

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- 1. Briefly describe the proposed new program. Please indicate if it is an expansion of an existing program; a new program; a cooperative effort with another institution, business, or industry; or an on-campus or off-campus program. Attach any formal agreements established for cooperative efforts.**

This is a proposal for a new interdisciplinary Master's degree in Intercultural Youth and Family Development. The idea was initiated following a symposium sponsored by the Society for Research in Child Development, in which representatives from several international aid organizations emphasized the shortage of individuals trained with intercultural perspectives in their pool of job applicants. The proposed program will therefore fill a vital and unmet need for students who wish to engage in volunteer or compensated work in the helping professions outside of their own culture, and to do so in an ethically sound and well-informed manner. The emphasis will be on developing applied competencies (values, knowledge and skills) necessary for effective service in a variety of cultural settings. These will be based on knowledge from psychology about comparative practices and behaviors related to children and families, from counseling about appropriate tools for working with youth and families in different cultural contexts, and from the fields of health, nutrition, leadership, negotiation and non-profit organization and management as applied to cross-cultural perspectives. The goal of the program will be to deepen understanding of the impact of culture on patterns and outcomes of child development; to build understanding of ethnocentric assumptions; to learn to cope with emotional responses in difficult service situations; to deal with personal health/safety when working in other cultures; and to attain professional efficacy (such as capacity building and assessing results of assistance efforts). We know of no other MA program of its kind.

The proposed degree would consist of a minimum of 34-36 graduate credits earned on campus and a 1-2 year supervised field placement experience. Placement may be with Peace Corps, Vista, or an established Nongovernmental Organization (NGO) either within the United States or abroad. The agency or organization would be one that addresses youth and family needs in a culture other than the student's own (e.g., orphanages, shelters for street children). Students from non-American or Western European cultures could also find this degree program relevant, and would add a great deal to the overarching questions posed during the academic and field work. Thus, an effort will be made to recruit students from other countries, and to provide them with appropriate volunteer field experiences in community agencies in the U.S.

We intend to establish formal partnerships with volunteer agencies that will streamline the process for students who wish to be assigned to field placements in other countries. The Peace Corps have granted approval, pending UM and BOR approvals, for this degree program to be added to the partner school agreement already in place with The University of Montana (currently only in conjunction with the College of Forestry and Conservation International Master's Degree program). Students will also have the

option of doing fieldwork in a non-Peace Corps placement deemed mutually satisfactory to faculty advisors and the student. This might be in urban settings with predominant populations of immigrants in the USA, or in reservation agencies with American Indians or Alaskan Natives, or internationally, in a setting of interest to the student. Preparation will focus on child and family needs, cross-cultural understanding, and helping or “enabling” competencies. This is not preparation for emergency workers, humanitarian crisis intervention, or peacekeeping efforts. Students will be actively discouraged from seeking volunteer opportunities in dangerous or unstable regions or cultures.

2. Summarize a needs assessment conducted to justify the proposal. Please include how the assessment plan was developed or executed and the data derived from this effort.

The idea for creating this degree began in response to an identified need for multicultural training expressed by leading international human development experts, child and family researchers, and representatives of humanitarian relief agencies. Many professionals who have volunteered through Peace Corps, teaching exchanges, research or work placements with nongovernmental organizations, or with USAID have attested to the need for greater knowledge and preparation when attempting to help across cultures. Despite good intentions, mistakes are often made. Helping and instructional practices are very much an expression of any given culture, and are not always readily translated from one culture to the next. Examples of inappropriate or ineffective practices and techniques abound. People can be highly educated in their field, and extraordinarily effective at helping within their own cultural setting, yet find their efforts are ineffective or even damaging in another culture. The goal of this program is to train students prior to their volunteer or paid service in other cultures, so that they will be prepared to protect the dignity, sovereignty, and self-worth of those with whom they work. There is a growing need for persons with this kind of preparation at a time when increasing numbers of youth and families are confronted with hunger and poverty worldwide, there is a dramatic increase in street children in urban areas, and the number of orphans due to HIV/AIDS is reaching epidemic proportions.

After the initial need was identified, and the idea for this set of studies was conceived, a number of avenues of needs assessment were pursued.

