



– LiveLearning’s Educator Workshop –
**International Service-Learning:
Learning through Experience**
The Dominican Republic
June 21-29, 2008

Lead Facilitator: Carrie Williams Howe
Expedition Leader/co-Facilitator: Alex Graham

Welcome! We are excited that you have joined us in this learning adventure. We look forward to getting to know you as we collectively explore best practices in planning and implementing international partnerships for service, learning, and social transformation. We are sharing all of our plans with you in the spirit of open, collaborative learning. Please see this syllabus as a guide and a set of goals, but not a strict prescription for our trip; we will adjust as need be in a flexible, responsive, and interactive manner.

Learning Goals of the trip:

- To teach service-learning through the use of best practices, workshops, facilitated and personal reflection, and intercultural activities and discussion.
- To generate excitement about and understanding of service-learning and social tourism amongst teachers and other leaders in the educational community.
- To support – financially, morally, and with service and understanding – local organizations and communities that are engaged in transformational change.
- To open the minds of participants and hosts alike and create understanding between cultures.

Learning Objectives. By the end of this experience, participants will be able to:

- Explain to other educators and students the key components of an effective service-learning experience, conveying the considerations that must be taken into account in an intensive or international setting;
- Apply their understanding of the key steps in implementing an intensive service-learning experience (preparation, action, reflection, and evaluation) to a situation in their own professional realm;
- Feel confidence in their ability to navigate community partnerships for service-learning, with a focus on reciprocity, mutuality, and equity.
- Understand the implications of cross-cultural service-learning for participants and communities in which participants work; and have a grasp of approaches to working with students around these questions and topics;
- Identify ideas, inspiration, and next steps toward implementing service-learning at their institution or with their organization.

Course Structure

This course is designed with a “train the trainer” approach. We believe that the best way to learn how to teach or facilitate in a service-learning context is to have experienced it for yourself. As such, this course is housed within a service-learning experience. You will learn ABOUT service-learning while you are participating IN service-learning. Pre-trip readings and writing will be combined with during-trip seminars, writing, and exercises and post-trip reflective writing. This requires a level of reflective engagement from participants that will, at times, feel demanding, yet will achieve the greatest level of understanding as theory and application will be combined.

Why Service-Learning?

Service-learning has become a buzzword in recent years at all educational levels, in large part for the simple reason that it provides a highly impactful educational and personal growth experience. Service-learning draws together learning and service objectives, with the goal that the activity change both the recipient and provider. This occurs when the service is combined with structured opportunities to link the task to self-reflection, self-discovery, connection with other cultures and people, and the acquisition and comprehension of skills, value and knowledge.

Service-learning is a powerful tool for developing cultural understanding and a sense of self, and, we believe, plays an important role in developing leadership and change-making skills.

Why the Dominican Republic?

The Dominican Republic shares the large island of Hispaniola with Haiti, and is often misunderstood by American tourists to be little more than a tropical beach destination. The island has a beautiful and varied topography, with peaks over 10,000 feet high, and a rich and varied cultural heritage that remains strong today. Since the death of its military dictator over 40 years ago, the country has moved steadily towards representative democracy, and is politically stable today. Despite increasing wealth and aid, it is seeing a rapid increase in corruption and in the gap between rich and poor.

The Dominican Republic is ideal for a service-learning trip for many reasons: it has a well-developed infrastructure which will allow us to travel safely and comfortably in the country’s rugged interior; its people have a strong cultural heritage, and are welcoming and open; there are many reliable and reputable sustainable development organizations based there with whom we can partner. Finally, it is proximal to the United States, insuring cost effective and easy travel.

About Rio Limpio and our Community Partners:

Rio Limpio is a rural community of about 300 families that sits in the mountains near the Haitian border. This small town is primarily an agrarian community; the local residents out to their farms each day. Ecologically, the area is important as it is in the Artibonito Watershed, a large area that provides water for drinking, irrigation and power to about 90% of Haiti. Slash and burn agriculture are a great threat to the stability and cleanliness of this watershed. For almost 25 years, this town has been home to a school that teaches young men and women organic and biodynamic farming techniques. This non-profit school is called CREAR.

