

**AIDS Activism on US Campuses Through Academic  
Service Learning:  
Lessons Learned from the OneWorldBeat Project**

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Presented at the Conference on  
Entertainment-Education and the Global African Experience  
Department of African-American Studies/  
Program of Development Communication  
Ohio University, Athens, Ohio 45701

**April 15-17, 2004**

# **AIDS Activism on US Campuses Through Academic Service Learning:**

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### **Introduction**

Perhaps one of the most powerful existentialist dilemma's felt by academics is a sense of futility, a sense that research findings barely reach audiences beyond the academic community. Scholars who conduct research on the problems that accompany globalization may be especially prone to these feelings. As the forces that promote economic globalization grow ever stronger people concerned with the growing human costs of these processes may feel their work increasingly irrelevant.

Research on the HIV/AIDS pandemic is particularly disheartening for a number of reasons. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is the signature epidemic of the global economy. It is a disease whose contours are the contours of the world's dispossessed. Roughly 70% of those afflicted with HIV are in Africa (Bourgault, 2003, p. 25). Roughly 95% are in the developing world (Singhal and Rogers, 2003, p. 40). In the developed world, those suffering from the disease are largely those whose demographic profiles replicate the people of the developing world (Robbins, 2002, p. 241). Access to treatment is equally disheartening with less than 1% of HIV+ Africans receiving treatment and less than 5% of HIV+ citizens from developing nations (Singhal and Rogers, 2003, p. 145).

To list the mechanisms that have helped to promote the disease is to list a compendium of conditions of the global economy in the 21<sup>st</sup> century: increased economic migration, dissolution of stable family life, rampant urbanization, increased trafficking of women, and growth in scale and variety of the commercial sex trade, state dissolution, and increased military conflict (Bourgault, 2003, pp. 32-45; Singhal and Rogers, 2003, pp. 37-76).

These conditions are coupled with such emblems of 21<sup>st</sup> century capitalism as user fees for primary health care and the promotion of irresponsible sexuality through the tools of popular mass culture (Robbins, 2002, pp. 222, 249; Bourgault, 2003, p. 40).

The political flip flops of the Bush administration and the need to sift through the continuous “spin machines” in Washington to interpret the funding policies of the present US administrations with the regard to the AIDS crisis exacerbate the problem. Just when we think we have made progress and finally gotten Bush’s attention, we recognize another set back (<http://www.africafocus.org> April 4, 2004.)

When examined from a global systems perspective, the HIV pandemic seems likely to be with us for years to come. It’s discouraging to learn about AIDS and to teach about it. For those of us who teach about human misery are in the uncomfortable position of sharing with our students the complicity of the North with historic and economic forces that profit the North and her citizens and impose misery on the South. It is a truism to say that today’s students “don’t want to know,” just as it is a fact of life that people adapt to situations they feel powerless to change. But with that sense of powerlessness comes a pervasive sense of cynicism. The cynicism turns people inward, eroding people’s desire to engage in public service. The challenge facing today’s educator is provide a way for students out of the void, out of a sense of futility. Academic Service Learning is a technique or system for doing just that.

Academic Service Learning is an action or a practical activity that is incorporated into an academic course so as to encourage the student to attempt to either enact concepts or to try out solutions to problems raised in the theoretical portion of the course. Broadly speaking, Academic Service Learning (ASL) can include any practical work for which a grade is given. But with ASL there is typically a twin bias toward service in the public or non-profit (NGO) sector, a focus on group activity, and an orientation favoring better citizenship.

The author is an AIDS scholar and activist who has designed or collaborated with eleven different campus AIDS activism projects since 2000. These include public theatrical performances, AIDS art contests, Theatre for Social Change Workshops, World AIDS Day commemorative events, and a group radio scriptwriting project. While each of these activities was conducted with student participation, none could be properly considered ASL projects per se. This is because the projects were ancillary to courses, or because they involved only a few student volunteers/directed study students. The following is a preliminary report on an Academic Service Learning project undertaken during the Winter 2004 semester at Northern Michigan University.

## **The Class**

The ASL project was undertaken in a Global Communication Class, BC 420, offered by the Department of Communication and Performance Studies at Northern Michigan University. BC 420 is a communication class that uses an economic systems approach to analyze globalization and its attendant problems, including media concentration. The course also examines the AIDS pandemic and surveys communication strategies and campaigns that have been used worldwide the stem the tide of this dreadful epidemic. Initially, there were 25 students enrolled in this course representing five different majors:

Media Production/New Technology (MPNT); Electronic Journalism (EJ); Public Relations (PR); Liberal Studies (LS); and International Studies (IS). (A copy of the course syllabus is appended).

## **The Project**

The class engaged in the organization and staging of a OneWorldBeat benefit concert to promote awareness of HIV/AIDS and to raise funds for groups assisting those suffering in the HIV/AIDS pandemic. OneWorldBeat is a brainchild of Hollywood producer/activist Andy Treichler. His idea was to hold HIV/AIDS benefit concerts simultaneously all over the world during the weekend of March 19 through 21. At last count, there were more than 160 concert events held in more than 40 countries during the third weekend in March 2004 (<http://www.oneworldbeat.org>).