- 1) We did a thorough Internet search for master’s programs similar to the one proposed (*for results, see below*).
- 2) We met with officials from Peace Corps and related national and inter-national professional organizations (American Psychological Association, American Counseling Association, Social Science Research Council, UNICEF) to obtain input about the need for and value of such an effort.
- 3) We conducted meetings with other faculty and administrators at UM and at other institutions of higher learning. These included representatives from related disciplines and programs such as Sociology, Social Work, Anthropology, Counselor Education, Psychology, Economics, and the Office for Civic Engagement, and Campus Compact.

4) We spoke with administrators of United Nations and nongovernmental helping organizations from other cultures to determine the feasibility of placing students abroad and of recruiting international students to participate in the program.

Findings: Although there are many Master's level training programs in the U.S. in international studies, maternal and child health, medical anthropology, nutrition, peace studies, social justice, humanitarian aid, and global studies, we did not find any with an applied focus specifically on understanding child and family systems from a multicultural perspective. Many helping profession graduate programs have begun to add courses in multicultural applications, but these often remain at the theoretical level with few requirements for applied service or field-based experiences. In addition, many of these programs focus more on physical health interventions and preventative measures, whereas the IYFD program would place greater emphasis on mental health and behavioral needs of children within the contexts of community and social support systems.

Officials and policy advisors we spoke with from Peace Corps, UN-related agencies, Native American mental health service representatives, and major professional organizations were not only receptive to this idea—they were uniformly enthusiastic and eager to see such a program. Their feedback indicated that a focus on the needs of children is currently a high priority for a number of important training and funding programs (e.g., Social Science Research Council, Ford Foundation and Gates Foundation). The Country Director of Peace Corps-Ghana has offered to facilitate development of this program by using projects in Ghana as “pilot” field placement sites (e.g., they have one of the only programs for volunteers to teach in Schools for the Deaf).

Our meetings with UM faculty (from many disciplines) and administrators were also positive, albeit with wise cautionary guidance. UM has a wealth of faculty and administrators interested and involved in global and/or intercultural issues. Many would like to see global-level considerations as clusters of studies within established degree programs, and faculty from across campus have been meeting to envision this as an option. Our proposal is a natural extension of this kind of motivation. The cautions included first making sure that this degree program does not imply that Caucasians/Americans are the appropriate “helpers” and people of other cultures must be “helped.” We intend to address this concern in two ways. First, we expect to attract students from a wide variety of cultures to enhance our notions of what kind of assistance works and what does not work in various cultures and settings. Second, we plan to stress through the campus-based curriculum an informed critique of global volunteerism and other forms of development assistance, guiding students to explore the many instances of helping “gone wrong” or used toward a manipulative, political end, as well as examples of what constitutes effective assistance, both at the macro- and micro-levels.

It is currently possible for students to put together a similar, individualized program for the Master's in Interdisciplinary Studies. Given this possibility, the current proposed program was considered for its efficacy as an Option, rather than as a new program. This idea was rejected because: 1) the student would not receive an MA degree (which is more recognized by employers); and 2) there would be no indication

on the diploma regarding program area or academic emphasis. We believe that students earning the proposed Master's Degree would be highly marketable, based on conversations with officials in international relief organizations, professional organizations (psychology and counseling fields), funding agencies, and universities in other countries.

Finally, the individuals we met with who provide training or services in other cultures were very enthusiastic about this program and its potential (*see letters of support*). For example, Dr. Gyda Swaney, Director of UM's Indians into Psychology program, has offered to serve in an advisory/consultant capacity.

3. Explain how the program relates to the Role and Scope of the institution as established by the Board of Regents.

From the Board of Regents Mission Statement: "... prepare students for success by creating an environment of ideas and excellence that nurtures intellectual, social, economic, and cultural development."

From the UM-Missoula Mission Statement: UM-Missoula "dedicates itself and its resources to the search for truth and new knowledge, the responsibility to disseminate knowledge, and the obligation to provide service to the people of the state, nation, and world. The University strives for excellence in all its endeavors...to assist the people of Montana to achieve their fullest cultural, professional, and personal potential."