It's not an understatement to say that CREAR was the backbone of the community until its government funding was slashed three years ago. Our expedition's goal will be to help them as we can towards the goal of re-opening their doors and being operational in a sustainable manner. Helping to get CREAR going again will provide immeasurable benefit and will bind us closely with this community.

Please note: if you are interested in organizing a service-learning expedition or participating in other expeditions to Rio Limpio and CREAR, we ask that you please work through LiveLearning to do so. The community's resources for hosting groups is limited and requires management, and working through LiveLearning respects the large investment of resources required for identifying and developing this partnership.

About LiveLearning:

The LiveLearning Program is a not-for-profit organization whose mission is to promote positive social change by engaging learners of all ages in educational expeditions in partnership with international community-building initiatives. Our goal is to inspire both travelers and hosts alike to become responsible citizens and leaders, at home and abroad.

In addition to our educator courses, LiveLearning creates expeditions for two populations: student groups and adults/families who have an interest in cultural exchange, learning, and service. Please refer to www.livelearning.org for more information.

About the Facilitators:

Carrie Williams Howe is the Associate Director of Community-University Partnerships and Service-Learning at the University of Vermont. She brings a wealth of experience in training faculty and students around service-learning pedagogy and best practices. She has a Masters of Education in Higher Education and Student Affairs from the University of Vermont, and has been working in service and service-learning settings for more than 5 years. Carrie has worked with many faculty members at UVM in designing international and intensive service-learning experiences, and for two years advised an Alternative Spring Break program at UVM. She has done research on the cross-cultural aspects of service-learning, and its role in creating a socially-just community. Prior to graduate school, Carrie worked at a nonprofit organization in Washington, DC. She is a graduate of Middlebury College. This is Carrie's second year coordinating and facilitating the academic component of this program.

Alex Graham is the Executive Director of The LiveLearning Program. Alex has a degree in English Literature from Harvard University and an MBA from UCLA, which included graduate study at Universidad Pontificia la Católica, in Chile. Until leaving to join LiveLearning, he was the Director of the Hull Crest School, an experiential learning, travel-based program, in which students earn the funds to support two international trips each year.

Alex has traveled internationally and domestically throughout his life, including teaching on school ships and other sail training vessels around the world. He is a certified Emergency Medical Technician (EMT-B) and Lifeguard. This is Alex's second year leading this expedition.

REQUIRED MATERIALS (please bring with you):

1. Please purchase a copy of **Learning through Serving: a Student Guidebook for Service-Learning across the Disciplines**. (2005). Sterling, VA: Stylus.
2. A Course Packet with readings specific to international service-learning will be provided by LiveLearning.

PREPARATION:

BY APRIL 15	Submit program application.
BY MAY 1	Program Participants Selected & Notified.
BY MAY 23	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SUBMIT: Short introductions of each participant to the rest of the group (through e-mail) 2. READ: Learning through Serving Chapter 1 – “What is Service-Learning?”
BY MAY 30	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. READ: Albert, G. “Intensive Service-Learning Experiences” and Grusky, S. “International Service-Learning: A Critical Guide from an Impassioned Advocate” (readings packet) 2. SUBMIT: “KWL” Reflection (2pgs): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. K: What do you KNOW about service-learning; about international service-learning? b. W: What do you WANT TO KNOW about (international) service-learning? What made you come on this trip? c. L: What do you expect that you’ll LEARN on this trip? What do you hope you will know by the time you return?
BY JUNE 6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. READ: Readings/Research on Dominican Republic and specific agency/program we will be working with (to be provided) 2. SUBMIT: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Personal Preparedness Reflection (1-2 pages): In what ways do you feel prepared and ready for this trip? What skills and knowledge will you contribute? What elements of the trip are concerns, worries, or unknowns for you? How will you address/conquer those unknowns either before or during the trip?
Before you Arrive:	<p>REVIEW the following readings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Chapters from Learning Through Serving: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Becoming Community (Chapter 3) b. Creating Cultural Connections (Chapter 5) 2. Chisholm, L. – “Building Partnerships for International Service-Learning” (readings packet)

