

A Global Vision for Taft

In the 21st Century

“Becoming a citizen of the world is often a lonely business. It is, in effect, a kind of exile – from the comfort of assured truths, from the warm nestling feeling of being surrounded by people who share one’s convictions and passions.”

Martha Nussbaum

(ALS, May ‘09)

Draft Strategic Plan – Global Literacy & Activism

Goal

To build on Taft's traditions of academic excellence and service by extending, affirming and reinterpreting the school motto for the 21st century.

Rationale

Taft has a rich history of service and intellectual engagement, and a student body drawn from all over the globe. The school mission is to educate the whole student, and to help them become “good, thoughtful unselfish world citizens.”

Global Literacy and Activism represent key pathways by which head, heart and hand can be engaged and directed to live out this mission together with the school motto: “not to be served but to serve’. They provide opportunities on local, national and global levels for students to engage with the leading issues of the day through rigorous academic study and informed action. Global literacy and activism take place across the curriculum, linking curricular and non-curricular strands to reinforce, enrich and extend knowledge and understanding of critical issues and skills.

The process of strategic planning involves both goal-setting and evaluation, which are built in to the school year so as to allow maximum participation from the community and co-ordination with the budgetary cycle.

WHY?

Why now?

There has never been a better time to make global literacy and activism key priorities for the school:

Growing awareness of our inter-connectedness: globalization, financial crisis, climate change etc

IB, British system Cambridge Pre-U, US commitment to global citizenship as a core focus

A demonstrated high level of commitment, awareness and compassion from students

National and international emphasis on service – ServiceNation, President Obama, the NAIS 20:20 programme

Huge number of resources available

College recognition of value of service and global literacy for global careers

During her address to Taft faculty in September 2008 **Linda Lorimer** (Yale University) identified the following criteria necessary for preparing students to be global citizens in a global workplace:

- Experience of other cultures
- Far greater awareness, and humility
- Global knowledge embedded in all subjects and all courses, and not only electives, but also foundation courses:
- An agreed body of knowledge / skills that students must know before they graduate
- The ability to make comparisons and cross-references; knowing other peoples' stories.

Why Taft?

Mission: The education of the whole student

Motto: Not to be served but to serve

The Portrait of the Graduate.

International students: 14% of student body from 29 countries. This represents a key resource for the school, with the potential to draw on expertise and experience which can realize and illuminate global issues that might otherwise be perceived as distant or disconnected.

Demonstrated student interest and engagement in global issues.

Many key elements and structures are already in place: joining these 'dots' will generate an exponential increase in global literacy and opportunities for activism which could position Taft as a leader in the field of global education. 'Dots' include distinguished speakers and visiting scholars, the Poole and Page Grant funds, clubs, Volunteer Council, school publications (Global Journal), school trips, Community Service Day, Martin Luther King Jnr Day, globally-focused academic classes, Service Learning.

WHAT?

