

Bonner Global Engagement Framework

International Partnerships Initiative

Victoria Thompson, Bonner Scholar 2012

The International Partnership's Initiative encourages Bonner schools to engage in global immersion projects and programs that replicate our domestic approach and incorporates the Bonner Common Commitments through the use of Bonner Global Engagement Framework – a set of recommendations for establishing and managing a campus-community partnership with an international organization and for developing and implementing a global immersion project/program. After conducting interviews and collecting feedback from Bonners in terms of their international engagement activities/experiences, I developed a set of Best Practices within the Bonner after critically analyzing my research. In this Model of Engagement, you will find a process for partnership establishment, a guideline for choosing an issue area and project specification, a framework for creating academic and faculty connections, best practices on how to incorporate an educational component, guidelines for strategic planning and sustainability, a set basic standards for pre-and post-trip training, and strategies for campus-wide integration. Through the Bonner Global Engagement Framework, we ultimately hope to identify and promote a set of development goals and/or priorities for global engagement throughout the Bonner Global Village Network.

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International Partnership Management

In our findings, we see that Bonner Schools are applying our domestic campus-community partnership model to the international context by building sustainable and long-term commitments to various international communities. We encourage that you think about what safety measures and medical precautions need to be taken to work in your country of interest, what resources are available at your international partnering organization (extra beds, bed nets, access to food), and how many students can your International Partner host for the duration of your proposed program. As you consider which organization to forge an international partnership with, you may want to consider the questions below.

Within your country of interest, have you looked into what Bonner colleges might have served or are serving there? Which references verify that your International Partner is reliable and trustworthy? What type of organization is the International Partner (NGO, CBO, government-agency, etc.), and what implications does this have on your interests of engagement? What is the mission of the organization, and do you support it? Will students be able to receive a full cultural immersion by living with host-families through this International Partner?

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Here are some Best Practices from the Bonner Network on incorporating this into your global immersion project or program:

- Investigate the area service partners, and identify which International Partner you would like to work with. Develop a set of expectations for you and for your International Partner through the creation of a Community Learning Agreement (CLA) which identifies and clarifies the roles and responsibilities for you and your International Partner during the development, management, and implementation of the project/program.
- Partner with other Bonner colleges who are working in the same geographical area to foster a cluster program or a Bonner Global Village, where students from multiple schools are focusing their service in one country for long-term, sustainable, strategic, and reciprocal service. To see where Bonners across the Network have been, visit the 'Students Abroad' page on the 'International Partnerships Initiative' page.
- Develop a full international service exchange program with a university abroad in your host country. This can be a big undertaking, but it does empower the international students as they will have the opportunity to receive further training and skills that they can take back to build their community. This reciprocal approach to international service can also provide opportunities for students at your domestic college to learn from these international students.

Issue Area and Project Specification

Effective international partnerships should have an overarching set of developmental goals and/or priorities decided upon before the start of the project or program. In our findings, we see Bonner Schools moving towards development projects that strategically address long-term outcomes and goals. Best practices of deciding upon a specific issue area or project has involved extensive input from and collaboration with International Partners – a grassroots, bottom-up approach to development. As you consider the issue area your project or program will address, you may want to consider the questions below.

What are the specific community-driven needs that your International Partner is working to address? What types of projects will most effectively address these needs? Which and what types of communities in particular will the project focus on (rural, urban, village)? How might your campus contribute to or further develop an existing strategic development project in your host country, rather than simply add an extra activity or project to it? How can the Bonner Common Commitments be integrated into your project to address the issue area?

Here are some Best Practices from the Bonner Network on incorporating issue/project specification into your global immersion project/program:

- Start a collaborative conversation with your established International Partner in which you garner an understanding of the area-specific issue that you are working to address. Through this discussion, find out your International Partner's analysis

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- and proposed solution to the issue. Offer your insights as a Bonner and incorporate the Bonner Common Commitments into your International Partner's plan of action.
- Look at the specific Millennium Development Goals (MDG) that are being targeted in your host country. Decide upon an MDG that your campus will focus on, and research the country-wide projects that are being implemented to address this MDG. Analyze how effective these development programs/projects are, and how much progress has been made. Devise a plan for how your campus can strategically replicate the effective projects that you have researched or implement a new project in an effort to seeing a Millennium Development Goal come to fruition by 2015.
 - Further analyze the underlying causes of issues such as poverty, education, and joblessness (i.e. fuel shortages, frequent water and electricity outages, sanitation system, droughts, unequal gender relations, HIV/Aids pandemic, lack of schools, distance of schools from villages, proximity of residencies to natural resources such as lakes, corruption within the government, deforestation, shortage of US currency within the country, devaluation of the country's national currency, a decrease of exports, etc.). Collaborate with your International Partner on ways to advocate for structural and behavioral change in their community and country at large. Work with your International Partner to create innovative projects that will address the underlying causes of the issues you are working to address. For example, you can host a radio station in which community members can be educated wherever they live by simply listening to education lessons over the radio; or create a windmill to generate electricity in a rural town or village.

