



# Experiential Global Health Education for the Health Professions: Lessons Learned from Experience-Based Learning for Students, Residents and Healthcare and Population Health Professionals

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## Experiential Education/Learning Perspectives

- “For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them” - Aristotle
- “Education is lifelong through: auditory (instruction), visual (observation), and kinesthetic (hands-on activities, learning modalities)” - John Dewey
- “Behavior is a function of a person in their environment” - Kurt Lewin
- “Learner creates knowledge through direct experience that is meaningful to the student with guided reflection and analysis” - David Kolb
- Building learning experiences, discussing experiences via problem-based learning, case studies changes teacher’s role as a facilitator and mentor

## Experience-Based Learning

- Goal: Involves something personally significant or meaningful to the students
- Students are personally engaged with reflective thought and opportunities to write or discuss their experiences throughout the process
- The whole person is involved, meaning not just their intellect but also their senses, their feelings and their personalities and students are recognized for prior learning they bring into the process
- Teachers establish a sense of trust, respect, openness, and concern for the well-being of the students

## Selected Competencies - Medical Students<sup>2</sup>

1. **Assess the health status of populations** using available data (e.g., public health surveillance data, vital statistics, registries, surveys, electronic health records and health plan claims data).
2. **Discuss the role of socioeconomic, environmental, cultural, and other population-level determinants of health** on the health status and health care of individuals and populations.
3. **Appraise the quality of the evidence of peer reviewed medical and public health literature** and its implications at patient- and population- levels.
4. **Apply primary and secondary prevention strategies** that improve the health of individuals and populations.
5. **Identify community assets and resources** to improve the health of individuals and populations.

## Selected Competencies - Public Health (MPH) Students<sup>2</sup>

- Domain 1 – Capacity Strengthening**
  - Identify program sustainability methods
- Domain 2 – Collaborating and Partnering**
  - Build trust in partnerships
- Domain 3 – Ethical Reasoning and Professional Practice**
  - Analyze ethical and professional issues and protect human rights
- Domain 4 – Health Equity and Social Justice**
  - Implement strategies to engage marginalized and vulnerable populations
- Domain 5 – Program Management**
  - Develop implementation strategies for “scaling up” . . .
- Domain 6 – Socio-Cultural and Political Awareness**
  - Describe roles and relationships of key entities . . .
- Domain 7 – Strategic Analysis**
  - Conduct a situation analysis . . . cultural, economic, health contexts

## Global Health is Public Health – Key Points<sup>4</sup>

- Sensitive to contextual and cultural issues
- Global and public health concerns such as climate changes, zoonotic diseases
- Multilevel systems-based interventions – public/private
- Comprehensive financing and structuring of health policies and services
- Commitment to health as a basic right, not a privilege

## Global Health Experiential Learning: Key Learning Opportunities

- Practice, application of classroom or clinical learning
- Program planning and leadership skills
- Working with diverse populations, cultures, systems, and languages
- Sustainability planning
- Reflection opportunities – journal, etc.
- Communication – presentations oral and written
  - Professional presentations, written reports, publications
- Builds student self-efficacy

## Key Components of a Global Health Experiential Learning Initiative<sup>5</sup>

- Preparation**
  - Developing, supporting, and sustaining **reciprocal partnerships and exchanges** with in-country organizations and communities
  - **Funding** for students/professionals
  - **Preparation meetings** which often include onsite or e meetings with in-country individuals
  - Developing community-based and/or clinical **projects** based on community and/or clinical **needs assessments**
  - **Language/communication** issues, training as needed
  - Establishing **evaluation criteria and continuous assessments**
  - Consideration of **ethical** issues and standards
  - **Pre-experience** education/research and learning
  - **Linking experience to instruction**, clinical learning, competencies
  - **Establishing timeframe** – flexible, specific timeframe, in-country considerations
  - **Planning for training in-country personnel**
  - **Planning for in-country personnel to come to US** for reciprocal training in university/healthcare settings
  - **Logistics planning** – MOUs, visas, immunizations, flights, housing, etc.