The ASL class undertaken was conceived as a way to respond to the HIV/AIDS pandemic with concrete action, raising funds for Keep a Child Alive, a project of the Global AIDS Alliance. The funds are used to purchase anti-retrovirals and other medicines for HIV+ African children and their families (<http://www.keepachildalive.org>).

## **Activities Undertaken before the Start of the Class**

In Fall 2003, while attending to one of my regular HIV/AIDS listservs<sup>1</sup> I happened upon the OneWorldBeat website. At that juncture, I had just completed a different AIDS arts project that had had more limited success.<sup>2</sup> I wondered if a dance concert featuring bands with a local following might attract bigger crowds.<sup>3</sup> I consulted a group of seniors and juniors in my Mass Media and Society class to solicit their response to the idea of holding a OneWorldBeat concert in Marquette, and to determine if they thought such an undertaking would be feasible as a class project. This group, some of whom were planning to enroll in the Global Communication class in Winter 2004, felt OWB could work as a class project. I decided to take on the project providing a suitable venue could be found to host the event, and providing we could secure a commitment from one or more local bands.

In November 2003, I spoke with the director of two bands, an Indie Rock band “Múnbút” and a Reggae/Ska band “Ignorant Mob.” Both of these bands have a following around the city of Marquette, and both regularly assist the community by playing benefit concerts. The leader of both groups, Tom Laverty (also a part time student at Northern

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<sup>1</sup> ActAlive run by Janet Feldman of the KAIPG, [kaipg@earthlink.net](mailto:kaipg@earthlink.net), or see <http://www.actalive.org>; Drumbeat [drumbeat@comminit.com](mailto:drumbeat@comminit.com); Creative Exchange, [info@creativeexchange.org](mailto:info@creativeexchange.org)

<sup>2</sup> In Fall, 2003 Northern Michigan University hosted New York City based performer Peggy Pettitt. Ms. Pettitt conducted a powerful “OneWomanShow” that featured a number of skits covering of issues including HIV/AIDS in the US African-American community. A small but dedicated theatre audience attended the performance and gave it rave reviews.

<sup>3</sup> In Fall of 2003, one of my former students and a leader of two local music groups had held a benefit for Angolan AIDS orphans at a local coffee house. The event had been well attended and had generated over \$500.00. He had asked me to speak at this event.

Michigan University) agreed to produce the OWB concert. Things looked good so far, though I felt that holding a dance concert with local bands would hardly constitute a learning experience for most students. I felt there would have to be a new musical element brought to the community. The ideal musical group or individual would be an African performer or group performing indigenous music or some form of hybridized world music. I mined my contacts within the Great Lakes Region and around the US to see whom might be available stateside. No one emerged, but I remained hopeful. I intended to bring someone to campus who would be willing and able to visit classes doing guest lectures and performances and appearing on the local media in addition to playing in our OWB concert. This would help justify the expenses of this musician with the university administration.

Sometime in November I also solicited the support of two of my closest colleagues in the Broadcast area. The first, advisor to the Media Alliance for Communication Students, Dr. Dwight Brady, felt this project would make a suitable video documentary project for his group. A second colleague, Dr. Charles Ganzert, who teaches audio production, felt he would be interested in recording an African or World Music performer in class if such a person could be found. Having collegial interest and support in the OWB student project, while not requisite, makes it possible to extend the project into different sub-disciplines and magnify its significance for the students and the community.

After Thanksgiving 2003, a Communication colleague (Dr. Charles Ganzert) and arranged a meeting with the General Manager of Charter Media, our local TV Cable Service provider. A member of Cable Positive, the Charter Media's GM was very keen to support our project. He offered to produce our promotional material and to cablecast to the entire Upper Peninsula of cable subscribers a finished documentary of the concert. Moreover, he agreed to cablecast student-produced promotional video material if we could arrange it.

Meanwhile, there was need secure a budget, some "special project" funding in order to undertake an Academic Service Learning project of considerable scope and complexity. Fortunately, the University administration, keen on promoting Academic Service Learning and impressed with the commitment from Charter Media, enthusiastically endorsed the project.<sup>4</sup> The College of Arts and Sciences offered us \$3000 in start up funds, funds that could be used to launch our ASL/OWB fundraising project.<sup>5</sup>

A venue for a dance concert needed to be secured. As luck would have it, by December 2003, the desirable university function rooms were already booked for the OWB weekend. It was necessary to investigate off-campus venues that were sufficiently close to the University to permit easy access to students living on campus. Fortunately, we were able to secure a very desirable location, a beautiful historic hotel, the Landmark Inn,

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<sup>4</sup> The OWB project is indebted to Dr. Terrence Seethoff, Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences for financially supporting this undertaking.

<sup>5</sup> A rough budget is to be found in Appendix 1.

overlooking Lake Superior located in Downtown Marquette. The hotel owner, a university alumna with strong ties to the community, granted us the venue rent-free.

During finals week, Fall Semester, I received a series of emails from the second presenter on this panel, Ms. Amy Motto. Keenly interested in the concept of edutainment, she wished to participate in a directed study on the topic. We agreed she could easily serve as my assistant for the OneWorldBeat project. We convinced the Political Science Department to substitute this activity for one of the requirements in her Political Science major.