EXPEDITION ITINERARY:

Day 1 Saturday, June 21 st	Participants arrive in City of Puerto Plata, Dominican Republic. We will gather in the late afternoon for a welcome meeting, a dinner, conversation, and chance to explore the city. We'll do introductions and an overview of the trip, and we'll discuss expectations we have for each other and the overall experience.
Day 2 Sunday, June 22 nd	We will travel by bus to Rio Limpio (5 hours). There, we will have lunch then spend the afternoon getting to know the town and getting settled. We'll likely get a tour of CREAR and learn more about our partnership with this organization and community.
Day 3-6 Monday, June 23 rd – Thursday, June 26 th	We'll spend mornings working at CREAR on various agricultural projects with the staff. In the afternoons and evenings we'll get together for seminar meetings to discuss best practices and theories related to international service-learning. We'll also spend time reflecting on our learning in the context of our experiences in the same way that we would foster student reflection. There will also be time during our days in Rio Limpio for spending time with members of the community, enjoying recreation and performances, and baseball.
Day 7 Friday, June 27 th	Goodbyes happen early and we leave Rio Limpio; our primary destination will be the large International Market at the Haitian border town of Dajabon (see reading). Later that day we continue traveling to Cabarete, arriving for dinner.
Day 8 Saturday, June 28 th	We'll spend the day in Cabarete enjoying the beachside activities. There may also be time for a short trip to nearby attractions or meetings with local nonprofit groups. We'll do our final reflective discussions with the group on this day.
Day 9 Sunday, June 29 th	Participants depart from Puerta Plata.

POST-TRIP: Participant Evaluation of facilitators, location, and learning will be provided to LiveLearning; including: How does this experience contribute to your professional development; did it meet expectations; what do you anticipate will be your next steps in using this knowledge?

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

E-mail: info@livelearning.org; call: Toll Free (866) 293.5765, or locally (802) 735.1278.

- We strongly encourage participants to purchase **travel cancellation insurance** to cover unforeseen cancellations or delays.
- The LiveLearning Program reserves the right to cancel expeditions at any time or make changes to the itinerary and staffing.

FOR PARTICIPANTS SEEKING ACADEMIC CREDIT:

If you are seeking academic credit, please let us know of your interest. We have offered credit in the past but no participant has ever elected to earn it. Therefore we will only register this expedition as a for-credit course if requested to do so by a registered participant.

The requirements for credit will be:

FOR TWO CREDITS (% of grade for each component is noted):

- Complete pre-trip readings and written assignments (30 %)
- Participate in trip seminars and exercises (30 %)
- Complete during-trip journal assignments (30%)
- Provide post-trip evaluation feedback (10%)

FOR THREE CREDITS (% of grade for each component is noted):

- Complete pre-trip readings and written assignments (10 %)
- Participate in trip seminars and exercises (20 %)
- Complete during-trip journal assignments (20%)
- Provide post-trip evaluation feedback (10%)
- Complete Critical Analysis Paper (40%)

Additional Requirement: Final Critical Analysis Paper (8-10 pages)

This paper should follow the DEAL Model of reflection (Describe, Explore, and Articulate a Learning). In 8-10 pages, describe the most meaningful aspects of this experience, explore what the experience means to you in a professional and personal sense, and articulate what you have learned that you will carry forward from this point. This essay should represent a critical analysis of your experience, incorporating citations from the reading and descriptions of specific ideas for application. It should explore what this professional development opportunity has added to your “toolbox” as an educator, and serve as a personal exploration of how you will apply this learning in current and future endeavors.

Spanish Language Skills: We highly encourage all participants to pursue and refine Spanish Language skills before embarking on the trip. While there will be translators and Spanish speakers among the group, even the most basic level of competency with the language will allow you to learn and interact more readily with the community.

Language classes are often offered through local colleges, language schools and on-line. Additionally, many communities have free language practice groups, or you can start your own.