre-placement preparatory requirements prepare students for the cultural characteristics and educational practices in their placement sites, and familiarize them with the iceberg analogy of culture. Rich discussions should explore notions of making assumptions about and objectifying cultures, intercultural communication, intercultural sensitivity, and global citizenship.
- ▶ Structured on-site requirements, coupled with structured reflections, must be built in, necessitating that student teachers step beyond their host schools to participate in the surrounding community, interact with diverse community members, engage in service learning, and explore below the surface of the cultural iceberg to understand the values, beliefs, attitudes, and assumptions that shape and define others' world views.
- ▶ Well-planned experiences have the potential to launch emerging educators on a trajectory of powerful transformation that informs their teaching practice, interpersonal relations, and world view for years to come.
- ▶ *You cannot teach what you do not know; you cannot lead where you do not go ...* if teachers are to make the world accessible and meaningful to their pupils, they must gain first-hand experience themselves in crossing cultures; immersing themselves into new ways of thinking, doing, and being; and developing the perspective consciousness that is one of the defining characteristics of a world-minded educator.
- ▶ We are limiting our future educators, and the children in their classrooms, by continuing to promote student teaching as something that happens only within a given school, with a classroom teacher and university supervisor having the greatest (or only) influence on what the novice gains from the experience. We must expand our thinking about student teaching as an opportunity for immersion into the local community and culture.

Examples of Structured Assignments and Reflections Used in Global Gateway Programs

- ◆ First 48 Hours Report – capturing those powerful initial impressions.
- ◆ Influence of cultural values on classroom practice and community involvement: Structured assignments require student teachers to delve below the surface of the cultural iceberg to identify and seek to understand the values operating in their placement communities. In addition to describing specific values, they also must provide examples that cut across age groups and settings, and applications of the insights they gained to their subsequent professional, personal, and social actions.
- ◆ The service learning project must: adhere to the “3 R’s” of service learning (realistic, reflective, reciprocal exchange); be separate from the host school’s academic or extracurricular program; require a structured write-up; involve direct interaction with community people; and give the student teacher an opportunity to learn more about the community served by his or her school, thus enhancing classroom instruction, cultural learning, and further local involvement. Documented outcomes include:
 - ▶ help student teachers build community connections and a sense of “belonging”
 - ▶ enhance awareness of own personal and professional strengths and weaknesses
 - ▶ inform classroom practice
 - ▶ foster greater understanding of and appreciation for the nature of other people’s lives
 - ▶ provide opportunity to learn things that cannot be learned in classrooms
 - ▶ contribute to a broader world view
- ◆ Structured essays on additional topics, including:
 - ▶ global/international topic or issue
 - ▶ current national issues headlining the news
 - ▶ assumptions challenged
 - ▶ comparative education
 - ▶ historical and cultural site visitations
 - ▶ changing perceptions of the U.S. and student teachers’ “home” culture
 - ▶ influential host nation citizens and perspectives held by members of the host community
 - ▶ transnational characteristics of youth culture

Selected Global Gateway References

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Stachowski, L.L., Bodle, A., & Morrin, M. (2008). Service learning in overseas and Navajo Reservation communities: Student teachers’ powerful experiences build community connections, broaden worldview, and inform classroom practice. *International Education*, 38(1), 40-65.

Credits: Cultural Iceberg: opengecko.com; World from Another Perspective: PaulChrisJones.com