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Global Studies Initiative Faculty Report: Interdisciplinary Collaborations

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Aims of Global Studies Initiative: Parkland’s Global Studies Initiative promotes the addition to Parkland’s courses of instructional materials on global issues with a focus on the European Union, Russia, Eastern Europe, and Eurasia, and East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific. Further, it aims to provide faculty with instructional design tools and aid them with the implementation of new course materials in the classroom.

Global Studies Initiative Faculty Report: Interdisciplinary Collaborations

Faculty Name: Annie McManus

Courses Taught (course name(s), section number): PSY 207

Please answer the following questions to complete this report:

1. Please describe an assignment or class material covered in your course that teaches students about global issues or, better yet, teaches them about the areas of the world covered in this initiative: the European Union, Eastern Europe, Russia, Eurasia, East Asia, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific. You can attach the assignment rubric, instructions, and/or syllabus or course schedule to this report if you wish. If you have no current materials or assignments dealing with global issues, describe an idea you have for a new assignment or course material you wish to adopt.

In most of my classes I use fairy tales, folklore and fantasy to encourage students to identify key terms and concepts they learn in class. This assignment would be used in a Child Psychology class after we had finished discussing Middle Childhood Development. I would use it as an application writing assignment.

During a class period I bring in lots of fairytales in the format of picture books. I bring in an assortment of familiar stories, variations on familiar stories, and familiar themes but from other cultures. I read a selection aloud to them and then I let them work in groups, reading aloud to each other and discussing the books. Following this in class activity I give them the following writing assignment:

Using your textbook and class discussions I would like you to show support for and/or explain the validity of the following quote by Albert Einstein. Identify at least 4 ways that reading fairy tales to children supports cognitive and emotional development during Early and Middle Childhood.

“If you want your children to be intelligent, read them fairy tales. If you want them to be more intelligent, read them more fairy tales.” Albert Einstein

These are some of the key terms or concepts I would want them to identify:

Storytelling is a building block to **early literacy**.

Fairytales provide **conversational topics** such as how is the world that Goldilocks lives in different from your world? How is it the same?

Fairytales boost the **imagination** and provide scripts for dramatic play.

Fairytales can give kids practice in **decision making**; What could the bears have done differently? What could Goldilocks have done differently?

If, then questions such as; If the bears had stayed home what would have happened when Goldilocks arrived at their cottage?

Often fairy tales include a moral, **Kohlberg's theory of moral development** can be applied to the decisions made by the various characters in the story.

Fairytales help children develop **emotional resiliency**. Fairy tales show children that people have to go through challenges and survive, succeed, and learn from the challenge.

When children read or listen to fairy tales they are also learning cultural literacy. Fairytales often include different cultures and different ways of doing things. If children hear fairytales from a variety of cultures they learn about cross cultural values and behaviors. They also are introduced to themes that shape their cultural beliefs (not always a positive, such as a female needs to be rescued).

In middle childhood we discuss the **school system and curriculum**. Fairytales can be used as a tool to **teach the components of a story**. By reading fairy tales kids can discuss the development of the story, identify the conflicts in the story and how it is resolved, understand the personalities and characteristics of the characters in the story, and it introduces the concept of fiction versus non-fiction. If the children are already familiar with the stories that provides them with scaffolding for the classroom lesson.

2. Parkland College faculty have developed six general learning outcomes to help students acquire essential skills, knowledge, and values that will serve them in their future careers. The Global Awareness and Ethical Reasoning outcome states that *students will demonstrate an understanding of global issues, gender and sexual orientation, multicultural perspectives, and/or the role of ethical core values in making personal, social, academic, and professional decisions*. Please reflect on how the assignment or materials you described in the previous question contributes to this learning outcome or could be modified to better fit this outcome.

In the assignment I have created the students have the potential to work on two of the learning outcomes developed by Parkland College faculty.

Multicultural perspectives- By reading and discussing fairy tales and folklore from several countries students see similar themes, challenges, and messages. Since one of the purposes of folklore and fairy tales is to teach children about their culture and cultural values, they are a good entry into a discussion. I scaffold this for them by

reading the book, “Glass Slipper, Gold Sandal” by Paul Fleischman and then having a class discussion about the ways the various countries tell the Cinderella story.

Gender and Sexual Orientation - By reading a variety of stories the students begin to see the emergence of gender roles and expectations of individuals based on their biological sex. This topic is part of the discussion mentioned above.

3. How do you think learning about global issues and other areas of the world benefits your students in your field of study or discipline?

My Child Development class is taken by education majors. Since we live in a diverse community my students observe and work in local schools where they might encounter students from around the world. This assignment and our class discussions give them an opportunity to think about some of the universals of child development and the variations due to family cultures.

4. Do you believe your course could benefit from more interdisciplinary collaborations on global issues participating, for instance, in some of the collaborative teaching initiatives presented by your group in your joint report? Explain your answer.

I think all of the classes I teach would benefit from more interdisciplinary collaborations on global issues. I left each meeting with resources, ideas, and questions to think about for my students and myself. The wealth of experiences, interests and talent represented in the group of instructors was the rejuvenation I was hoping to receive by participating in the project. I am looking forward to incorporating their ideas into other assignments I will use in Fall 21.

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