

Global Studies Initiative in Social Sciences Courses

Parkland College, AY 2018–2019



Aims of Global Studies Initiative: Recall that the goals for participating in the Global Studies Initiative course redesign project are: To promote the addition to Parkland’s social science courses of instructional materials on global issues with a focus on the European Union, Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia. Further, to provide social science faculty with instructional design tools and aid them with the implementation of new course materials in the classroom.

To achieve the goals of the Global Studies Initiative and finish your participation in this project, please fill out the form below on the course you taught in the Spring semester of 2019, and upload it to the shared folder on Parkland’s One Drive at the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/y4qncb6>

Global Studies Faculty Project Final Report for Term 2

Faculty Name: Benjamin J. Skousen

Course Taught (course name, section number, term): ANT 101, Introduction to Anthropology, Section 002, Spring 2019

Format of Course (face to face, online, hybrid): face to face

A. Goal(s) for Course.

Please describe here the changes that you made to your class objectives to increase global studies content and learning about global issues. Keeping this in mind, please answer the following:

1. Please describe here each of your new goal(s) or objectives for the course. These can be based on the Teaching Goals Inventory we covered in EDU 931, and/or related to Parkland College’s General Education Goals.

The goals for this course are as follows (taken directly from the syllabus):

Students who take this course will:

- Become familiar with the four subfields of anthropology.
- Become familiar with the primary methods used in each subfield and learn how to apply them.
- Learn about key anthropological concepts, including positionality, reflexivity, culture, race, history, structural violence, and gender.

- Better understand how anthropological concepts (including those mentioned above) effect everyday life as well as broader historical and global trends.
 - Gain a better understanding and appreciation of the diversity of human cultures that exist and have existed through time and space.
 - Develop a more reflexive perspective and apply it in their own life.
2. Please explain how the new goal(s) promotes the aims of the Global Studies Initiative (described above).

Two of the goals stated above were specifically developed for the Global Studies Initiative. The first is to better understand how anthropological concepts effect everyday life as well as broader historical and global trends. Throughout the semester students read about and were presented with various case studies from Europe and Asia that helped drive home certain concepts they learn in class.

The second goal related to the Global Studies Initiative is to gain a better understanding and appreciation of the diversity of human culture through time and space. Again, throughout the semester I presented examples and case studies that introduced students to different cultures throughout Europe and Asia, past and present. Several of the in-class assignments also addressed this issue – students read about cultural practices and beliefs and compared them with their own culture, beliefs, and experiences.

B. New Course Material(s) To Achieve Goals.

Please explain the new material(s) you used for the course. Keeping this in mind, please answer the following:

1. Please list the new material(s) that you used to enhance the global studies and/or world area studies component of your course. Please also provide links online, or reference citations for each of the new material(s) you used in this redesigned course. These may be books, journal articles, magazines, videos, movies, web links, or any other materials that fit the aims of the Global Studies Initiative.

There are numerous materials I drew from to enhance the global studies initiative; only a few are listed here.

Film – NOVA: Secrets of Stonehenge

Article – Border Wars: The Ongoing Temple Dispute Between Thailand and Cambodia and UNESCO's World Hertiage List, by Silverman 2011, International Journal of Heritage Studies.

Article – The History of the Idea of Race...And Why it Matters, by Smedley 2007, American Anthropological Association, www.understandingrace.org

2. Please explain your rationale to show how the new materials fit the aims of the Global Studies Initiative.

“Secrets of Stonehenge” is a movie about recent archaeological work taking place at Stonehenge. This will provide students with information about the Stone and Bronze Age in Britain, and specifically the cultures and beliefs of the people who built Stonehenge. Students will read the article “Border Wars: The Ongoing Temple Dispute Between Thailand and Cambodia and UNESCO’s World Heritage List” for a lecture and discussion focused on the contested aspects of history and owning the past. It provides some historical information about Thailand and Cambodia and the dispute over a specific heritage location. I will use portions of the article “The History of the Idea of Race...And Why It Matters” in my lecture on race. It discusses the interconnections between Europeans, their ideas and beliefs, their plantations and colonies in the New World, Africans, Native Americans, the rise of slavery, and rise of racism.

C. New Activities, Assignments, and Assessments to Achieve Goals.

Please describe here the new activities, assignments, direct and indirect assessments, and the new syllabus you developed to achieve the aims of the Global Studies Initiative. Keeping this in mind, please answer the following:

1. Please describe all new in class activities and/or take-home assignments that you created for your redesigned course to increase global studies content and learning about global studies issues. In your description, please be sure to explain very concretely how each of these activities/assignments are linked with each of the new course goals (described in Part A).