Throughout Christmas break, I continued to search for the right African performer. But when I went away to Dominica for a ten-day holiday shortly before the New Years, I still hadn't found one. I even had thoughts of locating someone in the Eastern Caribbean during my vacation in Dominica. But I never found a suitable performer there either! When I returned just before the start of the Winter Semester we still had no African performer. But our project had two local bands, an important media promotional outlet, a budget, dance floor, and an eager student assistant. It was too late to turn back! I designed my syllabus with the OneWorldBeat project included!

On the first day of class winter semester 2004 I finally reached a Malian musician in Ypsilanti, Michigan who appeared interested. I took his interest as a sign!!! We had to have an Academic Service Learning Concert. Later that day, when going through the syllabus in class the first day, I announced the project. Student enthusiasm was mixed and tepid, but I was not deterred. Let's face it. No one quite knows what to make of the first day of class. And many students are more focused on how their schedules are going to mesh, than on the content of the course.

## **The Academic Service Learning Component of BC 420**

In January 2004, while we were still focused on theoretical aspects of the course, I distributed team sign up sheets and began to build teams for the OWB project. I also encouraged student to supply any team ideas that I had failed to mention. We created the following teams.

Concert Production (in conjunction with the concert's producer, Mr. Tom Lavery, Director of Múnbút and Ignorant Mob)

Audio Production (for sound documentaries in conjunction with Dr. Charles Ganzert)

Video Production (for the documentary of the concert conjunction with the MACS)

Concert Audio and Video Promotional Announcement Production

Legal Issues/Releases

Fund Raising and Grant Writing/Tee Shirts

Special Assistants to the Executive Producer (Instructor)

Print Promotion

Webmaster<sup>6</sup>

Two additional groups, “Residence Hall/Word of Mouth Promotion” and “Hospitality (for our Malian musician) were created by the class.

I also created a term paper option<sup>7</sup> for those students who felt unwilling or unable to participate on the OWB Academic Service learning project. Two students availed themselves of this option. One of the two eventually dropped the class.

## **Progression of the Course**

BC 420 meets twice a week for one hour and forty minutes. During the month of January, the progress was quite slow. But by early February, the pace of our activity began to pick up. During the month of February we spent about the last 10-15 minutes of the class divided into teams working on the project. The video team was also meeting outside of class with the concert producer. The audio production team was meeting in the Advanced Audio production class where they would record their project.

In early February we also got serious about fundraising. Based on my personal previous experiences with fundraising for performances in the community,<sup>8</sup> the fundraising team designed donation solicitation letters for businesses. One of the students with fundraising experience also sought to “train” his team members. These teams ‘hit the streets’ just after Valentine’s Day. They asked local businesses for minimum contributions of \$100 promising them mention on a concert banner and in the documentary that would be made from the concert. We quickly learned that mid to late February in the Upper Peninsula is not a great time to secure cash donations. After a few more sessions of fundraising, the team leader indicated they were having no luck, but that a high-end jewelry store had offered us in kind items and that he had no idea what we would do with them. One of the other students suggested a silent auction. We agreed to send the teams out again soliciting merchandise. This was much more successful and we were able to amass gift certificates and merchandise suitable for a silent auction.

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<sup>6</sup> Because no web master emerged from within the class, a web master was recruited from outside. He enrolled in an independent project course in order to complete the project.

<sup>7</sup> Term papers were to examine the HIV/AIDS epidemic a selected country whose presence was represented on the OneWorldBeat Website. The paper was to focus on the contours of that epidemic in that nation and then to analyze informational and edutainment responses to the pandemic. Finally the paper was expected to profile the group registered to perform a concert in that country.

<sup>8</sup> The author had raised more than \$13,000 in the community and on campus in 2000 in order to bring a group of eight South African performers.

Spring break took place from February 28 through March 7, 2004. After Spring Break, as the concert date approached, the activities of all the teams intensified. On March 15 we devoted the entire class period. Then on March 17, BC 420 featured our guest performer, Mady Kouyaté who had arrived in town from Ypsilanti the previous day. Mr. Kouyaté treated the class to a prelude of what was to come, a virtuoso performance of the West African kora, heightening their enthusiasm for our event.

## **The Event Itself**

Marquette's OneWorldBeat concert took place at the Landmark Inn, 231 North Front Street, on March 19, 2004. Tickets were sold at a suggested contribution of \$5.00.<sup>9</sup> The doors opened at 7:00 P.M. and early arrivers were invited to begin bidding on silent auction items that were available in the lower level of the hotel adjacent to the dance floor. The musical performance began at 8:00 P.M. with an acoustical performance of traditional Malian music by Malian musician Mady Kouyaté. Mr. Kouyaté played for about one half hour in the beautiful lobby of the hotel. The event broke and then reconvened in the lower level banquet room, a room that featured a dance floor and tables. The two bands played two sets each. After the first two sets, Mady Kouyaté jammed with some of the percussionists in Ignorant Mob.

