WORKING GROUP ON THE ETHICS OF GLOBAL HEALTH AND VOLUNTEERISM PROGRAMS

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SCHOOLS AND UNITS
Why we should care
Good intentions can lead to poor outcomes

- Undermine health and social systems in host communities
- Strain/drain local resources (time, funds, housing, etc.)
- Teach students & professionals the wrong lessons
  - Objectifying residents; reinforcing stereotypes
- Expose everyone to increased risks [volunteers, patients/families]
  - Substandard health care, etc.
- Compromise our ethics and commitments to do no harm through our involvement in communities.
- Weaken trust in higher education institutions and global north professionals
Questions for Units to Consider
Homework

• How confident would you and your colleagues feel in responding to/advising a student who comes to you to inquire about participating in or selecting an international community-based or service learning program? What criteria would you use to help them vet programs?

• What global community-based experiences (e.g. volunteer programs, service learning programs, global health programs, other community-based programs, etc.) exist in your school/unit for students? Do students tend to seek experiences through existing university programs?

• Alternatively, how frequently are students recruited by third party providers to participate in international community-based programs directly or via classroom presentations authorized by faculty?

• What types of community issues do students in your school/department tend to engage in through these experiences and what organizations and/or communities are they working with? What voice and authority does the host community have in the design/implementation of the project/experience?

• Under what conditions are students encouraged to consider the possible positive and negative impacts of their presence and "service" in the host community? Where and how does this happen? What evidence does your school or unit have that students are learning how to navigate their pre-professional/professional roles in culturally appropriate and ethical ways through these experiences?
Thank you!

We look forward to further discussion in the spring semester!

Stephanie Leslie, slleslie@iupui.edu

Mary Price, price6@iupui.edu