

## **Integrative Learning at Ithaca College Examples and Illustrations**

The following bullet points illustrate some integrative projects and programs currently underway at Ithaca College, as well as a few future possibilities sketched out by School and Division Deans. This is not intended as an inclusive (or exclusive) list, but rather as a set of exemplars to spark additional creative thinking about what integrative learning might look like here at Ithaca.

- **Humanities Technology:** a small group of faculty members within H&S has been meeting to discuss the development of a Humanities Technology collaboration project at Ithaca College. This includes direct collaboration between the Departments of Computer Science and Art History to support faculty projects, teaching initiatives, and student learning opportunities. It also includes the broader and more far-reaching vision of a Humanities Technology Center or a program in Humanities Technology at Ithaca College. A wiki was created to serve this larger group and to act as a repository of relevant documents, links, and ideas ([sites.google.com/a/ithaca.edu/humanities-tech/](http://sites.google.com/a/ithaca.edu/humanities-tech/)). The ideas behind this project are based on many years of work by multiple faculty at Ithaca College. Besides important grants (W. M. Keck Foundation, Hewlett Foundation), there have been many instances over the last decade of faculty collaboration on projects in the humanities and computer science, student-faculty projects around humanities technology, and widespread integration of technology in humanities courses and classrooms. This particular effort aims to create a stable, funded, recognized environment for such collaborations.
- **International Sustainable Development:** Students, faculty and staff with an interest in sustainability could partner together on projects in developing countries. For example, business students may find sponsorship or venture capital to fund micro-loans for local residents to purchase equipment such as sewing machines or pottery kilns. Student teams could write a business plans, develop marketing materials, find retail outlets in North America, and work with local individuals on how the proceeds would be used to enhance the lives of individuals and their communities. For example, a portion of the proceeds could be used for water purification systems or new building materials.
- **Volunteers for the Olympic News Service:** this past summer, a class was created to help students from HSHP and Communications prepare to be Flash Quote reporters at the 2008 Beijing Games. Faculty expertise from the areas of sport and journalism were brought together to enrich the experience of the students. We are currently planning to continue this work for the 2010 Vancouver Winter Games and the 2012 London Summer Games.
- **Music Education:** Students in this program will be asked more and more in the future to align their musical lives and pedagogy with other fields and with other values. Practicing their skills and honing their philosophies with and within other

disciplines will help create a context for their teaching that is more global, more informed and better poised for flexibility as the world of education and musical training evolves. General education and elective credits, coupled with real practice shared with others outside their defined world will add a wonderful broadening aspect to the already highly-valued IC music education degree.

- **Center for Life Skills and Health Care Teams:** The Center for Life Skills grew from a U.S. Department of Education grant to develop an experiential learning model integrating many aspects of health care. Since its inception, students from schools and programs across the college, as well as IC alumni from the National Rehabilitation Hospital in Washington DC, have been active in learning and working together to provide health care and life services to patients. The health care team creates a plan for real people in the community that integrates health and life needs for patients that are recovering from brain injury. This past fall HSHP removed some infrastructure barriers to make it easier for students outside of HSHP to become part of the team. The final weekend course is designed around travel to Washington to observe Health Care teams in the field at the national Rehabilitation Hospital.
- **Environmental Studies:** Including the Environmental Studies major and the Environmental Science major, this program offers many examples of integrative learning. The majors themselves are inherently interdisciplinary. In addition, numerous student projects focus on applying theory to practice, such as the maple syrup project, or are community based, such as the incubator projects within the Partnership for Sustainability Education.
- **Fifth Year:** For students whose major is not focused on professional preparation, we could offer additional opportunities as “5<sup>th</sup> year programming—the comprehensive year.” This could mean exploring the development of additional bachelor’s/master’s degree five-year programs, but it could also mean committing IC to staying connected to students as they have all kinds of year-after-college experiences—internships that are field work, lab work, creative arts/media arts projects; international opportunities, co-op work opportunities. IC can also maintain contact with students who go on to professional programs at other institutions—Ph.D. programs, law school, medical school, architectural study—in order to continue mentoring relationships into the 5<sup>th</sup> year.
- **Outdoor Adventure:** Students in the outdoor adventure leadership program will be participating in a wilderness immersion program while continuing their ongoing studies in other classes. A film production student will be joining the group this spring to film their experiences and create a senior project documentary.
- **Undergraduate and professional certificates:** Offered in winter/summer sessions, these programs serve emerging areas that cut across disciplines, such as our forthcoming certificate in creative economies and event entrepreneurship. Existing courses in corporate meeting and event management, theater

fundraising and publicity, recreation programming, eco-tourism, and film festivals are tied together by a creative economies course that explores the impact of cultural and recreational opportunities on economic re-vitalization and by internships with events such as FLEFF.