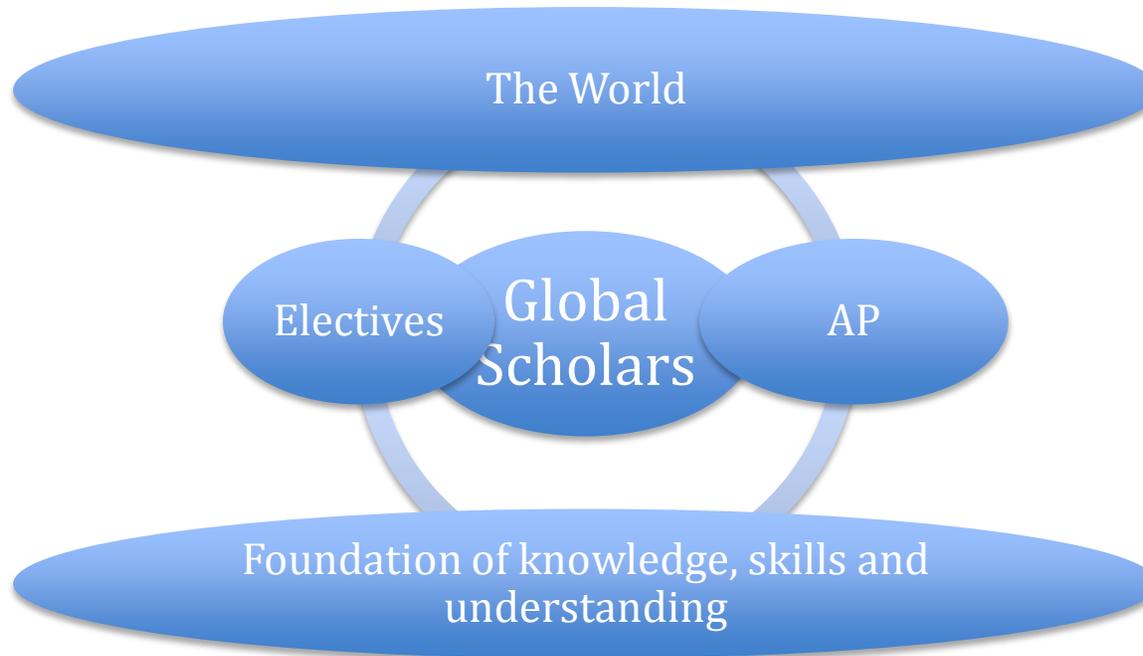
- An intentional, progressive and linked emphasis on global literacy and activism that involves both curricular and co-curricular aspects of school life
- A new way of thinking to compliment traditional approaches
- A focus on skills over content: “deep” and “transformational” learning, problem-solving, critical thinking –
- An additional assessment scale that identifies and records specific ‘global competencies’
- An ongoing conversation about global mindedness that begins with questions of personal and group identity and links directly to the residential life curriculum
- A meaningful and progressive leadership programme that includes all members of the community
- Dedicated funding lines to ensure all students can participate equally
- A dedicated physical space that reflects the value placed in global literacy and activism by the community

Core Principles

- **Progressive** programmes than run from 9th – 12th grades
- **Linked** programmes than maximize exponential gain and involve both substantial preparation and debriefing
- **Sustainable** partnerships with local, national, global experts and organisations
- **Flexible** thinking and scheduling on the part of the whole community
- Grass-roots buy-in of stakeholders: programmes **collaboratively** developed with students, faculty and partners

HOW?

1. The Global Scholars Track



Creating a dedicated Global Scholars track through the school addresses the two essential challenges:

1. Raising the overall level of global literacy throughout the school
2. Providing a dedicated pathway through the school for those students who are ready to commit to an academic and experiential programme with a global concentration.

Students wishing to graduate as Global Scholars would have up to three years to fulfill a number of requirements, including:

- A number of Taft courses with designated 'global' status. Every department would be required to offer at least one course which carried this 'global' designation.
- An agreed level of proficiency in at least two foreign languages & geography
- A specified number of service hours or tasks (domestic or international)
- Completion of the Taft Service Learning course
- Documented participation in global clubs, esp Model UN
- Attendance at a minimum of one leadership conference / event outside Taft
- A proven track record of leadership at Taft
- A culminating independent research project with an activist element (poss tie-in to Senior thesis / project)
- Completion of the Taft Global Scholars core course (Global Perspectives?) which would also be available to non-Global Scholars students.

Students transferring into Taft later in their careers would have to document their achievements to date to be considered for this programme.

This programme should generate a team of student **experts** who are highly aware and literate in global issues, and who can lead the school in this field. It should also raise the **overall levels of community awareness and literacy** by raising the profile and providing the connective tissue to link separate but related issues.

Construction of this programme may suggest review of the daily schedule, as creation of a common lunch block would encourage meetings of clubs and societies.

