

10-2014

# A University Campus Gone Glocal: From the Global Exchange to the Experiences of the Local

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## Recommended Citation

Stevenson, L., & Campillo-Fenoll, M. (2014). A University Campus Gone Glocal: From the Global Exchange to the Experiences of the Local,(). Retrieved from [https://digitalcommons.wcupa.edu/polisci\\_facpub/5](https://digitalcommons.wcupa.edu/polisci_facpub/5)

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**UNIVERSIDAD NACIONAL**

**COSTA RICA**

**WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY**

**PENNSYLVANIA, USA**

## **MEMORIA ELECTRÓNICA**

**III CONGRESO INTERNACIONAL DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR**

**6-10 de octubre de 2014**

**Heredia, Costa Rica**



## **“A University Campus Gone Glocal: From the Global Exchange to the Experiences of the Local”**

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*Dr. Linda Stevenson (Political Science, WCU)*  
&  
*Dr. Marcos Campillo-Fenoll (Languages and Cultures, WCU)*

In this presentation, Dr. Marcos Campillo-Fenoll and Dr. Linda Stevenson, from the Departments of Languages and Cultures and Political Science at West Chester University, share similar experiences in their teaching and directing the Latin American and Latino/a Studies program (LALS), which is a minor program at WCU.<sup>1</sup>

Our conference here at the Universidad Nacional in Costa Rica is one of the results of the ongoing international collaboration among two institutions of higher education from two countries (Costa Rica and the United States) that have very different historical and linguistic backgrounds, as well as different cultural practices. However, this international collaboration is possible thanks to the understanding that today’s society revolves around global exchanges; not only in the economic and political realms, but also in the cultural aspects of global connections and the sharing of ideas and knowledge, as this year’s conference title exposes.

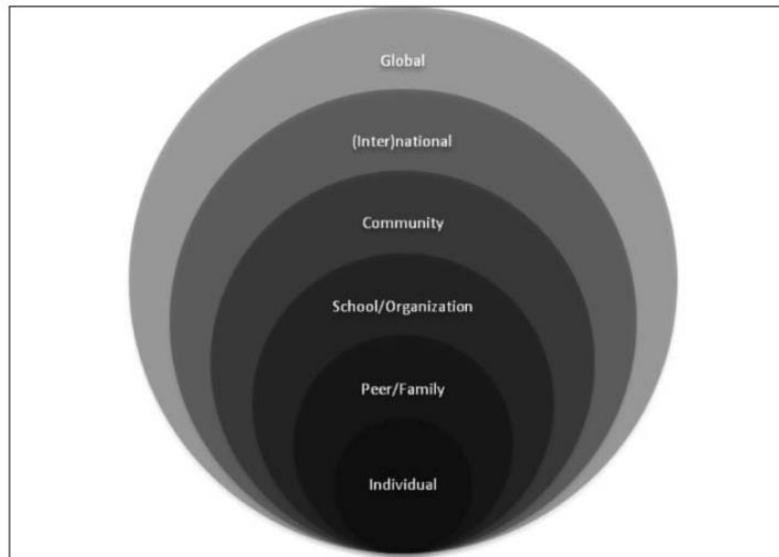
These global exchanges are a response to contemporary advances as well as challenges. In this respect, during this presentation, we would like to discuss the ways in which educational leaders can help transforming a university campus and culture to advance its efforts towards an immersion into the global realm. We will specifically address three ways in which we, as faculty members at West Chester University, have worked towards making connections between the local (our campus and close communities) and the global (through experiences that allow students to be expose to cultures beyond their closest communities). These three experiences are

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Stevenson directed the program for 10 years, and recently passed the baton of leadership to Dr. Campillo.

related to the development and carry out of Study Abroad programs, the development of service learning opportunities, and the organization of a local Latino Communities conference at our home institution. While developing these three types of actions, we look at how they correlate to the university's vision statement of developing programs and activities "that actively engage students in connecting the life of the mind to the world in which they live and work,"<sup>2</sup> as well as how they represent best practices for the advancement of higher education.

