



SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Department of World Languages and Cultures
IUPUI

PRAC GRANT FINAL REPORT

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7. Project Title: "Students' Assessment on Race: Haitian and Dominican Populations"
8. Project Dates: Summer I 2008 / Study Abroad section May 18th-May 29th

Purpose of Grant

My project was to study the opinions of Dominicans and Haitians on the subject of race by using questionnaires specifically prepared for this task. The answers to these questionnaires were going to be assessed by my students of WLAC F100 *Cultural Relationships and Global Interactions. International Service Learning in the Dominican Republic*. The purpose of the assessment was to expand the students' knowledge on the subject of race and use this newly acquired knowledge in their journals, oral presentations and /or research paper.

The questionnaires results were crucial to my students' learning due to two reasons:

- a) Ninety percent of WLAC F100 students were of African American descent
- b) The topics of the class (Dominican history, geography, urban education, politics, economy, and culture) were all studied in relation to how was race was dealt with between Dominicans and Haitians

Overall Project Accomplishments

As stated in my grant proposal, I felt that integrating the questionnaires to standard methods of learning (readings, lectures, oral presentations, diary entries, research papers) would help my WLAC F100 students to analyze the biases in Dominican populations and the difficulties Haitian immigrants endure in the Dominican Republic because of their ethnicity. The idea proved to be right. The students' learning was enriched by the different perspectives



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expressed by Dominicans and Haitians in the questionnaires.

Upon finishing the study abroad section of the course, the students had 18 days to prepare their journal, oral presentation, and research paper. In at least one of these, the students had to incorporate information on the conclusions gathered from class discussions, guest presentations, and questionnaires assessment. On June 19, 2008, the students representing various schools: Education, Engineering, Art, Spanish, and University College, shared the results of their research to the academic community. They stated how important the direct contact with Dominicans and Haitians was to their investigations and how these findings had impacted them academically and personally. The audience consisted of students, faculty from different departments, Chair of World Languages and Cultures, Associate Deans of University College and School of Liberal Arts, and representatives of the Multicultural and Diversity Program.

Methods and Analysis of Results

The WLAC F100 course took place in Summer I 2008. Like many researchers, I had to go through the process of the IRB exam in order to give the questionnaires to Dominican and Haitian participants. Just a few days before the students and I parted to the Dominican Republic, I passed the IRB exam and had the questionnaires for the interviews translated officially and approved by the IRB Committee. See attached examples of the questionnaires. The letter “D” identifies Dominican participants and the letter “H” identifies Haitian participants.

The participants in the course were 14 students, a teaching assistant, a representative from the IUPUI Student African American Brotherhood (SAAB), a representative from University College, and an observer from the Nina Scholars Program. The students were the only ones assessing the questionnaires.

During the first days in the Dominican Republic, the students had regular classes, tours, and special lectures such as the ones prepared by Mrs. Martha Wilmore-Johnson (teacher and descendant of African Americans from Philadelphia), and a seminar on race prepared by Juhanna Rogers from IUPUI and Dr. Lynne Guitar from Pontificia Universidad Católica de Madre y Maestra. Following the seminar, the questionnaires were distributed among Dominican and Haitian participants.

After assessing the answers to the questionnaires, the consensus was that:

- a) Race in different parts of the world is a subject that still divides people
- b) Race discrimination is much more considerable in the Dominican Republic than in the United States



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- c) 70% of Dominicans felt that there is no discrimination in the Dominican Republic but they do not want to socialize with Haitians or live next to Haitian neighborhoods
- d) 30% of the Dominicans that agreed that there is discrimination in their country said that although the answer to the problem might be education and government policies, the prejudice is so ingrained that no solution might help
- e) 100% of the Haitian participants felt discriminated in the Dominican Republic and would like to socialize with Dominicans and live in non- discriminatory neighborhoods
- f) 100% of the Haitians that said that they were discriminated in the Dominican Republic are hopeful that the situation will change due to education and government policies

Obstacles/challenges

The target was to give the questionnaires to an equal number of male and female participants, but this was impossible due to the uneven numbers between the two groups. There were more females than males in the groups.

Changes made to address obstacles/challenges

The questionnaires had to be given to the participants that were available in spite of the difference in numbers according to their gender. It was more important to collect the questionnaires for the students' assessment. The questionnaires provided to be an excellent tool to see how unaware of discriminating patterns of behavior Dominicans are, and how race and discrimination is a painful reality for Haitian immigrants living in the Dominican Republic.

QUESTIONNAIRE ON RACE (D)

1. Where do your ancestors come from?
2. Do you consider yourself white, black, mestizo, or other? If other, please explain.
3. What did your parents and/or immediate family say about people of other races or nationalities like the Haitian population?
4. As a child, did you ever observe or take part in an incident that involved race discrimination?
5. What was more important at your parents' house: race or social status?

10. What was the attitude of your high school teachers towards black or Haitian students?

11. What was the attitude of your high school classmates towards students of other races?

12. Do you remember any particular incident related to race discrimination while you were in high school?

13. Do you work with people of other races? Which race or races?

14. Do you live in neighborhoods that include people from other races? Which race or races?

15. Do you socialize with people from other races? Which race or races?

16. How would you describe the different races in the Dominican Republic?

17. What is your definition of race?

18. What is your attitude towards Haitians living in the Dominican Republic?

19. Do you think there is racism in the Dominican Republic? If so, how did it begin and how was it propagated?

20. What can be done to stop racism and integrate all races?

QUESTIONNAIRE ON RACE (H)

1. Where do your ancestors come from?
2. Do you consider yourself white, black, mestizo, or other? If other, please explain.
3. What did your parents and/or immediate family say about people of other races?
4. As a child, did you ever observe or take part in an incident that involved race discrimination?
5. What was more important at your parents' house: race or social status?

6. Did you attend an elementary school that allowed the inclusion of all races?

7. What was the attitude of your teachers towards children of other races?

8. Do you remember any particular incident related to race discrimination while you were in elementary school?

9. Did you attend a secondary school that allowed the inclusion of all races?

10. What was the attitude of your high school teachers towards students of other races?

11. What was the attitude of your high school classmates towards students of other races?

12. Do you remember any particular incident related to race discrimination while you were in high school?

13. Do you work with people of other races? Which race or races?

14. Do you live in neighborhoods that include people of other races? Which race or races?

15. Do you socialize with people of other races? Which race or races?

16. What are the different racial groups in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic?

17. What is your definition of race?

18. Do you think that there is racism in Haiti and in the Dominican Republic? If so, how did it begin and how was it propagated?

19. Have you been a target of racism while in the Dominican Republic? Please explain.

20. What can be done to stop racism and integrate all races?