After the jamming, the results of the silent auction were read, and bidders were invited to come to the auction table to pay for their merchandise. The dance concert resumed with the bands playing until 1:00 A.M. At that time, the hotel required us to strike. The bands packed their equipment and left the premises by 2:00 A.M., the time at which establishments serving alcohol are required by Michigan law to close.

Entire musical portions of this event were videotaped with a basic three-camera set up. One camera left on a wide-shot was used to capture footage that would later serve as the basis for the video web cast. This video is available at <http://www.acs.nmu.edu/media.php#owb>. The additional footage shot is still in production. When completed, the program will air both on the Northern Michigan University's cable access channel and on the access channels of Charter Media that services the entire Upper Peninsula of Michigan.

About one week before the 160 worldwide scheduled events of OneWorldBeat, the OWB website announced that radio web links would be available through Red Devil Radio. Our web master downloaded the needed software, connected his NMU Think Pad into the sound mix board, and accessed the web through the Landmark Hotel's Charter Media service. Red Devil Radio web cast our signal for about one half hour before we were cut off by cyber gremlins!

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<sup>9</sup> There was considerable disagreement about the pricing. Many students felt we should not exclude attendees with no funds from attending the concert.

## **Mishaps and Acts of God**

The Upper Peninsula's traditional Saint Patrick's Day blizzard had come early this year, blanketing the area with almost a foot slushy snow during the week-end prior (March 12 and 13) to our event. But hazardous driving and "white-out" conditions had subsided by the 14<sup>th</sup> March so we were optimistic. And when the Ides were bright and almost warm we breathed a collective sigh of relief thinking the worst of winter was behind us. Warming trends continued throughout the week leading up to the concert. March 19 started out mild enough however windy. But by the evening, fierce northwesterly winds brought freezing temperatures, blinding snow and fierce winds across Lake Superior and onto our shores. The bad weather deterred some of the fainthearted including one of our volunteer ticket salespersons who was unable to get a lift to the concert. The bad weather forced another student, her vehicle, and her "significant other" off the roadway and into a ditch. This was the student carrying 100 OneWorldBeat tee shirts to sell at our events. Fortunately she was unhurt. A hearty soul, she got her jeep back on the road, waited one and a half hours for visibility to improve, and then drove 15 miles from her apartment into Marquette for the OWB concert. The tee shirts sales got off to an 11:00 PM start and suffered the consequences. We are still selling OWB tee shirts and will sell them to members of this audience at a special price!

Inclement weather also deterred our local AIDS Community Health Officer from delivering a set of HIV/AIDS informational brochures and a collection of free condoms for distribution at our event. She had made these items available during our World AIDS Day Arts Contests in December 2003 had promised to do so once again.

Apart from setbacks brought about by the weather, there were a number of organizational details that occurred simply because of the relative inexperience of the players. Better coordination was needed between the local bands, the hospitality team, and the Malian performer. The entire concert would have been more effective if sited on one floor of the hotel. The silent auction would have been better positioned in the well-illuminated lobby of the hotel than in a darkened wall adjacent to the dance floor. A cut of the bar business might have been negotiated between the hotel and the organizers of the concert. Such details could easily be rectified if a similar event were to be held during next year's OneWorldBeat weekend.

## **Outcomes**

To date, the concert event has raised \$2800 for the KeepAChildAlive project and funds are still trickling in.<sup>10</sup> We also reached approximately 275 concert goers and probably hundreds more through the audio and video web casts. The cable cast of the concert and the broadcast of the radio program produced in an Advanced Audio Production class will diffuse important messages even farther. Twenty-five students from BC 420 had a

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<sup>10</sup> See Appendix 2 for a breakdown of proceeds from OWB.

structured ASL experience along with another dozen or so student volunteers who joined in and helped out. I have just completed a review of the OWB project reports from these students. Their enthusiasm for this project proved to be very high and it far surpassed my expectations.

In addition, Mady Kouyaté's class presentations, in BC 325, BC 271, and BC 473A reached another 70 or so students. His media appearances prior to the concert, both on public and on commercial radio and television must have reached several thousand people.

## **Pedagogical Lessons Learned from the OneWorldBeat concert as an Academic Service Learning Project**

- 1. Students are generally receptive to action-oriented projects, particularly projects that allow them to make a positive contribution to a real problem.** Students seem to feel that such activities are more memorable than the learning of abstract academic concepts. Students like doing good.
- 2. Student can build social and leadership skills through ASL.** They seems to build camaraderie at an even deeper level than do group academic projects.
- 3. Students can use the opportunities provided by ASL to try out new skills and to hone existing ones.** Media students are particularly appreciative of production/reporting opportunities. International Studies students are appreciative of ways to connect their academic learning relevant to life in the United States. Through ASL experiences students may learn they excel at organizational tasks, fundraising, accounting, graphic arts, etc.
- 4. Students especially appreciate ASL projects that provide opportunities to develop portfolio pieces and or help build resumes.** Students are also keenly interested in projects that may lead to employment opportunities.
- 5. Students' potential resistance to ACS stems from the fact that some instructors may require far more work than would be expected in a normal classroom.** Faculty undertaking ACS projects should strive to maintain realistic expectations regarding student's other time commitments, conflicts that may include other classes, work, and extra-curricular commitments.
- 6. Students will remember that the human aspect of ASL will remember long after they have forgotten the content of your course.** It is the human interaction that provides the richness of the experience. When teaching about the global AIDS pandemic it is essential to humanize the tragedy. Thus, ASL should include a person or persons whose lives have been touched by HIV/AIDS. Failing that, involve a person whose homeland has been affected by AIDS. I felt it was important to include at least one African performer in a benefit concert for HIV+ African children. Otherwise, this would have been another event wherein