As leaders in institutions of higher education, we have to help students be aware of their belonging to this global culture, while also prepare them to understand it and succeed in it. Furthermore, we have to make sure that students are able to make connections between the global and the local experiences, instead of seeing them as separate entities. Of course, this process is not without challenges, and it requires of experiences that go beyond the classroom walls and delve into the first-hand experience of the global arena. If we look at the figure by Jeffrey Brooks and Anthony Normore (see Figure 1), it becomes even clearer that not only do we need to make those connections between the "school" and the "global," but that we need to consider all six circles and make sure that the individual student understands the implications of the global into the other realms, and viceversa.



**Figure 1.** Relationship between local and global cultures

Since the end of the 1980s, the term “glocal” has encapsulated this idea of the intertwined forces between the global and the local realms. In his article “Globalization, "Glocal" Development, and Teachers' Work: A Research Agenda,” Everard Weber (2007) explains that

Glocal development refers to the dialectic of the global and the local. It is an abstraction, useful to understand and explain social change in a general and theoretical sense rather than in concrete, empirically specific ways that highlight the patterns and contradictoriness of human experience in contemporary times. (280)<sup>3</sup>

Therefore, because the concept of “glocal” refers to the explanation and understanding of “social change,” it correlates well with the activities carried out at West Chester University in its internationalization efforts.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Weber, E. (2007). “Globalization, “glocal” development, and teachers’ work: A research agenda.” *Review of Educational Research* 77: 279-309.

<sup>4</sup> In *Internationalization of higher education in the United States of America and Europe*, H. de Wit analyzes four rationales that have led to the internationalization efforts of universities: political, economic, academic, and social/cultural. (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001).

## STUDY ABROAD

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The experience of Studying Abroad during college is one of the best opportunities for students to be exposed (for many of them for the first time) to another culture, and to become part of the awareness about global movements and transnational relations. Colleges are promoting this option increasingly more because we have come to understand that while completing a Study Abroad program is beneficial for the individual student, the knowledge gained and personal experiences of those individual students affect in significant ways the campus upon their return.

For instance, Michigan State University implemented several years ago a Freshman Seminar Abroad, in which students participate in a Study Abroad program even before entering college, during the summer previous to their freshman year. The significance of this experience in the long run can be best described through a statement by Jim Lucas, its coordinator in 2012, who affirmed that “75% of students who participate in these programs end up going abroad later in their career.”<sup>5</sup> West Chester University has also recently increased its international cooperation and the programs offered abroad, which has resulted in a steady increase in the number of students who go abroad. Indeed, while during the 2011-2012 academic year 150 West Chester students participated in study abroad and international programs, this number grew to 250 in 2012-2013 and reached 340 in the 2013-2014 year. This increase can be attributed to two factors: the first one is the university’s internationalization efforts as part of its own *Plan for Excellence*, which contains as one of the action plans to “[i]ntegrate an international, global,

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<sup>5</sup> Walker, Rebecca. “First Semester Study Abroad Gaining in Popularity.” *USA Today*. 5 May 2012.

<http://college.usatoday.com/2012/05/05/first-semester-study-abroad-gaining-in-popularity/>

See also Michigan State University’s “Freshman Seminars Abroad” options at

<http://studyabroad.isp.msu.edu/frseminar/intro.html>

and/or intercultural focus into teaching, research, learning, and service activities;”<sup>6</sup> the second factor contributing to this increase is the students’ personal interest in participating in these new opportunities because of the impact it can have in their personal, academic and professional careers.

While students are more and more willing to explore through international participation and the university needs to respond to this demand, we must also make sure that these programs maintain the highest academic standards and follow mission of the university. In 2012 and 2014, for instance, Dr. Campillo led two groups of students to Rosario, Argentina in one of the newly created programs in partnership with a private university in that city, and some of the actions taken with this program were directed towards fulfilling those academic standards. While most summer Study Abroad programs last for 3 or 4 weeks, when creating this new opportunity, Dr. Campillo decided to implement a program with a 5-week approach in order to meet the expectations of language proficiency improvement while abroad, which is one of the cores of our language program.

