

Innovative and Creative Undergraduate Teaching Proposal *ArtsBridge 2014*

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Rationale

Human beings have always used ingenuity to creatively solve problems and transform the world around them. We believe our students can—through the arts—facilitate change at Weber State University (WSU) and in our communities.

ArtsBridge is a course that provides undergraduate students with academic credit for designing and implementing a comprehensive, needs-based, integrated arts project with community organizations or area schools.

ArtsBridge is based on student imagined and student driven projects. It is the students’ imagination and passion that will shape this work in our community. And while the projects will be diverse, the course will offer students a clear structure and process for navigating the complexities of community engagement.

The ArtsBridge student will work closely with a WSU faculty mentor, community/school stakeholder, peers, and the ArtsBridge program director throughout the process culminating in the development of a capstone project.

Course components include:

- Orientation: project planning, budgeting, leadership, community service, educational protocols, action-based research
- Project Thesis: working from a community need or personal/professional passion
- Partnering: students, community, faculty, and additional resources
- Pre-planning with all stakeholders
- Drafting project description, timeline, budget, resources
- Project process and implementation
- Ongoing observation by faculty mentors and other stakeholders
- Capstone project
- Reflection/Assessment Assignment(s)
 - Student and Capstone Project Assessment (action-based research format) - *link to WSU Office of Undergraduate Research events and conferences*
 - Program/Curriculum Assessment

Depth of Impact:

Experiential learning is foundational to the ArtsBridge course. Emphasis is placed on research-based-learning, collaboration, leadership, and service.

Breadth of Impact:

Our vision is truly cross-disciplinary. To achieve this we will create an ArtsBridge course grounded in the following areas: Theatre, Dance, Music, Art, Education, and reaching across the WSU campus. The ArtsBridge Program Director will work with each of the collaborating departments (Theatre, Dance, Music, Art, Education) to determine how the ArtsBridge course can best serve their majors/minors. This will include the ability to offer ArtsBridge as an elective or requirement in their programs. It will be a variable credit course allowing for adaptability in different projects and programs.

We anticipate the number of ArtsBridge students to be approximately 10 per year due to the intensive nature of the course and with an eye towards sustainability. While the core number of students is limited, the community and regional impact is significant. For example, one ArtsBridge student working in a local school has the capacity to reach not only the individual class members multiple times a semester, but also the entire school population and parents with a capstone project.

The following ArtsBridge scenarios illustrate the breadth of impact in a quantitative manner. The flexibility of this program can manifest in many ways, here are three examples for what an ArtsBridge project might look like:

Example 1 - An ArtsBridge student working towards certification collaborates with a local school to deliver art content and a capstone project in the form of a school-wide neighborhood arts celebration. This project is developed in response to a PTA parent from a local school who contacts WSU because the arts have been eliminated from their curriculum due to funding.

- **1 WSU student** (project director), **9 WSU students** (cohorts, fellow classmates), **1 classroom teacher** (collaborating with the ArtsBridge student), **1 principal** (involved in the planning and implementation), **25 PTA parents** (involved in the planning, implementation, partial funding), **30 public school students** (in the class), **500 public school students** (participating in the neighborhood arts celebration), **30 classroom teachers** (participating in the neighborhood arts celebration), **500-1,000 parents** (participating in the neighborhood arts celebration).

Example 2 - An ArtsBridge student with a desire to raise awareness of the homeless population issues in our community collaborates with local shelters and nonprofit support groups. Work with this population may take different forms: a theatre major may create a performance based on interviews; a visual arts major may design and develop a sleeping pod; a music major may compose and record a performance; a dance major may offer weekly movement classes in the community.

- **1 WSU student** (project director), **9 WSU students** (cohorts, fellow classmates), **1 community organization manager** (involved in the planning and implementation), **5-10 WSU faculty, staff, student** (involved in the planning, prototyping, implementation), **10**

community members (interviews, collaboration), **500-1,000 audience members** (attending culminating event).

