

Instructionally Related Activities Report Form

SPONSOR: Dr. Annie White

PROGRAM/DEPARTMENT: Early Childhood Studies

ACTIVITY TITLE: Early Childhood Studies and Performing Arts: Narrative Inquiry at Santa Rosa Island

DATE (S) OF ACTIVITY: November 17-19, 2017

Please submit via email to the IRA Coordinator along with any supporting documentation at david.daniels@csuci.edu within 30 days after the activity.

Thank you for your commitment to engaging our students!

A. ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

(1) PROVIDE A DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY;

The Instructionally Related Activities (IRA) funded a Santa Rosa Island (SRI) trip for the Early Childhood Studies (ECS) course ECS 463, "Creating and Supporting Reciprocal Family and Community Networks" and the Performing Art Program (PA) course PADA 455 "Advanced Contemporary Techniques". This interdisciplinary collaboration at the SRI provided ECS and PA students' opportunity to combine a narrative inquiry course assignment with the modality of interpretive dance. The SRI trip provided students occasion for creative work through critical reflection and personal self-identity. The SRI trip took place during fall 2017 and included cross cultural interaction, reflection, self-awareness, and a transformational learning experience for students. This experience allowed students to link their social and cultural identities through increased awareness of self and others through deep self- reflection, shared through creative expression of movement. Students' participated in narrative inquiry through journal writing, small and large group work, and interpretive dance. Students shared with peers' their social and cultural identities which led to culturally responsive interactions. Student written reflections were used to help student inquiry and participatory research. The purpose of this project included students gaining deeper understanding of social and cultural identities through narrative inquiry in the Learning Stories (storytelling) format. Written Learning Stories were shared individually and collectively and culminated in interdisciplinary interpretive dance. The SRI provided the optimal safe environment for student narrative investigations in a prime topographically diverse setting, which supported high impact practices, while creating a culture of inquiry and community of learners.

This IRA funded trip to the SRI created an amazing opportunity for students to develop a strong sense of community, a deeper sense of self identify, and a transformative experience for students. The SRI trip connected ECS and PA dance students through sharing narrative stories on the SRI. This meaningful experience for student's fostered risk-taking through authentic sharing of personal lived experiences, increased awareness of identity of self, and relationship to others, through in-depth reflection and sharing of their creative and visual representations. Student reflections took place on SRI in individual, small and large group discussions and reflections. Students created narrative representations expressed through dance, reflecting each narrative Learning Story ("My Story" assignment). The "My Story" written assignment focused on diverse cultural background and student various self-identities. Students wrote narrative "My Story" on the SRI which were shared in small groups. On the final day on the SRI, individual students' shared their "My Story" with the large group, while their group provided interpretation expressed through body movement and dance, representing the storyteller's self-identities.

The purpose of this project was to create opportunity for students to gain deeper understanding of self-identity through the experience of sharing narratives ("My Story") following the Learning Stories (storytelling) format. The SRI environment provided the optimal setting that fostered a safe and open space for students to share their narrative stories in a beautiful, pristine, topographically diverse location that helped build a learning community through interdisciplinary and cultural exchange.

(2) HOW DID THE ACTIVITY RELATE TO A COURSE(S) AND/OR LEARNING OBJECTIVES?

The activity related to the ECS 463, "Creating and Supporting Reciprocal Family and Community Networks" in several ways. The trip to the SRI met ECS 463 course student learning objective, as students were able to apply techniques and skills used in individual and group process facilitation, problem solving, decision-making, collaboration, communication and team-building in order to effectively work in partnership with families, professionals, and the community. It is critical educators understand their own cultural values and beliefs in order to support diverse children and families. The ECS 463 class has a unit which focuses on student self-identity. In ECS 460 and ECS 470 courses, student learn how to complete Learning Stories assessments on young children. In the ECS 463 course, students continue their inquiry assessment practices with the Learning Stories approach, by developing a Learning Story about their own development, referred to as a "My Story". The ECS 463 student's identify key aspects of their social and cultural identities that have influenced their development.