Because improvement in cultural sensitivity in short-term programs abroad is developed through ongoing interactions with native speakers (Martinsen 133),<sup>7</sup> while our students in Argentina stayed with host families like in most other programs abroad, another key aspect of our program was the incorporation of what we called “Student Ambassadors” into the formal program. These ‘Ambassadors’ are native students from the host institution that meet with our students and organize activities around town for mutual collaboration throughout the time period

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<sup>6</sup> WCUPA’s *Plan for Excellence* (2007): <https://www.wcupa.edu/selfstudy/plan%20for%20excellence.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> See Rob Martinsen’s essay “Predicting Changes in Cultural Sensitivity among Students of Spanish during Short-term Study Abroad,” on how short-term programs (less than 8 weeks) affect the students improvement towards cultural sensitivity, in which one of the major factors is the interaction with native speakers in significant ways that allow for reflection (*Hispania* 94.1 (2011): 121-141).

of the program. Having these ambassadors as part of the program allows for opportunities in which the glocal effects develop in a two-way format, as the local host students get to share their local culture and knowledge with our students, and in return our students compare and share their own personal and cultural experiences that might be foreign to the Argentinean students, creating bridges and understanding through community building activities.

Another activity incorporated this past summer was the visit to a Guaraní village, the native people of the area around the Iguazú Falls, while visiting the site. This visit allowed students to reflect on issues of social inequality, economic pressures and national borders. After the tour of the jungle and a Guaraní village with a native, local guide, the group discussed the ways in which native peoples suffered similar discrimination across nations (US, Argentina). Incorporating the notion of the “glocal” into this reflection, the discussion emphasized several of the 5 “Cs” that are at the core of foreign language learning according to the Standards established by the *American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages: Comparisons, Cultures, Communication, Connections and Communities*.<sup>8</sup> Students were able to see how globalization can also affect negatively those that are less vulnerable, and they questioned their own opportunities and better positioning in this new global arena. But the reflection also helped them rethink ways in which global exposure to these inequalities can generate a series of global solutions and enterprises that affect local communities in a positive way.

In this program, students took Spanish language classes, as well as content/culture-based courses in the target language (literature, history, culture). However, many programs abroad do not take into account the linguistic component. A report from the Modern Language Association from 2007 reminded us that “[m]ost students studying abroad do not major in departments of

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<sup>8</sup> ACTFL Standards for Foreign Language Learning  
[http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/StandardsforFLExecsumm\\_rev.pdf](http://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/public/StandardsforFLExecsumm_rev.pdf)

languages and literatures, but they can be drawn to courses where they continue to develop their language skills and enrich their cultural knowledge” (5).<sup>9</sup> While Study Abroad opportunities on our campus are increasing in many areas and departments, most of them take place in countries where English is not the first language. It is therefore important that those faculty members incorporate (following the MLA suggestions) an interdisciplinary approach in which some components of the course are driven by language proficiency.<sup>10</sup> In this regard, a more active collaboration across disciplines for the development of study abroad programs would be beneficial for our university’s mission.

These needs were observed by Ryuko Kubota in his article “Internationalization of Universities: Paradoxes and Responsibilities,”<sup>11</sup> where he analyzes the problematic of creating unequal partnerships with institutions abroad, and where the English language is dominant:

internationalization initiatives [...] are heavily influenced by market-driven neoliberal and neocolonial politics supporting free trade in services, competition, and Anglo dominance of language, culture, and academic knowledge, which ultimately hinders the development of translingual and transcultural competency in foreign languages for English-speaking students (612).

Such gaps are being bridged by new interdisciplinary study abroad experiences at our university, like a program in Cuba developed by a professor from the Department of Languages, and which

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<sup>9</sup> *Foreign Languages and Higher Education: New Structures for a Changed World*. MLA Ad Hoc Committee on Foreign Languages (May 2007): [http://www.mla.org/pdf/forlang\\_news\\_pdf.pdf](http://www.mla.org/pdf/forlang_news_pdf.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> The MLA report suggests that “[i]nterdisciplinary collaborative courses could fulfill both the needs of the students and the goals of the institution's program. Interdisciplinary courses are typically taught in English, but a credit-bearing discussion module taught in the target language can be added with the support of programs such as foreign languages across the curriculum. More important, faculty members participating in team-taught courses could be encouraged to lead these discussion sessions as part of their teaching load. This approach should appeal to administrators who wish to promote interdisciplinary courses, particularly those taught by several faculty members” (5).