## In-Country Experience

- Logistics and contingencies
- Ongoing communication, de-briefing, and reporting
- Documenting experiences and sharing documentation (photos, stories, etc.)
- Health infused in cultural and social events

## Post Global Health Experience, Sustainability

- Student journal, paper, presentations sharing lessons learned and applications (knowledge, attitudes, cultural issues, skills, etc.) in U.S.
- Internal and external communication and marketing
- Education/training of next group of students or professionals who will continue the work
- Preparing for reciprocal students/professionals from the host country
- Fundraising as needed

## Examples from Global Health Experiential Learning Programs

### Jeff HEALTH (Helping East Africans Link to Health)

Thomas Jefferson University Medical, Public Health and Allied Health students spend 4-8 weeks in Rwanda involved in community health assessments, education, and infrastructure development initiatives.



### Jeff HEALTH Rwanda Medical Exchange Program

University of Rwanda Medical Students spend 7 weeks at Jefferson attending Family Medicine, Pediatrics and Public Health clinical and didactic programs and participate in community health initiatives in Philadelphia



### Jeff HEALTH Impact – to date

- 7 Years - 80 participating Jefferson students; 21 Rwandan students
- Disciplines: Medicine, Nursing, Public Health, Physical Therapy, Occupation Therapy, Pharmacy
- Medical Specialties: FM, EM, IM, General Surgery, OB/GYN, Anesthesia, ENT, Urology, Dermatology
- Career Paths: founder of non-profit (PURE), PIH (Rwanda), Global Health Faculty Development Fellowships (EM, FM)
- Fundraising: \$60,000 in travel grants, \$30,000 in foundation grants
- Numerous student research and professional presentations

### Christiana Care Health System's Global Health Resident Program<sup>6</sup>

- 2012 resident survey n=97
  - 82% felt it was important to have the option of a global health track
  - 72% were interested in international elective
  - 19% were strongly interested in global health track
- Builds on core strengths of primary care

### Why is global health important in residency?

- 2007 ACGME Pediatrics residency survey:
  - 52% offered a GH elective
  - 47% offered a GH curriculum,
  - 6% had an official GH track
- Trains residents to provide efficient quality care
- Builds on core strengths of primary care

### Residents who participated in global health electives are more likely to:

- Practice primary care
- Serve underserved communities
- Pursue careers in public health
- Participate in community service
- Work overseas

### Next Steps for Global Health Residency Initiative

- Demonstrate value to health system and community
- Develop existing & new institutional partnerships
- Mentor learners for further training: public health fellowship, Peace Corps, work experience
- Sustain core of educators across disciplines

### Transforming Medical Trips into a Significant Learning Opportunity in Global Health

#### Background<sup>7</sup>

Medical students from Florida International University’s (FIU), College of Medicine, have participated in medical trips to Haiti since 2010 under the auspices of International Health Connection, a non-profit organization created by former faculty and students. The trips evolved into a component of comprehensive training of future physicians.

#### International Health Connection:

- There have been 9 trips to Haiti with 38 students and 2 public health trips to Peru.
- Mobile clinics are set up in orphanages, schools, buildings and existing clinics **1,400 patients have been treated with more than 2,000 encounters**



## Key Elements of Success

### Academic

- Develop learning objectives to meet core MED/GH competencies
- Integrate in their curriculum: PH Internships, enhance clinical skills, research and scholarly opportunities
- Include competencies in social justice, health equity, cultural competency
- Follow-up of cases, additional research, scholarly publications and presentations
- Develop evaluation tools and make programmatic changes based on feedback

### Operations, Logistics

- Assigning responsibilities from the beginning:
  - Provide training prior to the trip:
    - Diagnosis and treatment of common health conditions
    - Local language
    - Pharmacy
  - Collect feedback and evaluate



### Areas for Improvement

- Translators: Barriers to language is a major obstacle
- Smooth exchange between examination/pharmacy
- Resources and timing challenges with a large group
- Daily debriefing after work

