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Exploring Information Literacy Needs Abroad: Librarians and International Service Learning

Jessica Crossfield McIntosh
Otterbein University



A Malawian student explores the outdoors during recess.

1 International Service Learning






“Service learning is a teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities”

- Learn and Serve America National Service Learning Clearinghouse



Otterbein students dance with community school leaders during a group meeting.

Otterbein offers more than 90 service-learning courses in which 1,200 students each year combine academics with community service. The cornerstones of the program include:

-  **Involvement in meaningful service to the community**
-  **Clearly conceptualized connection between course objectives and service activities**
-  **Structured opportunities for students to synthesize and derive new meanings as they relate their experiences to course goals and objectives**
-  **Citizenship contribution for students to identify their capacity to be an involved and active citizen within the community**
-  **Preparing students for service**

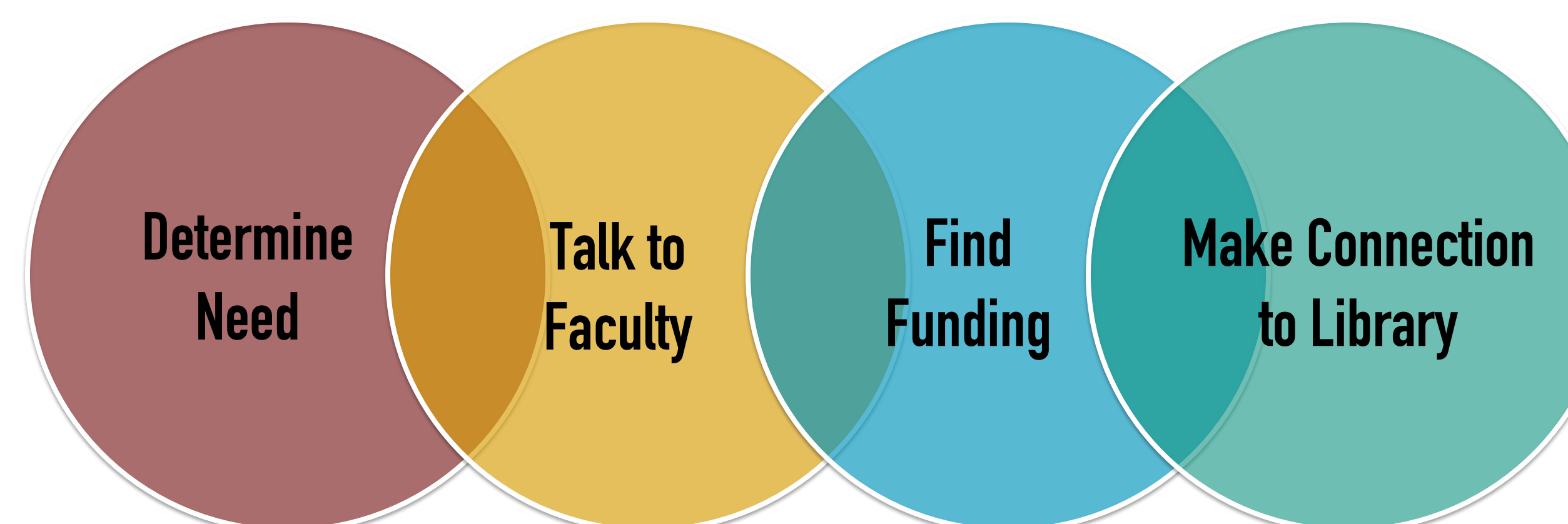
2 Librarians Abroad

Librarians have been involved in serving international students on campus, providing assistance for faculty and students going abroad, and supporting service-learning curriculum via class instruction, LibGuide creation, and research assistance. This project pushed the partnership further and included a librarian on the travel portion of the study abroad experience. This led to positive reflections from both student and faculty.

“We could relate to you but also respect you and know you have a lot more knowledge in the area of travel and intercultural experiences.”

Elizabeth Jackson, Sophomore

3 Starting a Partnership



Above: The class and faculty pose with contractors working on the Cardinal Classroom.



Right: Otterbein student, Corinne Saul, meets with Malawian villagers.

304,467 U.S. students
Studied abroad for academic credit in 2013/14

4 Get Involved!

- Find out what service-learning students need
- Get involved early
- Create relationships
- Be available before and after the travel

Help Abroad:

- ✓ Offer insight and support to observations made abroad
- ✓ Act as documentarian
- ✓ Ask important and relevant questions to spark conversation
- ✓ Pre-trip LibGuide for travel assistance and research

Help at Home:

- ✓ Follow up with questions during travel
- ✓ Act as archivist and collect photos and other artifacts for the faculty, students, and/or course
- ✓ Updated libguide with post-trip additions
- ✓ Assist with course assignments and reflections

5 References

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