<sup>11</sup> *The Modern Language Journal* 93. 4 (2009): 612-616.

will incorporate a course in Political Science taught by Dr. Linda Stevenson in the Summer of 2015.

### **Opportunities for ‘Glocal’ Pedagogy in *Latin American and Latino Studies and Political Science***

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Moving across the disciplines and literally across the Quad of our university, from Main Hall housing Languages and Cultures to Ruby Jones Hall housing Political Science, this part of the paper focuses on what one Latinamericanist political scientist has done in designing a number of innovative pedagogical initiatives,<sup>12</sup> which by some initial qualitative measures, have had significant successes in enhancing students’ own abilities and skill-sets in achieving a number of the glocal literacies mentioned above.<sup>13</sup> One of these initiatives is well-documented in a co-authored article in the *Journal of Teaching International Business*, with another WCU faculty member from the Marketing department, titled “Developing a Pedagogy of Globalization: A Marketing and Political Science Interdisciplinary and Transnational Approach.” Incidentally, the first draft of this publication was presented at the 2010 UNA conference in Heredia.<sup>14</sup>

For the purposes of this paper, Dr. Stevenson will describe her preliminary work using an ethnographic approach focusing on the trajectories of three recently-graduated WCU students – as her “data-points”- to illustrate the “glocal” effects of the study abroad and service learning projects they opted to take, through Dr. Stevenson’s offerings in my *International Relations*,

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<sup>12</sup> Many of these initiatives would not have been possible without the support of WCU administrative grants.

<sup>13</sup> One of the recently added mission goals of the department of Political Science is for students to obtain “global perspectives” through our course offering, so that they will develop the ability to view politics from diverse global perspectives and will understand the interconnectedness of political processes, cultures, and institutions. Likewise, one of the WCU’s General Education goals for “diversity” courses is not only to “respond thoughtfully to diversity” but also “to graduate students who have a commitment to a more equitable and socially just world.”

<sup>14</sup> Stevenson, Linda S. and Paul Arsenault. “Developing Pedagogy of Globalization: A Marketing and Political Science Interdisciplinary and Transnational Approach.” *Journal of Teaching in International Business* Vol. 23, Issue 4: 1-14, 2013. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/08975930.2012.779913>

*Latin American Culture and Politics*, *Latino Politics*, and *Women and Politics* courses. In addition, Dr. Stevenson includes several key extracurricular activities offered by our *Latin American and Latino Studies* program, and PASSHE's Diversity Summit program, which were important in the development of their "glocal literacies." Truth be told, at this point these are informal ethnographies-in-progress, as her data are being collected from the papers they turned in for credit in her classes over time, but also from informal on-going conversations with these former students, as recent graduates.<sup>15</sup>

In order to link Brooks and Normore's nine types of literacies outlined above defining their view of "Glocalization" with the influences offered through Dr. Stevenson's courses and our program, below is a table listing the literacies in the nine rows, the three student examples in three columns, and the influences of interest for this paper listed in the cells. Although far from systematic or statistical analysis, the purpose of this table is to highlight the confluence of factors that made an impact on these students. As a more comprehensive form of assessment regarding the impact of sequences of coursework, and study abroad, international and local cross-cultural exchanges, and service learning experiential opportunities on students, this analysis contributes to the growing body of studies and literature advocating for greater support for courses including these forms of pedagogy on WCU's and other campuses, if we are to fulfill our university missions of preparing students for the diverse, multicultural, globalized society of the future.

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<sup>15</sup> Since graduation, and the conclusion of the formal power relationship between professor and student, it is now possible to more easily engage in some of the more personal aspects of their learning and thinking, without the constraints of deadlines and grades marking the parameters of the relationship. With their cooperation, this preliminary work may become a more refined set of ethnographies in the future.

**Table 1: Influences from Undergraduate Studies on Glocal Learning for Three Students**

Legend: Study Abroad in **BLUE**; Local Cross-Cultural Educational Internship experiences in **GREEN**; Service Learning Experiences in **RED**.