Similar to Learning Stories, students included a "What it Means" section which describes the significance of their identity and also a "Opportunities and Possibilities" section which included vision for their future. Lastly, students completed the "My Story" written assignment during the SRI trip and following the SRI trip shared their written "My Story" with key people in their lives. These supportive family and friends, wrote a response to the storyteller, after they read the student "My Story". The "My Story" was very

powerful and transformative for the students. Students reported that they felt that as a result of the “My Story” assignment they had a better understanding of their identities and are better prepared to support diverse children and families.

(3) WHAT DO YOU SEE AS THE STRENGTHS OF THE ACTIVITY?

The strength of IRA activity was the incredible sense of community that was developed as a result of the SRI trip. The interdisciplinary collaboration between ECS and PA provided a powerful exchange between faculty and students. Some students had never spent a night away from their family, traveled by boat, or visited an island. In addition, some felt this trip was the first time they developed caring, supportive friendships, and experienced a true sense of community which they did not feel they had experienced at CI prior to this SRI trip. In addition, the sharing of the “My Story” through interpretive dance was very powerful and a transformational experience for students. Students’ took risks to share their stories openly, honestly while being very transparent. This level of sharing could not have been recreated in a classroom at CI. The SRI trip provided an environment that fostered the students feeling of safety and the ability to share their personal stories, expressed collaboratively through movement and dance.

Also, the PA faculty provided exceptional leadership in the area of self-care, movement exercises, yoga, team building activities, and demonstrated true collaboration with the ECS program. In addition, one of the students required a wheel chair. She was the first student who participated in the SRI in a wheel chair. The depth of care and support to this student by peers’ was incredible. The exchange between programs was definitely a highlight of this IRA activity.

(4) WHAT WOULD YOU SAY ARE/WERE THE ACTIVITY’S WEAKNESSES?

The original PA faculty who planned to co facilitate the SRI trip had a conflict with the schedule do to an amazing professional opportunity to dance with Selena Gomez for the AMA show. However, she worked very hard to find a substitute PA faculty who could take her place. It worked out great for everyone and turned out to be one of the strengths of the IRA activity.

Another challenge was several of the students did not attend the SRI trip. Several PA students who were signed up for the trip, did not show up and did not provide notice that they were not able to attend the activity. In addition, there were who were not able to attend for various reasons. Regardless, the interdisciplinary experience was very powerful and a great learning experience.

(5) HOW WOULD YOU IMPROVE THIS ACTIVITY FOR NEXT TIME?

Next time, I would like to have the ECS and PA students meet each other before the trip to create a sense of community. I think this may help influence the PA students to be more committed to attend the trip. Also, I would have SRI coordinator present to the classes too. I

...etter understand this incredible opportunity and thus, follow through with their commitment to attend IRA funded trips to the SRI.

(6) WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?

I learned how much work it takes to plan a trip to the SRI! I had a ECS lecturer and ECS student help provide leadership. I reviewed the menu, planned activities such as a mannequin treasure hunt, detailed outline of trip, shopping, and packing for trip. They offered to lead a Mindfulness activity and take photos, as the documentarian for the trip. I also learned to listen to student needs and adapt accordingly. For example, during the SRI trip, it became apparent students were stressed from school, work and lives, which showed the need to focus on self-care. As a result, we adjusted the schedule and incorporated more self-care activities, such as yoga, stretching, and group activities.

(7) WHAT ARE STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE ACTIVITY? ATTACH STUDENT EVALUATIONS OR ASSESSMENTS (IN ACCORDANCE WITH FERPA RESTRICTIONS YOU MUST REMOVE ALL PERSONALLY IDENTIFIABLE STUDENT INFORMATION)

I created an anonymous Google form to assess student experience and feedback about the SRI trip.