the North provides charity to the South without internalizing the problem. Mady Kouyaté composed a beautiful song about HIV/AIDS that he sang during the concert and that was recorded in the Advanced Audio class. No stranger to the AIDS pandemic, Mady had participated as early as 1996 in an effort organized by Mali's national orchestra to produce a CD for AIDS awareness. Apart from the AIDS pandemic itself, the visit from a recent immigrant to the US, a professional musician from West Africa, provided students with the opportunity to interact with a person of a very different culture and set of life experiences. It provided many students with their first opportunity to hear traditional kora music from the ancient Mandingue tradition. Students were most enthusiastic about their opportunities to interact with this young man, to dine with him, show him around, and to engage him in game of pool.

**7 Students learn differently from different kinds of pedagogical experiences. This ASL project was only one of many techniques for imparting knowledge that might have been used.** And although I was very pleased with the OWB effort and with our various performances, I think there are better ways than organizing concerts to help students internalize the depth and severity of the AIDS pandemic on the African continent. For example, in 2000, I arranged for a group of eight South African performance artists to visit our campus. They stayed for one week, lectured in classes and conducted a workshop for health care professionals. Their visit culminated with an evening performance that included both a musical and an AIDS play. This earlier event, more closely focused on the issue of the AIDS pandemic was probably more powerful in helping students to internalize and personalize the issue. These performers were full-time AIDS activists, and they hailed from a country whose adult seropositivity rate of 22% far surpassed that of Mali's 1.7%.

Again, in 2001, I arranged for Cameroon playwright Dr. Gilbert Doho to conduct a weeklong Theatre for Social Change workshop focused on issues surrounding HIV and AIDS. This was an intensive participatory experience and was clearly more effective in helping participating students to grasp the gravity of this pandemic.

## **Organizational Lessons Learned from the OneWorldBeat Project as an Academic Service Learning Project**

**8 Try to involve the local media and the local community as much as possible in an ASL project.** I believe I was able to sell the project to the students because Charter Media, our local cable service provider had agreed to carry promotional materials for the program, and had agreed to carry a completed documentary of the show. I was able to use this argument to generate support from the hotel. And the offer of a free venue for hosting the concert in turn encouraged and motivated our students. The involvement of each of these two major players, combined with the support of the University was a hook that we

used to generate support of merchandise from local businesses. Later, we received support from locally owned commercial radio stations together with the University's Public Radio and Television stations. Support of local media helps to bestow status on the project and to generate "buzz" within the community. It helps to keep the students motivated.

- 9. Enlist the support of like-minded religious groups in ASL projects when possible.** We were lucky to receive the support of the Marquette Unitarian Universalist Congregation. In this case, one of the students was a member and a Sunday School teacher there. She was able to organize a Children's Bake Sale that netted \$115.
- 10. Consider calling upon the services of at least one student service organization in an ASL project where needed and if practical.** Many student organizations are engaged in philanthropy work and are eager to find worthwhile social service projects in which to engage their members. Moreover, they may have budgets that can provide necessary start-up funds that can provide seed money for projects of this type. In our own case, we used the services (but not the funds) of a campus group that produces visual media (the MACS, the Media Alliance for Communication Students). Many of the members of the groups were also in my class. These students would otherwise have been producing a popular musical program outside of class. The opportunity to engage in this work for a class project was very appealing and gave them more time to work on their musical productions. The project increased the visibility of the Media Alliance for Communication Students and helped them to improve their skills. The Student Chapter of International Planned Parenthood Federation, Vox, also offered their services to our project. Unfortunately, we failed to follow up on this contact and altogether missed their services.
- 11. Elicit the support of academic colleagues who teach in related areas.** Finding projects or project components that work in several classes, including those of your colleagues makes it easier to secure funding from the administration. It also makes it easier to have students excused from your colleagues' classes to work on your project if they are also working on theirs. Audio Production Instructor Dr. Dr. Charles Ganzert, was able to use Mady Kouyaté, in two class exercises. One of these will turn into a production in its own right, an hour-long Public Radio program on Malian folk music.
- 12. Find ways to develop synergy across your own teaching assignments in order to facilitate the ASL experience.** In addition to the BC 420 class, I teach a course entitled Communication and Performance in Africa, BC 325. This second course is a Liberal Studies course and is taken by students from a range of disciplines across the University campus. Because there is some overlap in the classes, I was able to draw from an additional pool of students to volunteer to help with certain tasks. Some students from this class assisted in set up, ticket sales, and work with the silent action. They were also treated to a preview during the BC 325 class that

met just prior to the conference. They were also assigned to come to the event, the best homework, I assured them, they would ever have. Our guest performer, Mady Kouyaté, moreover, served an important guest-lecturer/performer for both classes. Even without the planned OWB concert event, his visit could easily have been justified and supported on pedagogical grounds.