Academic and Faculty Connections

In our findings, we see that Bonner Schools are utilizing academic and faculty connections to design faculty-led service or study abroad trips. Incorporating faculty enhances the overall experience of international service programs. Faculty provide another level of expertise to the development project/program through their academic knowledge of specific country, and ideologies, research of specific topics or issue areas, and their personal experience of implementing projects and facilitating research in developing countries. As you consider building academic and faculty connections for your international project/program, you may want to consider the questions below.

Which faculty members at your campus are native citizens of your host country? Which faculty members speak the language of your host country? Are there any faculty members who have traveled to your host country and/or completed their education at a school in your host country? Are there any faculty members that want to take their academics outside of the classroom for experiential-learning? How would your International Partner benefit from an academic and faculty perspective/resource?

Here are some Best Practices from the Bonner Network on incorporating this into your global immersion project/program:

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- Add a credit-bearing assignment to the trip such as the development of a research paper about your host-country or a newspaper/magazine that details students' experiences and gives first-hand account stories about the lives of people living there.
- Organize a panel of faculty members from the International Studies Department, Engineering Department, History Department, World Languages Department, and other departments in which faculty members can join students in a forum that discusses the trip and the issues that are being addressed.
- Invite interested professors to join the trip as a participant. Discuss which ways that the faculty member(s) can contribute to the specific project(s) that will be implemented during your global immersion project/program. For example, a faculty member can educate participants on how to build a home.
- Institutionalize global engagement in higher education through the development of a study abroad program at your school in which students can work directly with your International Partner. In order to do so, schools within our Bonner Network have rescheduled their service trip to take place during the fall or spring semester. As a result, non-Bonner students have become involved in their global service project/program.

Educational Component

Weaved into the fabric of the national Bonner program is an educational component that precedes and directs all domestic service projects and interactions between Bonners, volunteers, community partners, and patrons. This approach to civic engagement ensures that our student leaders are properly prepared to approach the communities they serve, be aware of the socio-economic inequalities within their communities, and strategically address these issues through culture-appropriate projects. We hope for this approach to be replicated on an international scale. As you consider weaving an educational component into the design of your international project/program, you may want to consider the questions below.

Have you organized a pre-trip training that educates and prepares students? Are participants of the trip knowledgeable of the country, its people and history, as well as the issues they will work to address? Are students knowledgeable of important theories, frameworks, and perspectives of International Development? What are students' assumptions about International Development, poverty, and privilege?

Here are some Best Practices from the Bonner Network on incorporating this into your global immersion project/program:

- Advise trip participants to take an academic class on your campus that will educate them on international perspectives and theories of development.
- During pre-trip training, lead workshops to educate students on poverty, ethnocentrism, and unpacking of privilege. During pre-trip training, invite a faculty member or scholar to host a seminar that will educate students on different theories, frameworks, and perspectives of international development. Suggest

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books, articles, and research papers that students can read to further educate themselves on this subject matter.

- During the trip, assign students an academic competency paper in which they will express their understanding of your project's issue area and how it relates to their domestic service projects. Students have also written a personal discovery reflection paper which outlines their personal growth and learning in the host country.
- Incorporate a Bonner Global Conference into the trip's curriculum which engages participants in a global discussion (through seminars and workshops) about perspectives of international development. Invite faculty and leaders from your college and international partnering organization to lead some of these workshops. Formal and informal reflection sessions after these sessions (i.e. during or after dinner) are highly recommended.

Strategic Planning and Sustainability

In our findings, the most effective international service is implemented at sites where Bonners serve yearly – whether participants are returning or recruiting new participants. We encourage you to begin to think about how you can develop a long-term international partnership, how you can strategically implement a sustainable development project, and what back-up plans will achieve the goals of your project/program. As you consider the strategic planning and sustainability of your international project/program, you may want to consider the questions below.