## Costs and Benefits: An Ethical Analysis for Short-Term Global Health Field Study Programs<sup>7</sup>

- Students who participate in global health internships are more likely to:
  - Develop careers in the public health sector
  - Work with ethnic minorities and underserved populations
  - Enter into primary care fields
  - Report improvements in self-reflection, critical thinking, and cultural awareness

### Moral Obligation of Global Health Internship Programs

- What is benefit-sharing: A mechanism to counter exploitation
- Trust/mistrust comes from history of clinical trial research in developing countries
- Our obligation:
  - Ensuring that all institutions and individuals benefit from collaboration

### 2010 Working Group on Ethics Guidelines for Global Health Training (WEIGHT)

- Used by several sending universities as framework for reflection and improvement
- Clarify goals, expectations, and responsibilities through explicit agreements and periodic review
- Develop, implement, regularly update, and improve formal training for trainees and mentors, both local and foreign
- Consider local needs and priorities, reciprocity, and sustainability of programs

### Planning Ethical Internships

- Length of Student Stay, student preparation, logistics, project scope, student skill level, oversight, collaboration between organizations, evaluation

### Online Benefit-Sharing Assessment Tool addresses length of stay, signed MOUs, accommodations, scope of work, cultural competency training

#### Goals of Online Benefit-Sharing Assessment Tool:

- Provide practical guidance for internship program planners
- Create measures/indicators of internship programs and their contribution to benefit-sharing
- Encourage awareness, accountability, self-assessment, student assessment and evaluation

### Standards and Best Practices: Global Health Experiences for Pre-Health Students<sup>8,9,10</sup>

- Large growth in pre-health, pre-med undergrad students seeking global health experiences
- Need for explicit program structure, partnerships, and communication to support these students
- Academic, NGO, and professional organizations all play a role in planning and organizing these experiences
- Need for the adherence to ethical standards of practice
- Increasing number of tools and resources available

### Why pre-health students go abroad?

- To learn about new or different cultures
- To gain a sense of confidence
- To grow in resilience, adaptability, flexibility
- To gain self awareness
- To test one’s comfort zone
- To gain language skills
- To have new and different experiences that make them competitive for health profession programs

## Global Ambassadors for Patient Safety (GAPS) – Application Questions

- Are you a pre-health or pre-clinical student who wants to experience global health first-hand?
- Are you planning to travel abroad to gain that experience?
- Did you know that there are limitations in what you can and cannot do when you are abroad?
- Did you realize you could put your future as a health professional at risk if you are not careful?
- Are you a learner and not solely a doer?
- Become a global ambassador for patient safety today and take the GAPS oath!

## Standards of Good Practice for Education Abroad

1. **Mission:** The organization has a formally-adopted mission statement
2. **Student Learning and Development:** Organization has educational objectives that foster student learning and development
3. **Academic Framework:** The organization maintains clearly stated and publicly available policies on academic matters
4. **Student Preparation for the Learning Environment Abroad:** The organization has processes in place to assess student needs, provides advising and orientation support
5. **Student Selection and Code of Conduct:** Commitment to fair policies regarding student selection and code of conduct
6. **Policies and Procedures:** The organization has in place policies and procedures that govern its education abroad programs
7. **Organizational and Program Resources:** The organization provides adequate financial and personnel resources
8. **Health, Safety, Security and Risk Management:** The organization assures attention to health, safety, and security of its students and faculty
9. **Ethics and Integrity:** The organization educates its employees in and adheres to its code of ethics

## Standards of Good Practice for Pre-Health Programs

The Forum on Education Abroad is the association recognized by the U.S. Department of Justice and the Federal Trade Commission as the Standards Development Organization (SDO) for the field of education abroad.

## Summary Take Away Messages

- Experiential education must be considered in a global, ethical and systematic context
- Global Health experiential education requires strategic and diligent planning and assessment
- Global health experiential education initiatives should be reciprocal to include training and capacity building of in-country individuals
- Students and professional participants in both countries should be the drivers of the experiential learning project(s)
- Global health education should meet standards of good practice
- Reminder: Global health experiential learning can also be done locally – Local Health can also be Global



Local Health is Global Health  
Philadelphia children in front of one of its over 3000 murals

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