Here is some of the responses from students from both the PA and ECS programs:

"I was paired with a girl I had had in many classes but never talked to and a dance student I had never met. At first I was a little disappointed to not be paired with the people I knew better but I wouldn't have changed it for anything. Sharing my story with them gave them the courage to share with me. I found out that one of them is currently dealing with problems that I had overcome in the past. She told me that she hadn't told anyone about this and talking to me made her feel that she could overcome it too. I have never felt more important in my whole life."

"I have overcome a lot of challenges in my life. These were things that I had never talked about and it has caused me to have panic attacks almost daily. I had been to therapy, group counseling and nothing ever helped. But in the two weeks since the trip I feel calm. I have made friends that actually care about how I'm doing and I care about them. We built a family on the island that can never be taken away."

"It felt good to share my "My Story" with everybody. Everyone was so supportive and I felt like I didn't have to hold anything back. I could just tell my story and be myself without any judgment."

"I thought that the interpretative dance was beautiful and such a powerful form of expression. As far as sharing my story, I never thought that I could feel such love from people before. The overwhelming flood of support and care is something that I don't think I will ever forget."

“It was life-changing. It made me realize that everybody has a story and you can't judge anybody because you don't know what their story is and what they might be going through. No one is alone. By the end of the trip, everybody was like a family and everybody was there for one another.”

“I will seriously never forget the trip. It was one of my favorite college experiences so far! I wish I could go back in time and do it all over again. Also, I feel like I will forever have a connection with everybody who went on the trip!”

“It was strange to me, even as a dancer, in a good way because it was a moment of vulnerability not only for the storyteller but the dancers. It was kind of the definition of evanescent, quickly fading from memory, as each word and line was interpreted and then gone as the storyteller moved forward in their story. There was so much to soak in that it was almost like lightning striking or snowflake melting and you want to memorize that moment - the pattern before it fades but also stay present. It was beautiful and I would love to see more people on campus have the opportunity to express themselves and witness that expression in turn with the My Story experience.”

8) GIVE A SUMMARY OF EXPENSES FOR THE ACTIVITY.

IRA Activity approved budget: \$5,760

Island Packard- round trip boat transportation and SRI lodging \$3,328.00

Food- \$983.44.62

Total spent= \$4,311.62

\$5,760 (IRA budget)

4,311.62 (Amount spent)

Total Remaining Funds = 1,488.38

Note: over budget due to reduced number of students who attended the IRA funded Santa Rosa Island trip

B. ATTENDEE LIST- SUPPORTING DOCUMENT:

In addition to the report form, *in a separate document*, attach to your email a list of attendees complete with each student major and grade level. This for IRA Committee reference only and will not be published on the IRA website. Include your name and the title of your IRA activity on the document.

Please see attached Attendee list

C.IMAGES FROM ACTIVITY:

Finally, attach to your email up to 6 images demonstrating student participation (under 2 MB total) with captions/titles. Please attach these photos in .JPEG format directly to email. Thank you!

See attached photos

IRA Santa Rosa Island Trip

Name	Course
1. Isabelle McBain	PADA 455
2. Alma Andrade	PADA 455
3. Jessica Clay	PADA 455
4. Terri Clay	PADA 455
5. Chelsea Rueda	PADA 455
6. Irene Flores	PADA 455
7. Amanda Wilson	PADA 455
8. Bonnie Lavin	PADA 455- Instructor
9. Maelyn Escamilla	ECS 463 01
10. Gisselle Pretell Fernandez	ECS 463 01
11. Autumn Hersey	ECS 463 01
12. Miranda Martin	ECS 463 01
13. Kristin Romero	ECS 463 01
14. Yannel Valadez	ECS 463 01
15. Cristal Vasquez	ECS 463 01
16. Micaela Bavaro	ECS 463 02
17. Andrea Stamatelaky	ECS 463 02
18. Barbara Paulino	ECS 463 02
19. Annie White	ECS 463 01 & ECS 463 02- Instructor
20. Carlisha Zacarias	ECS student
21. Larisa Callaway-Cole	ECS Lecturer