Three in-class assignments were specifically developed for the Global Studies Initiative part of the course. Each of these assignments consisted of several questions. Students provided a written answer and turned the assignments in at the end of the class to receive full credit. The goal of these assignments was for students to show that they knew the basic concepts learned in class, how to apply them in everyday situations, and use them to help them better understand and appreciate the complexities and diversity of cultures, values, practices, and beliefs throughout the world.

The first is called “Who Owns the Past?”. For this assignment I presented the history of the Elgin Marbles, or sculptures taken from the Parthenon by a Scottish diplomat in the 18th century. The diplomat eventually sold the sculptures to the British museum, where they are still curated today. Despite numerous requests by Greek archaeologists that Britain return the sculptures back to Greece, British authorities will not cooperate. In this assignment, I asked students to identify the ethical problems involved and present a solution or plan on how they would handle the situation. This presented students with a specific example of cultural heritage and appropriation in Europe (specifically Great Britain and Greece) as well as the importance of cultural heritage in Great Britain and Greek history and current events, which speaks to both of the goals developed for the Global Initiative part of the course.

The second is titled “The Importance of Cultural Relativism”. For this assignment students read a passage in their textbook that explained female genital cutting and the controversy surrounding this practice. They were asked to explain the main ideas of the passage (which largely had to do with “for” and “against” arguments related to this issue) and discuss how they might explain the dialectic between being a cultural relativist and advocating for human rights, reproductive rights,

and gender equality. This assignment presents Euro-American perspectives on certain cultural practices from around the world and helped students understand the complexities in trying to understand another cultural practice on its own terms and yet advocating for individual rights and wellbeing. Both were closely associated with the two Global Initiative goals.

The final assignment was about gender performativity. It followed up on a class lecture which focused on how gender roles are performed, and how drag is a specific kind of gender performance. Students watched a short documentary of a drag queen from England and his experiences and feelings about drag; students were then asked to answer several questions about drag and gender performativity. This assignment addressed both global component goals in that it introduced students to aspects of British culture and had them think about the role of a key anthropological concept in those cultural practices.

2. Please describe all new direct assessments that you used for these new activities/assignments to explore student performance (at one time) and/or learning (across two or more times). In addition, please explain whether each direct assessment is: formative or summative, or quantitative or qualitative. Also, if you used a rubric to help with direct assessment, please explain whether the rubric is holistic or analytic. In your answer here, please be sure to explain very concretely how each of these direct assessments, and any rubrics you created, show student performance and/or learning related to the new course goals (described in Part A).

Since the new activities were all in-class assignments that I graded, they provided a direct, quantitative way to assess student comprehension and learning as well as how well students were able to apply certain concepts to different situations, people, and cultures. Strictly speaking, the assignments themselves were summative in that we did not focus specifically on these topics in the same way again; however, these concepts were mentioned, brought up, and discussed at various times throughout the course, which gave these assignments an informal formative feel (specifically, it demonstrated whether students remembered the concepts and whether they could continue to apply and link them to new situations and topics). The ultimate goal was that these assignments were to provide a platform that instigated continued learning and application of these concepts. This was apparent during other direct assessments throughout the course, such as the midterm and final exams. I also gave surveys at the beginning and end of the semester in which they were asked to explain how well they thought they knew certain concepts. Both surveys asked similar questions to determine how much students believe they learned during the course.

3. Please describe any new indirect assessments you used (if applicable) for these new activities/assignments to explore student attitudes. In your answer here, please be sure to explain very concretely how each of these indirect assessments was created to show student attitudes related to the new course goals (described in Part A).

Though all of my official assessment techniques were direct and quantitative, I got a sense of what students learned and understood based on comments, discussions, and ideas they shared throughout the semester. These discussions and comments were not graded or strictly monitored, so their comments gave me a chance to assess their learning indirectly. In some

cases, these moments were just as useful and satisfying in evaluating student growth and development as direct assessments.

Please attach a copy of your class syllabus for the course you revised for this project. In the syllabus please highlight changes that you made to the syllabus to show what was changed as a result of this project. Please upload your revised syllabus to the shared folder on Parkland's One Drive:

<https://tinyurl.com/y4qnncb6>

D. Faculty Reflection on New Course Material

Please provide your opinion on the degree of usefulness of the new course material you implemented and whether you recommend its continued use. That is, would you use it again? If not, what other material could you use or how else could you better implement the objectives of this initiative?

In general, I think these materials were useful for the goals of the class. I would use them again, though I would probably tweak them, specifically in the way I led into the assignments and explained and presented them. For specific topics, I would continue to search for more examples from around the world for more comparisons; I would also search for better examples of a particular concept.

Thank you very much for participating in this the Global Studies Initiative and completing this report!