- 13. Establish a web presence with your Academic Service Learning Project, or choose one that already exists, and plug into it.** A website gives the project a global currency and an up to date feel. It permits friends of students in other parts of the country/world to access the website and to read about their activities. I believe we were very lucky to find OneWorldBeat, for it had a ready-made website to which we could register. Later, we were able to feed articles on our progress to this website. Moreover, the idea underlying the OWB website nicely was nicely parallel to the contours of the BC 420 course. **Articles about us can be seen at [http://www.OneWorldBeat.org/pages/owb\\_c\\_home.html](http://www.OneWorldBeat.org/pages/owb_c_home.html)**
- 14. Lead by deed.** The instructor should be willing to engage in all of the tasks assigned. It is encouraging for students to see that their will instructor will run camera, solicit community donations, sell tee shirts, etc.
- 15. Delegate, delegate, delegate.** A project of this complexity requires many assistant executive producers. Dependable students, preferably graduate assistants, if available, should be recruited to work alongside the executive Producer (faculty coordinator). If necessary, recruit students to complete independent projects so as to assist in class-based academic service learning project.
- 16. Take full advantage of secretarial and clerical help available through university channels.** Our Department Secretary/work study staff designed the ticket and produced concert tickets. The College Secretary/work study staff assisted in contacting some auction winners who left before the end of the OWB concert. When something must be accomplished quickly, or when students have failed to deliver, there is no better way of assuring that a task will be completed than to give it to an experiences university secretary.
- 17. Start Planning Early.** The framework of an Academic Service Learning project must be established before class begins. This means some of the parameters must already be laid out before the start of the semester. Such exigencies perforce limit student choices and options and may seem to fly in the face of the democratic nature of the Academic Service Learning experience. This notwithstanding, it is a mistake to leave too many logistical decisions to student groups. Valuable time will be wasted arguing about simple procedures. Assume the Peter Principle and start moving as soon as your idea is formulated. One of the students in our class went into labor and delivered a premature baby two months before the due date, Michelle's was a very important member of the fund-raising team and her services were greatly missed after the birth of her tiny preemie.

- 18. Promote student problem solving, including experiments with trial and error, in areas that are not time-sensitive.** Students should be allowed opportunities to solve problems that are not time sensitive. Deciding how (but not when) to promote an event or who will meet performers at the airport are fine examples of issues that can be decided by committees, even after the semester begins. Locating and securing a concert venue or start-up funds for a project or supervisors in the community are often elements that must be in place before an Academic Service Learning Project can begin. Remember also that growth means the opportunity to develop social and leadership skills and to engage in self-discovery. Teams with mixed ability levels are a natural part of group dynamics and will help most of the students involved in them. Be conscious of varied skill levels.
- 19. Be flexible.** There is an expression about the best-laid plans. Be prepared to abandon an idea that is not working. When our fundraising hit a blank wall, we switched to the concept of the silent auction. It was effective substitute for raising funds.<sup>11</sup>
- 20. Have fun and be a sport.** There is probably a desire among many instructors to create an Academic Service Learning project that runs as smoothly as a traditional college class. This desire is likely to be thwarted along the way. Instructors must remember that college students tend to be inexperienced. Often their willingness to perform a task outweighs their abilities. Or their ability to anticipate roadblocks, especially schedule conflicts, is underdeveloped. Students will disappoint and it's best to anticipate these eventualities with a back-up plan. Some will drop the class, or otherwise drop the ball. The instructor must also take these inevitable set backs with grace and humor. An instructor's bad mood will leave students dispirited and may ruin the entire event.
- 21. Consider obtaining professional advice from the University development fund for fundraising efforts.** Fund-raising should be well-thought out and professionally executed. When soliciting corporate donations from branches of multi-nationals begin early because decisions regarding donations must usually be made at corporate headquarters. And remember that local businesses prefer to invest in the community than to invest in distant causes. Try to localize a global AIDS fundraiser or similar venture with mention of local support. Be sure to drop names of other local donors/supporters and of your university. And when fundraising, remember to ask for an amount somewhat higher than you anticipate the donor will give you. Then when he or she says no, be prepared to suggest a lower amount or an in-kind contribution.

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<sup>11</sup> The silent auction suffered from a certain lack of organization and lack of planning. A last minute addition, it never ranked its own separate organizational committee. Responsibility for the silent auction fell upon fund-raisers, assistants to the executive producer, me, and several volunteers.

**22. Remember to show gratitude and to acknowledge all contributions, big and small.** This will make it easier to return to the same sources on your next Academic Services Learning venture.

On a final note, I would like to reiterate my position that this report represents a preliminary look at a first attempt to engage in AIDS activism within the context of Academic Service Learning. It is clear that an Academic Service Learning model can be used to raise funds and to raise awareness of the global AIDS pandemic. The technique is attractive and satisfying to students. The extent to which this particular pedagogical method is preferable to other initiatives is a matter of some debate. Discussion and comments are welcome.