Student →  Type of Glocal Literacy ↓	<b>Jordan Smith</b> (graduated May 2013) BA in Political Science, International Relations track; Minors in Spanish, and LALS	<b>Meghan Cox</b> (graduated May 2014) BA in Liberal Studies, Minor #1 in Philosophy, Minor #2 in Political Science	<b>Cynthia Jones</b> (graduated May 2014) BA in Political Science, International Relations track; Minor in Youth Empowerment/Urban Studies (YES)
Political	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Latin American Culture &amp; Politics (LACP – Diversity course) (Spr 2011)</li> <li>- International Internship in Guatemala (Study Abroad) (Fall 2011)</li> <li>- Mexican Elections Seminar in Mexico (Summer 2012)</li> <li>- Latino Politics : <b>Service Learning Option (Fall 2012)</b></li> <li>- Spanish Language Minor</li> <li>- Latin American &amp; Latino Studies (LALS) Minor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International Relations (Learning Communities with World Geography) (Fall 2010)</li> <li>- Women and Politics (Diversity course)</li> <li>- <b>Service Learning Option (Spr 2013)</b></li> <li>- <b>Cross-cultural Internship with NGO in Kennett Square (Summer 2013)</b></li> <li>- LACP (Diversity course) (Fall 2013)</li> <li>- Latino Politics (Spr 2014): <b>Service Learning Option: Alternative Spring Break in North Philadelphia</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Cross-cultural Internship with NGO in Philadelphia (Summer 2013)</b></li> <li>- LACP (Diversity course)</li> <li>- <b>Service Learning Option with NGO in Kennett Square (Fall 2013)</b></li> <li>- Latino Politics 2014 - <b>Service Learning Option: Alternative Spring Break in North Philadelphia (Spr 2014)</b></li> <li>- Arabic Studies</li> </ul>
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LACP (Diversity course) – Simulation game (“The Debt Game”)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LACP (Diversity course) Simulation game (“The Debt Game”)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- LACP (Diversity course) Simulation game (“The Debt Game”)</li> </ul>
Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Latin American Culture &amp; Politics (LACP – Diversity course)</li> <li>- International Internship in Guatemala (Study Abroad)</li> <li>- Spanish Language Minor</li> <li>- Latin American &amp; Latino Studies Minor</li> <li>- Mexican Elections Seminar in Mexico</li> <li>- Latino Politics – <b>Service Learning Option</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Cross-cultural Internship with NGO in Kennett Square</b></li> <li>- LACP (Diversity course)</li> <li>- Latino Politics - <b>Service Learning Option: Alternative Spring Break in North Philadelphia</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Cross-cultural Internship with NGO in Philadelphia</b></li> <li>- LACP (Diversity course)</li> <li>- <b>Service Learning Option with NGO in Kennett Square</b></li> <li>- Latino Politics - <b>Service Learning Option: Alternative Spring Break in North Philadelphia</b></li> </ul>
Moral			
Pedagogical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PA Political Science Association Conference (March 2012)</li> <li>- Northeast Political Science Association (Nov 2012)</li> <li>- PASSHE Diversity Summit Conference Presentation (Fall 2014)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- PASSHE Diversity Summit Conference Presentation (Fall 2014)</li> </ul>	
Information			
Organizational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administration and management of Internet café/hostel and school in Guatemalan internship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Cross-cultural Internship with NGO in Kennett Square</b></li> <li>- Latino Politics - <b>Leadership of Service Learning - Alternative Spring Break in North Philadelphia</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Cross-cultural Internship with NGO in Philadelphia</b></li> <li>- LACP (Diversity course)</li> <li>- <b>Service Learning Option with NGO in Kennett Square</b></li> </ul>
Spiritual and Religious			
Temporal			

Source: Stevenson, using Glocal Literacy indicators developed by Brooks and Normore (2010).

Before discussing the Glocal qualities of the influences on the students, it is important to describe the cultural, racial and socio-economic backgrounds of the students, in order to learn a bit about their starting points, and what qualifies as “cross-cultural” for each one. All three of the students are white, from what they characterize as “small towns” in central Pennsylvania, amid farmland and forests, moving into the foothills of the Appalachian mountain range that cuts across and defines the central and western regions of our state. Culturally, all three are native English-speakers, mono-lingual except for their academic language studies, and racially they have the cultural advantages of “white privilege” in our white-dominant Pennsylvania culture. Socio-economically, two of the three could be characterized as “middle-class,” while the third comes from an “upper-middle class” family. The two in the middle-class category needed to balance work for approximately 15-25 hours/week along with their academics, while the upper-middle class student did not have to work as many hours while in college, so had more time to dedicate to volunteer work, leadership of campus programs/organizations, and to her academics. These socio-economic points can also aid in the administrative discussion about which students can afford or find the resources to be able to manage the costs of taking off time from breaks when they could be working, as well as the extra expenses of extracurricular cross-cultural, service learning, and study-abroad programs.