Example 3 - An ArtsBridge student is interested in working with local LGBT teens to create a safe after-school Art Space to empower and give voice to this population. Working with the WSU Center for Community Engaged Learning this student identifies a local group working with this population and secures and develops a gallery and performances space for these areas teens.

- **1 WSU student** (project director), **9 WSU students** (cohorts, fellow classmates), **1 community organization manager** (collaborating with the ArtsBridge student), **10 community organization staff** (involved in the planning, implementation, partial funding), **30 LGBT students** (in the after school group), **300-500 community members** (attending the gallery opening and performances).

Measurement:

Course Objectives

- To guide students through the design process and implementation of a comprehensive, needs-based, integrated arts project with community organizations or area schools
- To promote career and service pathways through the arts
- To provide an immersive learning experience to undergraduate students and pre-service educators
- To equip students with the tools to affect change at WSU and in their communities
- To assist students in the creation and dissemination of action-based research and documentation of projects that inform local educators, policymakers, and the public at large

ArtsBridge Student Learning Objectives

- To acquire knowledge in engaged learning through readings, discussions, observations, and reflections
- To identify, analyze, and discuss project planning, budgeting, community service, and educational protocols
- To develop thesis building skills
- To develop leadership skills needed in community action and engaged learning
- To experience and navigate collaborative project partnering
- To engage in planning with community partners
- To engage fully in the experiential learning process recognizing and adapting project goals as needed
- To assess, understand, question and express purpose and complexities critical to one's role in community
- To reflect on efficacy of process, project, and service to the community
- To document and disseminate action-based research process and capstone projects

Accountability:

In preparation for the implementation of ArtsBridge, a project is being piloted in Spring 2014. The attached ArtsBridge budget is based on our preliminary research and similar active learning program models.

Description of the Innovation

Students will have the opportunity to become “societal entrepreneurs” through arts-based engaged learning. The flexibility of this program can manifest in many ways, as outlined in the Project Rationale.

The core of ArtsBridge is faculty mentorship. It is the specialized knowledge and experience of the WSU faculty that will guide the students through the service learning process. The opportunity for students to work closely with their area faculty allows for deeper learning, forming strong professional relationships, practice of appropriate methodologies, and hands-on practical work.

ArtsBridge is based on student imagined and student driven projects. It is the students’ imagination and passion that will shape this work in our community. And while the projects will be diverse, the course will offer students a clear structure and process for navigating the complexities of community engagement.

Preliminary Evidence

The following select sources from our working bibliography will be instrumental in creating and implementing this course. These resources focus on the value and effectiveness of experiential learning.

Asbury, Carolyn and Barbara Rich, eds. 2008. *Learning, Arts and the Brain*. The Dana Consortium Report on Arts and Cognition. Dana Press, New York.

Booth, Eric. 1999. *The Everyday Work of Art*. Sourcebooks. Naperville, IL.

Gardner, Howard. 1983. *Frames of Mind, The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. Basic Books, New York.

Greene, Maxine. 2000. *Releasing the Imagination*. Jossey-Bass. San Francisco, CA.

Nelson, Andrew L. 2008. *The Art of Collaboration: Promising Practices for Integrating the Arts and School Reform*. Arts Education Partnership, Washington, DC.

Pink, Daniel. 2006. *A Whole New Mind*. Riverhead Books, New York.

President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities. 2011. *Reinvesting in Arts Education: Winning America’s Future Through Creative Schools*. Washington, D.C. www.pcah.gov

Sousa, David. 2003. *The Leadership Brain*. Corwin Press, Inc. Thousand Oaks, CA.

Stepian, William. 1997. *Problem-based Learning, a Facilitator’s Guide*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, VA.

Stevenson, Lauren and Richard Deasy. 2005. *Third Space, When Learning Matters*. Arts Education Partnership, Washington, D.C.

Root-Bernstein, Robert & Michelle. 2001. *Sparks of Genius*. Mariner Books.

