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Practicing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in
Twenty-First-Century Honors Education
Conference

2017 Conference

Oct 26th, 8:30 AM

Beyond the "Great Books" Canon: Global Issues and Great Ideas

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Bomberger, Ann and Morgan-Russell, Simon, "Beyond the "Great Books" Canon: Global Issues and Great Ideas" (2017). *Practicing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Twenty-First-Century Honors Education Conference*. 1.

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Gannon University's Efforts to Help Students Think More Globally

Curricular changes:

- Introduction to Honors (1 credit, first semester freshmen; all sections taught by Director): Readings explore repercussions of globalization, changing gender roles worldwide, technology, etc. Students create a research poster on a global issue that they present to the honors community. Older students visit the class one week to present on their study abroad experiences (short or long term). Students are required to attend an event from International Education week and report back, go in small groups to an ethnic restaurant they have never tried before or a cultural activity and report back.
- Intermediate and above foreign language courses count as honors credit.
- Every three years: Paris course: Fine Arts. Study cultural issues (both traditional French culture and changing cultures due to globalization) via film for a semester. Next semester will also include some guest lectures on Paris Art and architecture component. Trip at the end of the semester to Paris with two professors (Film and Art)
- History Without Borders (required History Core course): one of the sections has a focus on Human rights throughout the ages and draws from many different countries. The students interview a refugee from Iraq, Bosnia and it is recorded for the Erie Voices project (soon to be renamed Voices of Erie). Guest speakers from the International Institute (a local refugee resettlement organization).
- An international Literature course will be offered in the spring (counts as Literature CORE course). A course on Good and Evil (theology requirement) draws from writers from around the world.
- Faculty created two capstone courses with a strong international component (refugee mapping project and an international film course), but an insufficient number of honors students signed up for them and they had to be turned into non honors courses.

Recruitment:

- Talked with the ESL program, international admissions to recruit international students that would be good fits for honors.
- Got some recommendations from GO College (College readiness program in Erie School District) and waived some SAT requirements for refugee students and students of color. Erie is an international refugee settlement city.
- All of these efforts vary significantly from year to year in how effective they are.

Cocurricular:

- Honors gives out \$10,000 a year to students who study abroad short (\$250) or long term (\$500). Students who get funding are required to either write an article for our newsletter, share their blog via honors social media, present at an Intro to Honors class, or present at Celebrate Honors, an end of the semester symposium. I have some concern that this use of funds might be a turn off to first generation students who think this is financially beyond their means. We have considered raising the amount awarded for long term study abroad and perhaps need based additional scholarships.
- The honors program annually coordinates the visit of a Council of Independent Colleges Woodrow Wilson fellow, who attends many honors classes and gives a public lecture. We will continue to select people with international perspectives.
- The events committee is charged with including some events sponsored by GU squared (Gannon University's Global Unity club) or the International Students Association event on our list. For example, a few weeks ago Dussehra, a Hindu Festival, counted as an honors event. Some, but not many, honors students opted to attend.