- **Living-Learning Communities:** Like the Vecinos community on which it is modeled, *Quartier français* will offer students from all schools of the college the opportunity to explore their interests in French and Francophone cultures in an extra-curricular peer-led setting. The community is set to begin in Fall 2009. Students will be housed together on a single hall in a residence hall and will participate in a variety of cultural programs meant to strengthen and expand their knowledge and interest. Students will also dedicate certain hours of the day to speaking only French while in residence. *Quartier français* Resident Learning Community conforms to Ithaca College values by promoting intellectual growth through linguistic and cultural immersion, aesthetic appreciation through exposure to historical and contemporary manifestations of French and Francophone culture, and character development through intercultural exchange. In fostering a community organized around the notion that foreign language study provides a rewarding means to self-discovery and intellectual fulfillment, *Quartier français* also serves as a model for the lifetime of learning that the College hopes to inspire in each of its students.
- **Graduate Certificates and Degrees:** Existing and new programs can be designed to allow students to “fast track” into programs that expand their disciplinary perspectives and professional skills integrating the undergraduate years with the graduate-level experience. Examples are our existing MBA, Communication MS, MS/ MAT programs in education, and the M.S. in Sport Management, along with the proposed MFA in film and television writing. We also envision possibilities for post-baccalaureate certificates and degrees in interdisciplinary areas such as sustainability, organizational transformation, communication innovation, and non-profit management.
- **DIIS Programs:** The Division of Interdisciplinary and International Studies serves as a creative crucible for a number of integrated learning experiences for students campus-wide, such as the Ithaca College-Longview Partnership, the Center for the Study of Culture, Race, and Ethnicity (CSCRE), the Finger Lakes Environmental Film Festival (FLEFF), and Project Look Sharp (PLS). These interdisciplinary programs provide ways for students, regardless of major, to be involved in constructive action for positive change through on-campus internships, research opportunities, and service in the community. All four facilitate student and faculty interaction both in the classroom and in “the real world” and nurture faculty engagement across disciplines and schools to create a richer intellectual environment than is possible within disciplinary boundaries alone.
- **School of Music:** In majors such as Performance, Composition, Jazz Studies, and Music with an Outside Field need to become independent entrepreneurs in

their future careers. These artists will most likely make their professional way by positioning themselves inside cultural traditions that are shifting and increasingly collaborative with other arts and other social practices. Utilizing general education and elective credits, as well as engaging in extra and co-curricular activities that help them discover and foster new connections and areas of inquiry will help to prepare them more fully for the business-related and collaborative creative challenges that lie ahead.

- **Housing Offering Multicultural Experiences (HOME):** DIIS supports this program in cooperation with faculty from across the College and the Division of Student Affairs. In addition, the DIIS encourages and facilitates faculty-led overseas experiences for Ithaca students. Both of these initiatives encourage faculty and student interaction outside of the classroom, connect experiential learning to the classroom, foster an understanding of our relationship to the rest of the world and support faculty and students experience and learning in a new environment. HOME emphasizes the continuum along which domestic diversity, migration, and international concerns all lie while faculty-led programs help students to make the connections between the on-campus curriculum and the overseas experience.
- **First-Year Living/Learning:** A community could be developed for first-year students in bundled classes that bridge general education and professional studies. For example, School of Business students could co-enroll in the World of Business, Calculus, and Writing classes. These classes would bring together one student cohort, and could be combined with jointly scheduled community activities, speakers in the residence hall, and academic components such as tutoring sessions, writing workshops. Upper-level peer advisors could be assigned to the courses and faculty could coordinate and integrate assignments among the co-enrolled classes. The impact of this could be measured by the third semester retention rate for these students compared to a representative sample of students registered for other sections of the same courses.
- **Careers in Sport Symposium:** Each fall, the department of Sport Management and Media sponsors a symposium, bringing experts (including alumni) to campus to present on various sport-related careers. Students from HSHP, Communications, Business and Economics have attended this event. Students from any school or department with an interest in this area of work have the opportunity to establish personal networks among themselves and with alumni already engaged in the field.