Implementation

In the first two years of this initiative we will establish experimental courses (#3810) in Theatre, Dance, Music, Visual Arts, and Education. This will allow the time needed for the permanent adoption of these ArtsBridge courses through the necessary curriculum committees.

We anticipate the number of ArtsBridge students to be approximately 10 per year due to the intensive nature of the course and with an eye towards sustainability. While the core number of students is limited, the community and regional impact is significant. For example, one ArtsBridge student working in a local school has the capacity to reach not only the individual class members multiple times a semester, but entire school population and parents with a capstone project.

Detailed Assessment Plan

The ArtsBridge course is designed with ongoing, weekly assessments.

We will design specific assessment and reflect tools to align with our above stated course and student learning objectives. The resulting assessments will determine student learning effectiveness and guide future course improvements.

The following Student Learning Objectives are paired with anticipated assessment tools:

- To acquire knowledge in engaged learning through readings, discussions, observations, and reflections (*weekly seminar meetings, graded written quizzes, discussion and essays*)
- To identify, analyze, and discuss project planning, budgeting, community service, and educational protocols (*graded project planning documents, and formal observations*)
- To develop thesis building skills (*review and revision of graded project planning documents*)
- To develop leadership skills needed in community action and engaged learning (*observation and student participation in leadership activities and exercises*)
- To experience and navigate collaborative project partnering (*observations, ongoing project meetings with stakeholders, graded project planning documents, reflection*)
- To engage in planning with community partners (*observations, ongoing project meetings with stakeholders, graded project planning documents, reflection*)
- To engage fully in the experiential learning process recognizing and adapting project goals as needed (*observations, ongoing project meetings with stakeholders, graded project planning documents, reflection*)
- To assess, understand, question and express purpose and complexities critical to one's role in community (*reflection*)
- To reflect on efficacy of process, project, and service to the community (*reflection*)

- To document and disseminate action-based research process and capstone projects (*a portfolio of student work, submission to WSU Undergraduate Research*)

Sustainability

We envision ArtsBridge as an evolving, cross-disciplinary component of the undergraduate student curriculum at WSU. To achieve sustainability, ArtsBridge will be grounded in the following areas: Theatre, Dance, Music, Art, Education, and reaching across the WSU campus.

The ArtsBridge program director will work with each of the collaborating departments to determine how the ArtsBridge course can best serve their majors/minors. This will include the ability to offer ArtsBridge as an elective or requirement in their programs. It will be a variable credit course allowing for adaptability in different projects and programs.

The sustainability of ArtsBridge programming will occur through several areas: expanded interdisciplinary curriculum, community awareness and engagement, student and faculty participation, and external funding.

As the statewide recognition and appreciation of arts-based learning grows, we anticipate that additional funding will be available both through both private and public sources. Driven by ArtsBridge programming, WSU faculty and students will disseminate their action-based research findings locally, regionally, and nationally thus building fundraising capacities.

Detailed Budget -

Why provide stipends for faculty mentors? Crucial to the success and sustainability of this course is the student experience. Therefore the most significant portion of our budget is dedicated to support the WSU faculty mentors. The amount of dedicated collaborative work with WSU students required by the WSU faculty mentor is extraordinary to successfully facilitate this model. This stipend is designed to recognize faculty's substantial commitment.

Why give students a stipend? Also unique to this innovative course is the stipend provided to ArtsBridge students. The student-driven community engaged work goes above and beyond the requirements of a typical internship or classroom-based course. For this reason, a minimal stipend for ArtsBridge students supports travel, professional materials, and documentation.

Faculty Mentors (Stipend) - (\$500/project x maximum 10 projects) = \$5,000

ArtsBridge Coordinator (Reassigned time/Workload) = \$3,000

Student Scholars (Stipend) = (\$250/project x maximum 10 projects) = \$2,500

Student & Faculty presentations and publications (locally, regionally, nationally) = \$2,500

Transportation (WSU Faculty Mentors and Coordinator) = \$500

Marketing/Recruitment/Community Awareness = \$500

Documentation = \$500

Project Supplies (as needed) = \$500

Total Request = \$15,000