

**International Conference on
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Abstract for Day 2

Glocal Solutions: A Cross-Disciplinary Approach to Nurture Service Leadership beyond the Borders of Hong Kong

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The Faculty of Social Sciences of The University of Hong Kong is committed to nurturing service leaders through different types of experiential learning programs. Particularly, the Service Leadership Internship (SLI) has been founded since Jun 2012 with the support from the Victor and William Fung Foundation. Throughout the years, more than 400 students have been sent to different organizations to collaborate as shared leaders, provide innovative solutions to authentic problems and advocate for the improvement of the human condition.

Understanding the interconnectedness of the world and aligning with the HKU educational aims and institutional learning outcomes, the SLI in HKU goes beyond the borders of Hong Kong to explore the intercultural understanding and global citizenship for service leaders. A pilot project named as Glocal Solutions (GS) has been launched in summer 2015.

GS is a cross-disciplinary credit-bearing experiential learning project in HKU, and aims to nurture global leaders who perform social responsibilities in diverse cultural settings. Based on a needs analysis of the community, an innovative small scale construction project was implemented by the students, under the supervision of World Vision Vietnam. Students worked as shared leaders to create a design that met the community’s needs, while utilizing their academic training and mindful of local constraints in capacity, resources and time.

Sixteen students (eight from the Faculty of Social Sciences and eight from the Department of Civil Engineering) were selected to work collaboratively under the supervision of World Vision Vietnam at Hung Yen, Hanoi in June. To equip these students with the required skills and cultural sensitivity for the challenging work, the two faculties provided one week of training prior to the seven weeks’ experiential learning in Hanoi. The training focused on understanding cultural diversity, technical skills, collaborative skills, needs assessment and project management.

The seven-week experiential learning in Hanoi comprised two parts that required different skills of these cross-disciplinary teams. First, students built a sanitation facility for a local secondary school, with civil engineering students taking the lead, but all students participating. Second, students conducted a social needs assessment, where social sciences students took the lead to engage different stakeholders including local government officials, school principals, teachers, parents and children of various age groups for data collection. Academic tutors of the two faculties made on-site visits at different stages to monitor students’ progress as they worked to improve sanitation in the community and to reflect on the community’s needs.

The project honed a wide range of skills and developed global leaders with awareness and passion for global issues. Students were engaged as active and reflective learners in the process and submitted different types of learning reports. They also captured the various stages of the project by using

multi-media tools. The skills developed will definitely be useful for their future endeavors. The presentation will share with the audience the learning process and learning outcomes of the project.

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