Client-based International Projects to Promote Student Engagement and Experiential Learning
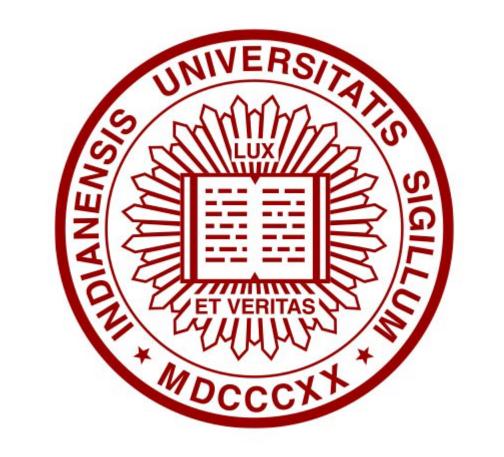
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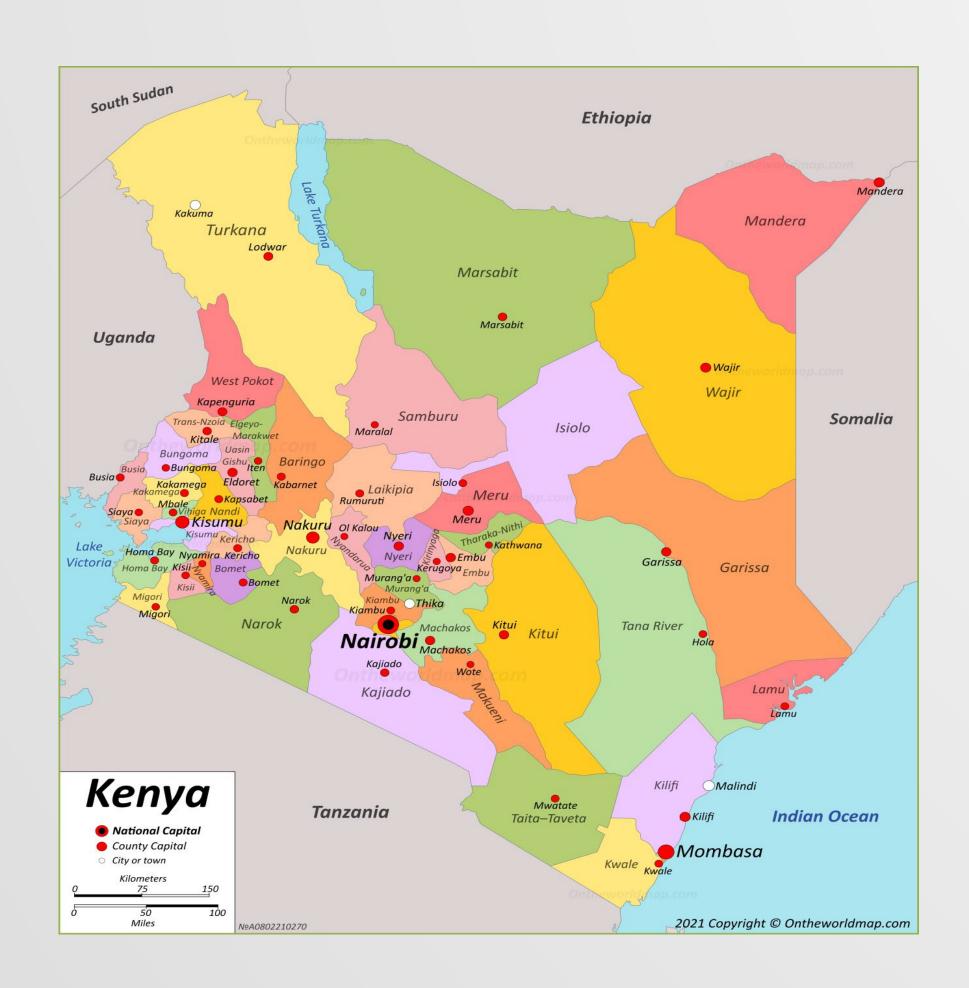**Department of Applied Health Science, Indiana University Bloomington**

Abstract

Institutes of higher education have increased pressure to provide students with experiential educational experiences to promote improved disciplinary knowledge and career readiness. Client-based Projects are one model where students work directly with an organization to solve a real-world problem (Heriot et., 2007). Client-based International Programs at Indiana University enlisted four different faculty members and courses (n=173 students).