Since the first part focused on the importance of study abroad experiences on fomenting glocal literacy for students, this section will concentrate on these aspects related to Service Learning experiences. For those unfamiliar with the practice of Service Learning, it is a pedagogical approach that faculty can use to combine experiential volunteer service with academic learning as a part of the goals of a course. In some courses, faculty require Service Learning, while for others it is an option. For example, in Spanish language learning, students

may be required to use their Spanish language skills with Latin American students in a local school's 'English Language Learning' (ELL) class for 15 hours over the course of a semester. Dr. Stevenson's ideas to start using Service Learning in her classes about ten years ago came from some of her colleagues doing these kinds of projects in the Spanish department. In Dr. Stevenson's *Latin American Culture and Politics* course, which is a General Education course offered to complement Spanish language and cultural learning (known as a "Culture Cluster" course at WCU), the make-up is usually about one half Political Science majors, and one half Social Science majors, History, Communications, Education and so on. To offer appropriate opportunities to this diverse group of learners, students are offered the choice between a research paper or a service-learning project for their most heavily weighted project in the course. The requirement for the Service Learning project is to spend 30 hours working directly with Latinos in a local school, organization, or program. To evaluate their learning, students are required to answer a series of reflection questions about their work, the Latinos they are working with, the organization, and the power relations and political issues related to this group of Latinos and the organization itself in the community/state of Pennsylvania. In some cases, students include comparisons at the national level – to better understand for example, the percentages of local Latinos who are registered to vote, or exercise their right to vote. They also present a synopsis of this learning to their peers at the end of the semester. Approximately 1/3 of the students in the course opt for the Service Learning projects, which results in nearly 600 hours of WCU volunteer service to the local community nearly every semester, as Dr. Stevenson teaches two sections of this class with 30 students in each.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Over the years, Dr. Stevenson has developed a database of all the organizations with which students have worked, so each new group can build on what the previous groups have done. There are generally 4-5 organizations at which students often volunteer (The Garage Youth Center, La Comunidad Hispana, the Maternal Health Child Consortium

Relative to the students in Table 1, although Jordan did not select that option in the class, after taking Dr. Stevenson's LACP class, and seeing how the service learning approach worked, he came up with the idea to ask the professor to see if he could obtain Service Learning or better yet, Political Science internship credits, for doing service work for a semester in Guatemala (at a project he heard about through a friend at his home church). This is an excellent example of the "dialectic" of glocal learning, in which the student had the creative notion of how to carry out an innovative project by seeing how others did it locally, and a willing faculty member just helped him put the pieces in place, paving the way through the bureaucracies to allow him to make it work for a semester's worth of academic credit. As Jordan stated in his reflection papers from the field, after living in a predominantly Mayan village, called Todos Santos, in an impoverished part of Guatemala for seven months, he wants to do all he can to try to better understand and make some kind of difference to improve living standards there, or in similar contexts. After graduating, Jordan took a job as a bilingual healthcare promoter (in the implementation of the Affordable Care Act in Pennsylvania) for most of the past year, in a small town in south central Pennsylvania. There are enough recently migrated Latinos in the area to warrant the need for a bilingual promoter. Jordan took a short return trip to Guatemala in July 2014 for three weeks to visit the people he met while there in 2011, and introduced some of his U.S. friends to them as well (more on this below). He began a Master's program in Economic Development at the Graduate School of Public and International Affairs at the University of Pittsburgh in August 2014, where he will also complete studies for a graduate Certificate in Latin American Studies.

