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International Service Learning: An Overview

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Introduction. Healthcare disciplines including nursing, public health, occupational therapy, and physical therapy (PT) now recognize global health participation and education as a necessary component of healthcare education.

Increasingly, students applying to and choosing which PT program to attend must now consider the design, purpose, benefits, and potential drawbacks of such a program in their education.

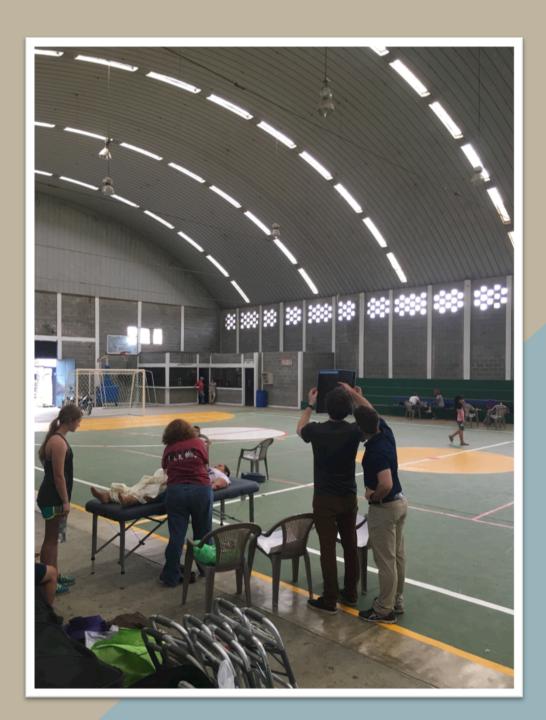
This report seeks to provide a basic overview of International Service Learning (ISL), its benefits, potential concerns, and a brief comparison of the University of Puget Sound's (UPS) pilot ISL program to the optimal model of an ISL in order to define possible areas of improvement.





<u>**Results.</u>** Pechak and Thompson recommend 7</u> components to create a program with positive outcomes (Table 1).¹

Benefits include increased confidence, improved communication skills, expanded world view, increased cultural competence, improved critical thinking, selfempowerment, independence, increased student selfassessment scores, increased experiential learning opportunities, and increased understanding and confidence in professional roles when ISL project includes cooperation with other professions.¹⁻⁶ Ethical considerations that should be taken into account include the power dynamic between the community and those rendering services, the quality of care being provided, sustainability at the community and individual levels, and community need.⁵





International Service Learning: An Overview Kaitlynn McKirgan, SPT; Daniel Murty, SPT; Dr. Holly Roberts, PT, DPT, GCS, NCS

<u>Components of</u> <u>Optimal ISL</u> <u>Program¹</u>	<u>University of Pug</u>
1.Partner that understands the role of the PT	Hearts in Motion (HIM). Operates clin provide care to the local community groups.
2. Community Identified Needs	HIM works with local organizations a needs and priorities to complement a constant presence in the region, er volunteer groups to meet community
3 Explicit Service and learning objectives	 Demonstrate an ability to adapt every evidence-based physical therapy in Discuss healthcare delivery in different of the second of the sec
4. Reflection	Students kept a journal, responding reflection on cultural themes, daily a
5. Preparations	 One hour of medical Spanish instruction for later reference with phrases and Therapy treatment session. Article readings and group discuss cultural sensitivity, cultural competent outlined in the course objectives.
6. Risk Management	 Meeting with UPS director of inter -Code of conduct and behaviora -U.S. Embassy of Guatemala con -CDC information for travelers to -Worldwide caution information -Telephone, laptop and PDA sec -Tips for women travelers How to register for the "Smart" -EIIA International Travel Insuran -Sexual assault response informa -What to do in event of emerger
	 Each member provided with "Trav Trips with HIM" handout. Handout precautions, financial/monetary inf plans, housing information, trip rul travel insurance information. Student physical therapists superv including UPS and HIM staff PT. No insure adequate level of supervision
7. Service Learning Outcome Measure	None. Reisch et al. recommends use

Table 1. Seven components of an optimal international service learning (ISL) project and how the University of Puget Sound pilot ISL fulfilled each component.

et Sound's ISL Design

inics that employ physical therapists to in addition to partnering with volunteer

and the local government to identify the resources already available. HIM has employing the local community and ty needs.

evaluation techniques and plans to provide interventions in an austere environment. erent regions of the world

healthcare disparities in the United States

ity, cultural competence, and cultural

physical therapy practice and the student from a global perspective.

to specific prompts to promote critical activities and experience as a whole.

ruction including quick reference handout nd words likely to be used in Physical

ssion of content to address the topics of etence, and cultural responsiveness

rnational programs to outline: al expectations ntact information to Guatemala through travel.state.gov curity

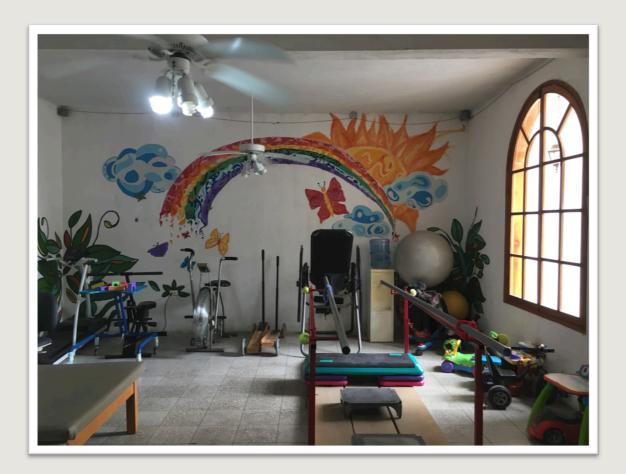
Traveler Enrollment Program". nce Coverage provided by UPS. ation for study abroad participants. ency.

veler's Checklist for Guatemala Mission t outlined packing list/suggestions, safety nformation, vaccination information, arrival iles, emergency contact numbers, and

vised by licensed physical therapists Jumber of students was kept below 6 to on and patient safety.

method outlined by Shinnamon et al.

one or the other.^{1,5} programs. program success.



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en

Discussion. By forming a relationship with HIM, the UPS ISL was able to address the lack of sustainability common to many ISLs. It has been observed that well-designed programs grasp that the relationship between the program and those it serves must be symbiotic, not simply serving

The UPS pilot ISL program met 6/7 components for optimal ISL outlined by Pechak and Thompson. Most notably absent was the use of an outcome measure to evaluate the service learning experience. This should be a tool utilized in future

Recommended improvements to the program include incorporating instruction to local care providers in order to increase the community's self-efficacy, increased preparation in medical Spanish in the months leading up to the ISL program, and use of a outcome measure to evaluate



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