H333 Strategies for Effective Peer education and Advocacy: trains peer health and wellness educators to conduct health promotion programming on a Midwestern Campus.

Background

- People living in poverty, limited access to resources
- Conservative nature of the county
- Very limited access to education (3rd grade)

Materials and Methods

School of CLIP Faculty	Course Name	Country of CLIP Partner	Project Overview
College of Arts and Sciences	Perceptions of the Holocaust	United States	Students gathered and analyzed social media data on perceptions of the Holocaust around the world
School of Public and Environmental Affairs	Financial and Cost Benefit Analysis	Guatemala	Students analyzed financial data and made recommendations on how to best use funds and increase revenue
School of Public Health	Strategies for Effective Peer Education and Advocacy	Kenya	Students developed lesson plans on sexual and reproductive health
College of Arts and Sciences	Business Anthropology	Mexico	Students used ethnographic research methods to understand organizational culture and write recommendations for improvement

- Teen girls: Limited to no formal sexual and reproductive health education, reduce stigma
- Community Activists: Passionate, need correct information, resource guide
- Healthcare Providers: Knowledge existed, focus on implicit bias, trauma-informed care
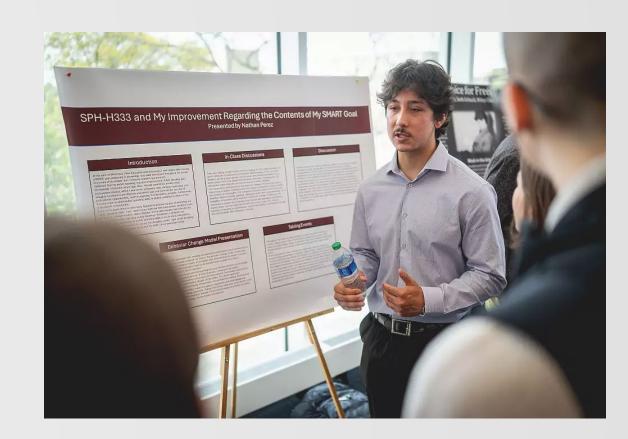- 21 lesson plans in total

Results

Across the 4 courses n=61 students completed the post survey (56% response rate)

- (88.5%) agreed/strongly agreed that it was a valuable learning experience specifically gained skills in working collaboratively in diverse, cross-cultural teams.
  "getting real world data rather than made up data gave me a better idea of how course learning can be used in a future career."
  "real world application of participating in a project like this is extremely rewarding. It takes learning from being hypothetical to being realistic, which is a unique experience."
  "gave me new perspective on the workforce and the processes that are used in the real world and another explained that they "develop[ed] skills related to my field of study."
- *"allowed me to be more confident in presenting my work to people who are higher up*
- *"gained comfort in their public speaking skills."*

Conclusion

- Communication is a challenge for project specifically cross culturally.

- Difficult to work on a team where they had to navigate different work styles, schedules, levels of motivation, and quality of work.

- Hard to "take into consideration the cultural and economic differences at hand" and recognized that those differences impacted their project results.

Lessons Learned

- Faculty must be transparent about why they are including a CLIP, what students will learn, and what challenges they will face (Transparency in Learning and Teaching (TILT)) framework.
- Encourage faculty to remain flexible as they work with students to complete the project, may offer a better learning experience.
- Include a global learning outcome into your course.

Acknowledgments