As is evident from the sequencing of the glocal influences in Table 1, Meghan and Cynthia both took advantage of the Service Learning opportunity in Dr. Stevenson's classes, and

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Family Center in Kennett Square, and the Dayroom at St. Agnes Parish in West Chester), and then 1-2 new ones each semester.

it served each of them as an entryway into more intensive cross-cultural work thereafter. For her Service Learning class in Dr. Stevenson's *Women & Politics* class, Meghan worked with a Puerto Rican mural artist named Betsy Casañas in North Philadelphia, whose mural designs are determined by the communities in which they are to be painted, and community residents (and other such as the students) participate in painting the designs crafted by Betsy, based on their input. Meghan spent most of her Spring break working with Betsy, and enjoyed it so much that she continued well after completing her 30 hours. Over the summer, Meghan decided to continue to work with Latina women, and she worked with the Maternal Child Health Consortium in Kennett Square, which primarily serves young Mexican migrant parents and their pre-school children.

Meghan and her mentor Betsy's enthusiasm at their exchange in March rekindled an idea a few other faculty and Dr. Stevenson had been working towards for years – of taking a group of WCU students to North Philadelphia for an “cross-cultural immersion” experience in “Latino Philadelphia,” for a week or so, with a service learning project being the “work” of the week, but the cultural, socio-economic, history, and political learning going on at the same time. In Summer 2013, it so happened that WCU was welcoming a new director of the WCU Office of Service Learning and Volunteer Projects at the time, Jodi Roth, who is particularly skilled at organizing these kinds of projects, so we formed a team to try to make it happen. Ms. Roth helped to orient us with some training by inviting a national leader in the “Alternative Spring Break” movement to campus to give workshops to a number of students and faculty interested in such endeavors. Concurrently, the Dean of the College of Business and the Provost provided some financial backing to support the initiative, and after months of planning, Meghan and Dr. Stevenson led 17 WCU students to Betsy's neighborhood from March 15-22, 2014. During that

week, students participated in various combinations on five different projects, including the cleaning up of a community garden, support in creating a publicity campaign at a local Puerto Rican art gallery and youth educational center, designing and painting multiple parts of a community mural with the students of a local elementary school, working on bring science into an after-school program in another middle school, and support in organizing the library at an elementary-level charter school. All of these projects were in neighborhoods of North Philadelphia that are predominantly Latino. It was a great success in generating hundreds of volunteer service hours for these generally marginalized urban neighborhoods, and as noted in the reflections of students in Dr. Stevenson's *Latino Politics* course, it opened their eyes (and in some cases their hearts) to new levels of understanding of some of the rich diversity just down the road, as well as the extreme socioeconomic inequalities that persist along class and race lines in the city/region.

Upon graduation, Meghan is interested in continuing to work across cultural lines, and is interested in pursuing Spanish acquisition, as she decides which kind of program she would like to apply for in post-graduate studies. As part of her path to improving her Spanish, she traveled with Jordan to Guatemala on the three-week trip mentioned above. Both Jordan and Meghan were the first students that Dr. Stevenson's had to work individually with Betsy Casañas, and they met when Dr. Stevenson asked them both to speak on a panel about their cross-cultural service learning experiences at the PASSHE Diversity Summit at Shippensburg University in November 2013. Like Jordan, Meghan's choice to seek out the cross-cultural experiences offered to her through Service Learning and internship experiences, have aided her in making local-global connections, and attaining higher levels of glocal literacy in the areas of culture, politics, economics and organization.

The third student, Cynthia, already had a predisposition toward international and volunteer work when she did her Political Science internship with Dr. Stevenson in the Summer term 2013, after spending a semester in London, and being a fairly seasoned international traveler with her family. But it was the *Latin American Culture and Politics* and then *Latino Politics* courses that re-oriented her to seek cross-cultural opportunities locally (and to realize that she might need to pick up some Spanish along the way!). Cynthia's internship experience was working in center-city Philadelphia at the Nationalities Service Center, teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to students from 30 different countries. Her basic Arabic was useful in this part of the city, and she actually went above and beyond the expectations of her internship to try to help a Syrian family figure out with whom to work to pursue political asylum. A Moroccan student offered to try to help Cynthia obtain a job in Morocco after she graduated, to continue to teach ESL there. With this in mind, Cynthia opted to work with the English as a Second Language department of *La Comunidad Hispana* in Kennett Square, which offers educational, health, social and legal services to the primarily Mexican migrant population, many of whom work in the mushroom farms in that area. She then took Dr. Stevenson's *Latino Politics* course in her last semester, and participated in the alternative Spring Break trip with Meghan and Dr. Stevenson in Philadelphia. This turned out to be most fortunate, as her Morocco plans fell through, but because of her experiences with Latino service work over the last year, Cynthia was able to obtain one of the competitive AmeriCorps teaching positions in a predominantly Latino school in the city for the coming year. Cynthia's glocal literacies paid off in smoothing her transition from her academic studies into a job/service position about which she is very passionate.