This degree will assist people to more fully understand child and human development needs in their own and other cultures, emphasizing not only the acquisition of specific knowledge, but also an active critique of that knowledge and its relative application globally and domestically. Montana itself is a state that embodies a number of cultures, some struggling to survive in terms of cultural identity (language and practices) as well as economically. This degree will prepare people from diverse cultural backgrounds to explore and respect the many ways of helping that exist in the world, and the many ways in which imposing culturally insensitive or inappropriate "helping" can in fact be detrimental. Embedded in both UM and the BOR Mission Statements are the central themes of service, respect for all peoples, and the determination to assist Montanans to live up to their full potential. Now more than ever, to live to one's full potential requires global perspectives of some depth and sophistication.

To the extent possible, students will be encouraged to form a learning community with their cohort, sharing independent study findings, developing support networks, and enhancing each other's growth and development both on campus and during field placements.

4. Please state what effect, if any, the proposed program will have on the administrative structure of the institution. Also indicate the potential involvement of other departments, divisions, colleges, or schools.

The program will not have significant effect on the administrative structure of the institution. As a small interdisciplinary master's degree, we will model ourselves after existing interdisciplinary programs. With instructor permission, students may take existing undergraduate or graduate level classes in departments determined to be relevant to their particular interests. Administrative impact will be minimal.

5. Describe the extent to which similar programs are offered in Montana, the Pacific Northwest, and states bordering Montana. How similar are these programs to the one herein proposed?

We have found no similar program offered in these areas. The Human and Family Development Minor at UM-Missoula comes closest, but it is available only to undergraduates and it does not have the same focus on intercultural understanding. Some study abroad programs include volunteer opportunities but are not degree granting (e.g., Univ. of Minn. "Studies in International Development" or Oregon International Internship Program), and Master's in Social Work degrees do not typically involve a multicultural emphasis.

6. Please name any accrediting agency(ies) or learned society(ies) that would be concerned with the particular program herein proposed. How has this program been developed in accordance with the criteria developed by said accrediting body(ies) or learned society(ies)?

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of this program no particular agency or learned society would have a prototype or set of criteria for this set of studies. However, the U.S. Peace Corps has given approval of the program as a Partner School to provide training for potential volunteers. The emphasis on children and youth fits well with current Peace Corps initiatives and priorities for addressing these needs on a global level. Peace Corps service will therefore provide the required field placement experience for some students.

7. Prepare an outline of the proposed curriculum showing course titles and credits. Please include any plans for expansion of the program during its first three years.

Core Coursework: (to be taught initially as "Special Topics" or other courses already offered in Psychology, Counseling, etc.)

- 3 credits: IYFD xxx *Intercultural aspects of human development
- 3 credits: IYFD xxx *Intercultural aspects of family development
- 2 credits: IYFD xxx *Issues in intercultural service
- 2 credits: IYFD xxx *Intercultural conflict management and negotiation skills
- 3-6 credits: IYFD xxx *Independent study on specific region/culture
- 2-4 credits: IYFD xxx *Field work/internship

2 credits: IYFD xxx *Final Project/Paper
3 credits: Social Science Research Methods (choice of various disciplines.)
Total Core: 20-25 credits

In addition, students will take at least 12 credits of elective coursework, to be selected with and approved by the advisor. Choice of electives will be tailored to each student's own background, needs, language proficiency, and experiences. Faculty in related disciplines will be consulted regarding appropriate courses as part of this process, particularly because admission to a given course may require permission by the professor. It is anticipated that most electives will be chosen from departments such as Anthropology, Communication Studies, Counseling, Foreign Languages, Geography, History, Human & Family Development, Native American Studies, Political Science, Psychology, Social Work, and Sociology.

Assessment Plan

Quantitative and qualitative evaluations of program value and effectiveness will occur on an on-going basis. Objective measures will include numbers of students enrolled, credits earned, instructional and advising hours, completed field placements, and relevant presentations/publications by graduate students and program faculty. (The purpose of the latter will be to provide information and knowledge acquired back to the given cultures and to agencies that might be assisting them, and to ensure that the students are aware of the importance of this kind of communication when engaging with members of other cultures.) Entering students will be evaluated in terms of previous exposure to and attitudes about multicultural youth/family issues, and the ethics and complexities of global "helping" efforts. These concerns will be re-evaluated prior to determining the student's readiness for field placement, and again following their field experience. Each cohort of students (and their supervisors) will be in close contact with UM faculty during this experience, and structured feedback will be obtained regularly from on-site personnel (or Peace Corps staff if applicable). Individual students will evaluate academic courses, field placements, and on-site supervision. This process will be modeled after that used currently by UM's Office for Civic Engagement. Upon return, students will present a professional paper or thesis based on their internship project; this will be the final academic evaluation by the student's committee. A University-based advisory committee will also assist in systematic assessment of the program and will recommend modifications as needed. Because the program is expected to be primarily externally funded, assessments will be a natural part of justifying continued support.