What International Partners in your host country might be able to replicate Bonner's domestic long-term partnership? How long do you plan on maintaining a partnership with your International Partner? How many years do you expect for your development goals to be reached? Are the resources (i.e. building materials) that are being used to implement your development project readily available in your host-country? How can your project ensure work to ensure accessibility to these resources?

Here are some Best Practices from the Bonner Network on incorporating this into your global immersion project/program:

- Develop a set of realistic goals and outcomes for the development project/program. After the trip, develop qualitative and quantitative results that will measure and report on the whether the project/program is meeting its outcomes. Afterwards, evaluate the areas of the program that need to be adjusted or improving of the future implementations of the project/program.
- Develop leadership roles (i.e. Sustainability Analyst) for the students to take on during the trip to help, especially to help in the planning of the next year's trip. For example, you can assign a role in which the student collects feedback from participants and evaluates different aspects of the project/program (i.e. timing of activities, accessibility to resources such as drinking water, relevance of specific reflection topics and workshops, etc.).
- Keep participants engaged in the project/program upon their return from the trip.

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For example, have students raise funds that can be used to pay school fees for the children in your host-country.

- Develop a long-term curriculum that will be implemented over a long period of time in which new students to the project/program can further develop projects that have already been implemented (i.e. rebuilding a forest).

Pre-and Post-Trip Training

Best practices of pre-trip training focuses on educating students on the cultural, social, economic, and political factors of the host country. Students and other participants should be well aware of what items they need to pack, where they will go upon arrival, how the program will operate (living, transportation to/from service site), how they are expected to behave and interact with the people of their host country, and what they are to do in the event of an emergency. A best practice of pre-trip training is especially to prepare participants by educating them on ethnocentrism and how to unpack privilege. As you consider developing a pre- and post-trip training for your international project/program, you may want to consider the questions below.

Are students aware of the trip agenda and the curricula? In terms of pre-trip activities, are students well educated on the issue area that your project/program will be focusing on (i.e. they've researched the causes of poverty in Malawi)? How can you provide resources (scholarly articles, journals, suggested readings) for students to educate themselves on what work has already been done to address the issue your project/program is focusing on, as well as general theories of International Development. In terms of post-trip activities, how will the students document and share their activities with the Bonner program and their campus?

Here are some Best Practices from the Bonner Network on incorporating this into your global immersion project/program:

- Well in advance of the trip, have students develop a 'pen-pal relationship' with the students that they will be working with in the host-country. This will provide an opportunity for participants to ask each other important questions that will prepare them for the project/program, and help them to establish a close relationship with a person in the host-county.
- During pre-trip training, have a faculty member or lecturer train students on theories of international development, welfare economics, post-constructivism, and strategies for mitigating the asymmetrical world order. Students should have a basic understanding of important theories of development (Modernization and Dependency) as well as frameworks of development by some important international development experts, such as Joseph Stiglitz, William Easterly, Arturo Escobar, and Amartya Sen.
- In the post-trip training, reflect on the transformational experience of students and how the experience has affected them moving forward.
- During post-trip training, advice students to work on their resumes in regards to the professional development experience gained from the trip.

Campus-Wide Integration

We have found that a useful way to promote campus participation and faculty connections – as well as garner support for the sustainability of your global immersion project/program – is to invest some time in developing a social media plan. This social media plan can inspire students to participate in the trip, as well as educate students after the trip commences. As you consider a campus-wide integration of your international project/program, you may want to consider the questions below.

How will the lessons learned from the trip be applied to student's domestic service work? How can students communicate the issues of the host country best to their campus community, perhaps relating them with issues in their hometown? How can students promote the increase of the amount of propaganda that paints underdeveloped countries in a positive way (i.e. pictures of the people from your host country joyful instead of starving and needy)? Which student groups/organizations may be interested in supporting your project/program?

Here are some Best Practices from the Bonner Network on incorporating this into your global immersion project/program:

- Encourage students to share their reflections before, during, and after the trip using Twitter (i.e. #MorehouseBonnersinDR), Facebook, and/or a blog.
- During the trip, have students create a magazine that tells stories of the people in the host country - their life and culture. Students would need to journal daily to preserve an accurate memory of these first-hand account stories. They should include pictures in the magazine.
- Partner with on-campus clubs, organizations, and fraternities or sororities to host awareness and fundraising events that will further support the efforts of your global immersion program.
- After the trip, organize an event (i.e. forum) in which students can give a campus-wide, global competence presentation about the trip and critically analyze their efforts to address a specific issue in their host-country. A documentary about the country that focuses on the issue area of your project/program would complement this event, and spark conversation/questions as well as educate attendees.