

INSTRUCTOR: DR. SINHA ROY

FALL '11

SHARED FUTURES

Building Sustainable Communities



JOURNEY TOGETHER
GROW TOGETHER

BUILDING OUR OWN COMMUNITY

FS 101 TRIP TO PITTSBURGH

Thanks to the support of the Fahrner grant, I was able to plan an interdisciplinary Freshman Seminar that also created its own Living & Learning Community!

ABOUT THE COURSE:

All incoming students take the Freshman Seminar (FS 101) during their first semester at Allegheny College. For my course, I collaborated with a faculty member from the Geology department, whose research is on fresh water. Since I am a media studies professor whose research is on globalization, we decided to make the shared focus of our courses, an examination of global sustainability issues.

While the two courses operated as separate sections, we did bring students together for shared field trips, extra-curricular activities, and an interdisciplinary collaborative project

through which mixed teams of students from both classes demonstrated their shared knowledge, through a poster session, for campus community members. This poster session will be repeated at a regional sustainability conference being held at Allegheny College in March 2012 as part of the college's annual theme celebrations.

Students from the two courses also selected to live in the same Residence Hall and do community-building activities together.



Activities

Pittsburgh



Students visited Pittsburgh's strip district and the special exhibit on population growth and sustainability at Carnegie Museum -- for many, this was their first visit to a museum.

MAWA

A field trip to the Meadville Area Water Authority to learn where our water comes from, and how our tap water is processed, and recycled.

Bookamer Farms



Visit to an eco-friendly local family farm where ecology is at the center of farming from the use of manure as fertilizer, to composting toilets, and the symbiotic harvesting of food-yielding plants.

Cooking Together

We shared the kitchen space in the residence halls and prepared meals together, using local produce.

Global Film Series

Students viewed films and documentaries that offered a non-Western perspective on global issues. We then followed up on the screenings with readings and class discussions.

Connecting the Local and the Global.

Many of the students from the Freshman Seminar, will be accompanying me on a study tour to South India this summer.



A student organization “Growing Hearts, Growing Minds” (GHGM), was formed in 2009 by former students who had accompanied me on previous study tours to India. GHGM has been collaborating with the Rotary Club of Midtown Bombay, India, to help make remote and poverty-stricken villages self-sustainable communities, through education and self-employment schemes based on conservation efforts.



Our FS 101 class worked on a fund-raising project to sell T-shirts they had designed (see images on the right). The T-shirts were printed at a local business that used domestically produced cotton T-shirts -- **the idea being that the class wished to help U.S. businesses even as they assisted communities abroad.** The profits from the T-shirt sales will fund educational initiatives for school children in Baste village, India. “Growing Hearts, Growing Minds” has already built a school for elementary and middle school children in that village, and helped fund a water line that pipes potable water to the center of the village so that women no longer walk 3 miles one way to fetch the precious liquid.



Laxmi Dive (*Above*), a poor widow in Baste village, depends on her small plot of land for growing what she needs to eat.

- She has donated this small plot to the village community so that a vocational training school can be built for the youth
- Thinking beyond one’s own needs for the good of the community is something we can all learn from.

SOWING THE SEEDS OF COMMUNITY-BASED THINKING



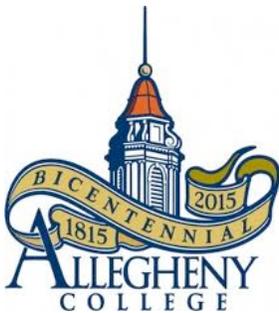
THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!



Thank you for the Fahrner grant that enabled me to plan the curricular and extra-curricular aspects of the FS 101 course during summer 2011. The grant allowed me to meet with my faculty collaborator and discuss joint aspects of the course. It also helped me research and gather course materials, and organize field trips.

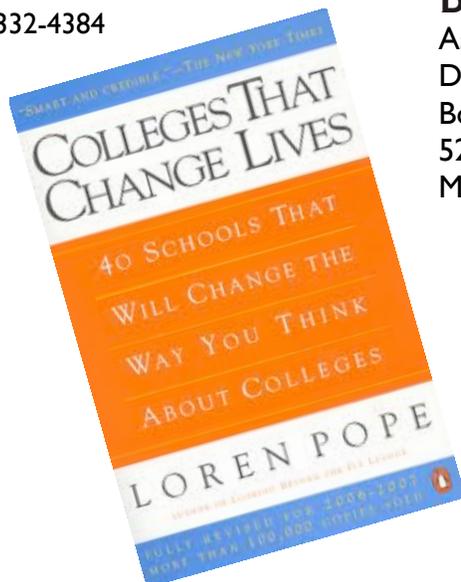
My faculty collaborator and I presented the learning outcomes from this interdisciplinary FS pilot at the 2012 Annual AAC&U (American Colleges and Universities) conference on “Shared Futures, Difficult Choices,” January 25, 2012 - January 28, 2012, at Washington D.C.

Because of your support, students from my FS101 course were able to engage in innovative assignments such as creating digital stories, which I was able to share with other institutions of higher learning at the “3Ts 2012: Engaging Students with Transliteracy, Technology & Teaching” conference in SUNY, Albany on March 16, 2012.



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