FACULTY AND STAFF REQUIREMENTS

- 1. Please indicate, by name and rank, current faculty who will be involved with the program proposed herein.**

Lynne Koester, Ph.D., Professor, Rita Sommers-Flanagan, Ph.D., Professor
We have also had and/or anticipate significant support from:

Mehrdad Kia, Wes Snyder and Otto Koester, Office of International Programs;
Dave Strobel, Dean of Graduate School; John Klocek, Assoc. Prof., Psychology.

2. **Please project the need for new faculty over the first five-year program. Include special qualifications or training. If present faculty are to conduct the new program, please explain how they will be relieved from present duties.**

Because we intend to keep the program small, we do not anticipate needing any new full-time positions, but rather expanded involvement of existing faculty as funding sources allow. We will also seek grant money to support course buy-outs, summer stipends, and compensation for advising, mentoring, and coordinating.

3. **Please explain the need and cost for support personnel or other required personnel expenditures.**

At present, this need is anticipated to be minimal; we will seek external funding for graduate assistantships, and for clerical and recruitment help.

CAPITAL OUTLAY, OPERATING EXPENDITURES, AND PHYSICAL FACILITIES

1. **Please summarize operating expenditure needs.**

Instructional resources (books, videos, etc.): \$300

Travel to meet with potential funding agency personnel and for recruitment (visits to a few selected colleges/universities): \$1,000

Communications budget will be needed for overseas mailings, telephone and Faxes: \$1500

Materials and supplies will include publicity brochures and costs of printing: \$750

Intercultural Youth and Family Master's Degree Proposal					
	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Student Enrollment	2 – 5	2 - 5	2– 5	2 – 5	2 - 5
Expenditures					
Books, videos	\$ 300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300
Brochures	\$ 750	\$750	\$750	\$750	\$750
Communication	\$1500	\$1500	\$1500	\$1500	\$1500
Travel/recruitment	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000	\$1000
Revenue	\$3550	\$3550	\$3550	\$3550	\$3550
(from external grants)					

- 2. Please evaluate library resources. Are they adequate for operation of the proposed program? If not, how will the library need to be strengthened during the next three years?**

With the planned addition of a new librarian devoted to ethnic studies, with the current high level of interest in global issues in many departments, and with the availability of Inter-Library Loan, existing library resources should be adequate.

- 3. Please indicate special clinical, laboratory, and/or computer equipment that will be needed. List those pieces of equipment or computer hardware presently available in the department.**

A computer with Internet connection will be needed for staying in contact with students (and their supervisors) during field placements, for recruitment activities, and for coordination with NGOs and other field placement sites. Participating faculty members currently have adequate computer equipment, so that a small amount of funding is requested for web/technical support and maintenance.

- 4. Please describe facilities and space required for the proposed program. Are current facilities adequate for the program? If not, how does the institution propose to provide new facilities?**

Current facilities (faculty offices & seminar rooms) in the Counseling Program, Psychology Department and the Office of International Programs are adequate.

EVALUATION OF PROPOSED PROGRAM

- 1. Please name faculty committees or councils that have reviewed and approved the program herein proposed.**

This proposal has been reviewed at UM-Missoula by the Chairs of the Psychology Department and the Department of Educational Leadership and Counseling; Deans of the College of Arts and Sciences, School of Education and Graduate School; Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs. It has also

been reviewed and approved by Graduate Council and Faculty Senate prior to submission to BOR.

If outside consultants have been employed, please list the names of these consultants, their current positions, and titles.

The following individuals have been consulted and have offered their support:
Sheridan Bartlett, International Consultant for child development to several United Nations organizations

Howard Williams, Peace Corps Country Director – Ghana

Paul Nelson, Director, Graduate Education and Training Programs, American Psychological Association

Narayan Shrestha, President, Helping Hands (Non-Profit Health Education Organization – Nepal)

United Nations Office for Child and Youth Policy/Programs