## How to Introduce Latin American and Latino Studies to more students?

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If you are hopeful, but a bit skeptical about our optimism for offering opportunities to build glocal literacy in our students (Dr. Stevenson only discussed a sample of three), we want to conclude our presentation by mentioning a now ongoing strategy that we have in order to reach more of the “masses” (or at least, potentially interested students, faculty and administrators on campus). Since 2008, we and other faculty and administrators in campus have organized six day-long conferences related to local Latino Communities, often to increase awareness of Latinos during the nationally recognized “Hispanic Heritage Month.”<sup>17</sup> These conferences have focused primarily on the issues for Latinos in education, English language learning/challenges, immigration questions, political and social rise of Latinos in the region, and their increasing influence and contributions to the blend of cultures in southeastern Pennsylvania. Presenters include faculty, students, local Latino leaders who work in non-governmental organizations or schools, and artists, and others with insights about Latinos in the region. Just as an example, the conference has had over 35 sessions going concurrently, paralleling the class schedule during a weekday, so an increasing number of professors in relevant departments are bringing their classes for a session, or encouraging them to attend for as much of the day as they can. In 2013, the conference hosted more than 300 attendees over the course of the day. The set-up allows for students, faculty, staff, administrators and local leaders and educators to network, and learn about the issues in a familiar setting, in the Student Union on campus. While we are in the

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<sup>17</sup> Hispanic Heritage Month happens from September 15 to October 15 each year. President Lyndon Johnson issued an executive order to start a Hispanic Week during his time in office in the 1960s; and then President Ronald Reagan extended that to the current month-long period in 1986. It begins during the week of September 15, when a number of Latin American nations celebrate their independence, and it ends with the celebration or commemoration of Columbus Day (October 12).

process of gathering information to measure and assess this factor, for some students this conference may serve as their first point of contact with Latino communities and as a starting point for more.

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

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While working towards these varied enterprises locally and abroad, we thrive to make connections between the two, and to rethink the ways in which students are engaged in the ‘glocal’ critical thinking that is essential in today’s societies. Through service learning activities structured within the regular academic curriculum, conference participation and attendance, and study abroad options, West Chester University provides students with a wide array of tools and opportunities to develop their own glocal literacies, and the students can obtain these through very diverse paths.

The Latin American and Latino/a Studies Program, previously directed by Dr. Stevenson and now under the new leadership of Dr. Campillo, serves as the central institutional site through which some of these activities are taking or will take place. It is therefore significant that the program assesses how students are gaining global literacies in this particular area. Additionally, being an interdisciplinary program, individual departments and faculty members need to recognize the vital importance of these glocal notions and prepare students to make connections between the local and the global in different content areas.

In relation to this, we need to acknowledge the need to develop (at the institutional level) more local, regional and international opportunities for faculty with these kinds of common interests to exchange information and best practices in teaching, research, and service. Additionally, and also at the institutional level, we need support for faculty groups and administration to undertake more comprehensive cross-disciplinary, study abroad, and service learning assessments, that cross departments, colleges, and even partner universities across the globe; such as the Service Learning Faculty Workgroup,

not so much like the Center for International Programs Advisory Committees, which have tended to be more informational, than workgroup-style.

Finally, because students are creating their own ways in which to gain glocal literacies through the different activities that the university is currently offering, it is appropriate and necessary to construct a panel study of students who select these options over time, to map their course/interest sequences, and where these sequences and interests take them after graduation. This way, the university can modify or reconsider curricular offerings based on the end-results of these experiences and to improve the ways in which new students create these connections between their local communities and the global arena.