

HUMAN RESOURCES AND WORKFORCE

The University of Washington Strategic Analysis, Research and Training (START) Center: an innovative applied research and training model

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Program Purpose: To meet evolving public health needs, global and domestic health organizations are leveraging external consultants for data analysis, technical advising, and program evaluation. The Strategic Analysis, Research & Training (START) Center provides high quality research and analytic support while simultaneously mentoring and training the next generation of public health professionals. START was established in 2011 through a partnership between the University of Washington Department of Global Health and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.

Structure/Method/Design: The START Center provides valuable research, evaluation and training opportunities for faculty and students from multiple disciplines. Under the START model, teams of graduate student research assistants and faculty mentors in Global Health, Epidemiology, Public Health, Medicine, Business Administration, Law, Education and Public Policy deliver high quality consultation for global and domestic health program efforts. These teams are student-led and managed, providing quality hands-on experience for future professionals.

Graduate Research Assistants work closely with Faculty Mentors in a structured training and mentorship experience to strengthen the following START competencies: leadership and interpersonal communication, synthesis and presentation skills, analytical thinking, team dynamics, and client engagement.

Outcome & Evaluation: To date, the START Center has completed over 85 research requests, serving both global and domestic clients in Washington State and beyond, and delivered more than 150 reports, presentations and tools for these clients. START has trained over 40 graduate Research Assistants in leadership, project management, communication and analysis. Today, the Center engages a team of 7 faculty, 12 masters and doctoral students from the Schools of Public Health, Business, Law and Education, and 3 staff members, working on 15 active research projects.

Going Forward: START continues to refine its interdisciplinary model and effective cross-university collaborations to optimally serve diverse global and public health clients. Client organizations benefit from the expertise of University faculty, while engaging well-trained global and public health students to tackle challenging questions from a variety of angles and disciplines.

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Teaching global health issues in online graduate MBA courses: the international technological university experience

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Program/Project Purpose: International Technological University is a WASC-accredited graduate school with students from 30 countries. This project focused on course development for and performance of MBA students enrolled in the Healthcare Management concentration in two online courses, *Health Promotion* and *Global Health*.

Structure/Methods/Design: The instructor used the course design process Link described in his 2003 book, *Creating Significant Learning Experiences: An Integrated Approach to Designing College Courses*. Link emphasizes a “backward design” effort that starts with: “What would I like the impact of this course to be on students, 2-3 years after the course is over?”

Students summarized their understanding of weekly materials in personal essays, and made at least four comment about the essays of other students. A lottery rewarded a weekly extra point for posting more than four comments.

For *Health Promotion* essay prompts, the instructor selected six journal articles and six videos that mirrored chapters from Kirsten and Karch's 2012 book *Global Perspectives in Workplace Health Promotion*. Written assignments captured the before-and-after status of individually-designed health improvement plans. A slidecast assignment envisioned students' pitches to WHO executives to fund workplace health improvements in student-chosen countries.

For *Global Health* essay prompts, the instructor selected descriptions of twelve goals from the UN's Global Goals for Sustainability. Students were invited to find videos for marketing campaigns to engage viewers in caring about specific goals. Students introduced themselves in slidecasts during the first week, announcing their global health interests. Written assignments directed students to research problems and possible solutions for their selected interests.

Outcome and Evaluation: Eighteen students completed the *Health Promotion* course. Sixteen students completed the *Global Health* course. At the end, students reflected upon accomplishments, evaluated learning tools, and shared insights such as “Technology and social media (are) powerful tools.” Students detailed health education needs of themselves, relatives, and friends. Students shared their visions for global health improvement efforts. Most students singled out