



International Politics & Sustainability



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Abstract

There is an expectation set forth in the Santa Clara Mission Statement that involves sustainability. It specifically outlines reasons why practicing sustainability is vital to becoming a well rounded individual. We set forth to examine whether or not the Political Science Department is living up to the expectations clearly written in the school's Sustainability Policy.

Introduction



- The political science department lists many courses involving international politics and relations. It stresses that globalization is a key factor of society today. It is clear that the political science department recognizes that communication and relations regarding solidarity and sustainability with other countries is a must.

Current Programs

Currently, Santa Clara offers a wide variety of programs in their International Programs. There are also other programs and schools that the University works through.

Santa Clara's Programs are:

- SCU Summer Programs
- Santa Clara Semester in London
- Casa de Solidaridad in El Salvador



Solidarity v. Sustainability

Solidarity-

harmony of interests and responsibilities among individuals in a group, especially as manifested in unanimous support and collective action for something.

Sustainability-

1. ability to be maintained
2. exploiting natural resources without destroying the ecological balance of a particular area.

Solidarity as a Learning Tool



- To reach sustainability you need solidarity. You must have “unanimous support and collective action” as well as “harmony of interests and responsibilities among individuals in a group,” to work towards this goal of sustainability. The school then, is reaching towards sustainability by having the students practice solidarity as well as increasing their knowledge.

Sustainability Element

- In working towards the goal of sustainability there should be a sustainability element in orientations for all study abroad programs. Sustainability does not solely consist of saving plants and animals. Just as important is its role as an organizing principle of society. It will also help the students to understand the country at a more well-rounded level. It will provide the students with an independent method of taking in the country and its culture as well as its development.

Study Abroad: Africa



A possible new study abroad program could be one to Africa with the goal of improving social sustainability. Some preparatory classes for the Africa program could consist of World Geography (with a concentration on the demographics and health profiles of particular third world countries), Introduction to International Relations, and Comparative Politics.



Why Africa?



Positives:

- The students would actually be providing a helpful hand to some of the most needy countries.
- There will be many willing to start an endowment fund to help provide the resources to maintain this study abroad program.

Negatives:

- Money; traveling to Africa is expensive.
- Health; HIV/AIDs as well as malaria are all health risks.
- Safety; many of these countries are politically unstable.

Social Sustainability



- “... recognition that a healthy and enduring environmental quality is a universal prerequisite to social justice and the alleviation of much human suffering.”

--Kenneth Manaster

- Before we move on to environmental sustainability the first issue that we must face is that of social sustainability. If the world can't work together as one united force then we can't move on to address issues of environmental sustainability.

The Work of Professor Leslie Gray

- Burkina Faso has been the home for one of Santa Clara's professors, Leslie Gray, who has been working on sustainability issues, both social and environmental, for years. She has helped build a community library and is currently researching cotton sustainability.



Work Cont...



- Her focus is on improving environmental issues, but these issues can't be solved until there is another sustainable option for these people to make a living outside of their current wasteful and degrading methods.

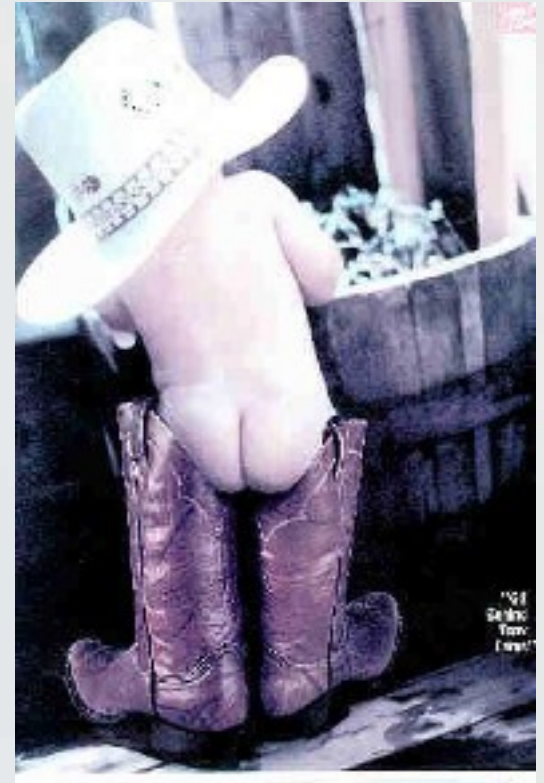
Work Cont...



- The African Study Abroad Program will follow in the footsteps of the example that Leslie Gray set. The Students will be able to participate in activities like the ones performed by Professor Gray in Burkina Faso.
- Hopefully, in time, the Santa Clara students will be able to help develop alternate methods for the residents of the villages in many of Africa's countries to make a more sustainable living. This direct contact with foreign neighbors is the starting block to send sustainability into a top priority.

Bigger Steps...

- By having a program that increases the direct contact between students and other cultures the school will succeed in integrating sustainability into the curriculum. As Michael Kevane wrote, “Direct experience abroad is what opens the eyes of students in new ways, and brings them back to the classroom with bigger boots, as the saying goes, to take bigger steps.”





Morality & Responsibility

- “Environmental morality now means a global morality and responsibility, and it must embrace an awareness of the connections between the individual actions in one place and potential global degradation elsewhere.” -Kenneth Manaster
- As a Catholic Jesuit University, Santa Clara has the responsibility to educate the whole person. The political science department does educate the mind but sustainability is often left untouched.

Reaching Goals

- The University's Sustainability Mission Statement states for the students to, "be prepared to be an agent of change towards sustainability and environmental morality in action." By creating the program suggested, the school would be completing this goal.

Bibliography

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- Special Thanks to Professor Leslie Gray for supplying us with pictures, personal insight, and an open mind.