## References

Bourgault, Louise M. 2003. Playing for Life: Performance in Africa in the Age of AIDS. Durham: Carolina Academic Press.

Robbins, Richard. 2002. Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Singhal, Arvind and Rogers, Everett. 2003. Combating AIDS: Communication Strategies in Action. New Delhi, India: Sage Publications.

<http://www.africafocus.org>

<http://www.oneworldbat.org>

<http://www.keepachildalive.org>

## Appendix 1-

### Rough budget for OWB Academic Service Learning & Related Projects

Performer (out of town) + Academic visits		\$1500.00
Food, lodging, airfare		500.00
Posters		250.00
Local Bands	gratis	00
Venue	gratis	00
Airtime on Charter Communication (Cable TV)	gratis	00
Promos on local commercial and Public Radio	gratis	00
News coverage on local commercial and Public TV	gratis	00
Silent Auction Items	gratis	00
Miscellaneous (video tapes, entertainment, airport transit)		250.00
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$3000.00</b>

## Appendix 2

### Proceeds from OWB Benefit Concert and Related Activities

Ticket Sales 275 @ \$5.00	\$1375.00	
Tee shirt sales 40 @\$10.00	400.00	
Proceeds from Silent Auction Items	660.00	
Donations	365.00	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$2800.00*</b>

\*Tee shirt sales are ongoing. Some items won at auction are yet to be collected and purchased. Another \$200.00 is anticipated.

## BC 420 Global Communication

Dr. L. Bourgault  
Office Magers 354

Office Phone: 7-1645;

Meets MW1:00-2:40 LRC 235B

Office Hours: TR 2-6; + others by  
appointment

Email:Lbourgau@nmu.edu

### ADA Statement

If you have a need for disability-related accommodations or services, please inform the Coordinator of Disability Services Office at 405 Cohodas (227-1550.) Reasonable and effective accommodations and services will be provided to students if requests are made in a timely manner, with appropriate documentation, in accordance with federal, state, and University guidelines.

**Course Description:** In the last 20 years, the world's mass media systems have become increasingly interconnected through the market forces of multinational capital. Responsive to the demands of profit, these forces often fail to address major social issues affecting the planet. In so doing, they tend to neglect the use communication media to their full potential as forces for social change. The first four weeks of this course will foreground global social processes involved in culture of capitalism, i.e., the forces that promote the generation of profit and continuous growth at the expense of other considerations. After this initial grounding, the course will examine communication and media applications for purposes other than profit, i.e., uses of media and communication designed to address social problems and intended to empower people to devising solutions to social ills. One social problem that will receive a great deal of attention is the HIV/AIDS pandemic, arguably the most severe epidemic humankind has seen in 1000 years.

The course will also engage students in the task of becoming student activists. In so doing, the class will participate in producing a benefit concert (and a series of related activities) scheduled to take place in Marquette on March 20, 2004. The concert, undertaken in conjunction with an INGO called OneWorldBeat, will raise funds for the Keep a Child Alive Foundation, a foundation that provides ARV treatment to HIV+ children in Africa.

**Texts:** Robbins, Richard H. 2002. Global Problems and the Culture of Capitalism, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

2) **Dagron, Alfonso Gumocio. 2001. Making Waves: Studies in Participatory Communication for Social Change. New York: The Rockefeller Foundation (to be distributed in class.)**

3) Singhal, Arvind and Rogers, Everett M. 2003. Combatting AIDS: Communication Strategies in Action. New Delhi, India: Sage.

**Other readings to be distributed as handouts.**

### **Assignments and Points:**

**Class Presentations:** Each student will be expected to participate in a group project with four students. The projects will present selected cases from the Making Waves Text. Each Case presentation will include

- 1) National/regional context within which the case study exists
- 2) Description of the problem tackled, including its relationship to the culture of capitalism (as described in the Robbins text), and statistics as to the extent of its prevalence.
- 3) Nature of the project, including communication methods used to empower targeted publics. Rationales of donors funding the project should also be supplied. Samples of communication media produced for the project could also be provided.
- 4) Aspects of social change that have occurred as a result of the case/project. Constraints or failures may be included. Suggestions for further communication interventions aimed at solving the problem.

**An annotated bibliography and notes from each presenter must be submitted along with any other handouts provided the class. Student paper work will be considered, and a group grade will be given by the instructor. In addition, each team member**

**will submit an evaluation his or her peers on the team. The grade received by each student for a given group project will reflect a 60/40 split between the instructor's evaluation and the collective team members' evaluations of a given student's work.**

**Note:** I encourage you to begin this assignment early. Please consult me about your projects as I have a great deal of material in my home library that I will lend to students. The class presentation will serve as a model for the term paper.

**Making Waves Case Presentations = 25% of final grade.**

**ONEWORLD BEAT PROJECT ON SOCIAL ACTIVISM.** Students will be expected to work throughout the semester on the OneWorldBeat concert that is scheduled for March 20. This work will be apportioned over 7 or 8 groups. Each student will be expected to join one of these groups and to participate according to the needs of the project. The work of each of the teams will be graded and this grade will constitute 25% of the final course grade. Each student's individual grade for the social activism project will be made up of the group grade for the team (given by the instructor) and the team members' evaluations of each member. Here again, there will be a 60/40 split on this grade with 60% given by the instructor and 40% given by the students' teammates.

I will expect a report from each student on the work that he/she completed in the Social Activism project and a set of reflective comments on the nature of this exercise as both a learning tool and a tool for social change.

**OWB Social Activism project - 25% of final grade.**

**Exams:** There will be two exams, an early semester in-class test, worth 20% of the final grade and a take-home final worth 30% of the final grade. The early semester in-class test will feature a combination of multiple choice, true and false, short answers, and essays type questions. The final will feature full-length essay

questions and will be **cumulative**. FOLLOW DIRECTIONS CAREFULLY IN COMPLETING THE TAKE HOME FINAL.

**Absence Policy:** Students will be given two free absences, excused or otherwise. Afterwards, each two absences will be worth 1/3 of a letter grade to be subtracted from the final grade. Eight absences will have the result of lowering a student's grade an entire letter.

**Attendance Prize:** Students with a perfect attendance record will have their grades raised by 1/3 of a letter.

**TECHNOLOGY POLICIES:** 1) All work must be submitted in hard-copy. Kindly paginate and staple all work.

**2) Use of laptops in class for purposes other than taking notes/web searches pertinent to the topic at hand (i.e.,) will lead to the banning of laptops for all students. I reserve to make this determination.**

## **Agenda**

**Week 1 Jan. 12 and 14. Capitalism and the Making of the Consumer.**

**Reading:** Robbins, Chapter 1.

**Video:**

**Week 2: Jan.19 and 21.The Laborer and the Culture of Capitalism & The Rise of the Merchant, Industrialist, and Capital Controller**

**Reading:** Robbins, Chapters 2 and 3;

**Video:** "The Global Assembly Line."

**Week 3: Jan. 26 and 28. The Rise of the Merchant, Industrialist, and Capital Controller; The Nation State and the Culture of Capitalism**

Reading: Robbins, Chapters 3 and 4.

**Week 4: Feb. 2 and 4. Constructing the Citizen Activist & Participatory Communication for Social Change.**

**Feb. 2: Test 1 (On Robbins, chapters 1, 2, 3, & 4 and lectures and course material Jan. 12 through Jan. 28).**

Reading: Dagon, Making Waves, pp.1-36.  
Robbins, Chapter 13.

**Week 5: Feb. 9 and 11. Hunger, Poverty, and Economic Development**

Reading: Robbins, Chapter 6  
Dagon, MW, Grameen Village Phone, pp. 271-276.

**Video: Grameen Bank. (Search for Common Ground).**

**Student Case Presentations: Feb.11 (Grameen Village Phones).**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 6: Feb. 16 and 18. Environment and Consumption & Women in Poverty**

Reading: Dagon, MW, Video Sewa, pp. 85-89;

Reading: Robbins, Chap 11, pp. 324-328.

**Feb. 18: Student Case Presentation (Video Sewa)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 7: Feb. 23 and 25 Labor Issues & Children in Poverty**

Reading: Dagon, MW, Radio Gene Yi, pp. 239-244.

**Dagon, Miners Radio, p. 43-48.**

Robbins, Chapter 2 (reread)

**Feb. 23: Student Case Presentation. (Miners Radio)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Feb. 25: Student Case Presentation (Radio Gune Yi)**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 8: March 8 and 10. Disease and the Global HIV/AIDS pandemic**

Reading: Robbins, Chapter 8

**Handout: Bourgault, Playing for Life: Chapter 2 (AIDS in Africa)**

**Week 9: March 15 and 17. The Global HIV/AIDS pandemic. Preparing for the OneWorldbeat Concert.**

Reading: Singhal and Rogers, Chapter 1: History of the AIDS Epidemic

**Assignment: Attend OWB concert, Sat. March 20**

**Week 10: March 22 and 24; Cultural Strategies for Combating Disease**

Singhal and Rogers, Cultural Strategies, Chapter 5

**Week 11: March 29 and 31: The AIDS pandemic, South Africa's Beyond Awareness Campaign.**

**Reading: Handouts, AIDS in South Africa; AIDS in Mali by L.M. Bourgault (from Playing for Life)**

Reading, Singhal and Rogers, Chapter 6: Overcoming Stigma  
Dagron, MW, Aaroham Street Theater, pp. 109-114.

**March 29: OWB- Project Report and Social Activism comment paper due**

**March 31: Student Case Presentation: Aaroham Street Theater**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 12: April 5 and 7: Entertainment-Education**

**Reading: Singhal and Rogers, Chapter 7-Entertainment-Education**  
Dagron, MW, Soul City, pp. 175-180.

**April 7: Student Case presentation: Soul City**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

**Week 13: April 12 and 14 Lessons Learned about Combating HIV/AIDS**

Reading: Singhal and Rogers, Chapter 10.

**Week 14: April 19 and 21-Review and Catch Up**

April 21: Distribution of Final Exam

**Week 15: April 26 and 28: Final Examination-Due Date TBA**

*Have a Great Summer: I hope you enjoyed the course. I hope you have a new understanding and appreciation of social activism!*