2. Raising the Levels of Global Literacy and Activism Across the Community: Joining the Dots

❖ **Include the Entire Taft Community:**

Students
Faculty and Staff
Parents
Alumni
Board members
Visiting speakers and scholars

❖ **Build Community Partnerships:**

Local: Children's Community School
National: Habitat for Humanity
Global: Maru a Pula School Botswana,
Orphanage Outreach, DR

❖ **Identify Expert Partners:**

Round Square
Facing History and Ourselves
Inter-Faith Youth Core

❖ **Identify and Build Skills & Experience**

Leadership programmes for whole community
Global issues and competencies
Portfolios of experience
Meetings with social entrepreneurs
Create Global Speaker series

❖ **Identify Opportunities in the Curriculum**

Global Scholars track – Global Perspectives
course open to all
'Global' courses in every dept.
Service Learning in all grades
GSS Department electives
Independent Projects
Senior thesis

❖ **Identify Opportunities in the Co-curriculum:**

Residential Life and CHAT
Athletics
Volunteer Council
Clubs and societies
Publications
Trips, inc Poole & Page Grant

❖ **Create Occasions**

Regular Community Service Days
Martin Luther King Day
September 11th Service Day

❖ **Be Ready to 'Stop the World'**

Design a protocol for responding to major world events using in-house expertise when possible.

THE PLAN

A. Objectives

1. **To raise the level of Global Literacy and Activism at Taft by ‘joining the dots’ to create an intentional and progressive programme for all students.**
 - a) To identify a set of global issues and competencies that represent a critical core of content and skills
 - b) To design a portfolio for students to gather and reflect on their global experience and expertise
 - c) To create multiple ‘occasions’ and opportunities for activism and reflection in every year.
 - d) To promote collaboration between classes, athletics, dormitories, advisories, clubs, the Arts and Volunteer Council, making use of the volunteer opportunities database.
 - e) Appoint a charismatic and experienced expert to take

2. **To raise the level of Global Literacy and Activism at Taft by creating a ‘Global Scholars’ track through the school for a committed group of students**
 - a) To design a 2 year Global Perspectives core course which will be both required for Global Scholars and optional for others
 - b) To ensure that all departments have at least one course with i) Global Scholars designation ii) a service learning component
 - c) To train and support a team of faculty with responsibility for designing and delivering the 3 year Global Scholars programme, overseeing teaching, assessment, independent projects etc

3. To develop a portfolio of sustained community partnerships through which to increase global literacy and activism and to channel support and fundraising

- a) To identify and commit to a small number of partner organizations and educate the community about them. eg Maru a Pula, Children's Community School, Interfaith Youth Core, Orphanage Outreach
- b) To identify key expert partners to provide guidance and direction, eg Round Square, FHAO, IFYC
- c) To strengthen and extend our ties with our neighboring communities, and ensure we are aware, and responsive, when they are in difficulty

4. To create a centre for Global Literacy and Activism at Taft and to use to it attract and develop high caliber students, faculty and visiting experts.

- a) To attract the most exciting and diverse new faculty and students and visiting speakers and scholars
- b) To develop a leadership institute for the whole community
- c) To provide a resource centre for local, national and global service and leadership
- d) To create a space on campus where Global Literacy and Activism can be visible and accessible for the whole community, where classes and lectures can be held and projects can be celebrated.

Strategic Plan for Global Literacy & Activism: Implementation (1)

Objective	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	i/c	Success criteria
1.	Start whole school conversation identifying global issues & competencies. Design portfolios. Identify ‘occasions’, and opportunities for collaboration in calendar.	Begin use of global competencies and issues, and portfolios, with 9 th grade. Launch global speaker series & follow-up discussions. Appoint Chair of GSS / lead on Global Activism	Transition responsibility for global speaker series to student leaders. Expand and extend speaker series to focus on community members		All students & faculty using shared language of global issues and competencies. All students with global portfolios. Frequent planned ‘occasions’ to focus on global issues and activism
2.	Design and draft GS track: Consider schedule changes, create GP core and geography courses, design tracking system, appoint & train faculty team, identify designated global courses. Address funding issues	Launch Global Scholars with first 10 th grade cohort. Develop ongoing evaluation tools. Prepare 11 th grade track	1 st cohort to begin 2 nd year of track, 2 nd cohort to begin 1 st year. Ongoing evaluation of both. Prepare 3 rd year track, with culminating project		Strong faculty / departmental participation and student sign-up. Forward planning and ongoing evaluation from all participants. Global scholars in leadership roles.

Strategic Plan for Global Literacy and Activism: Implementation (2)

Objective	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	i/c	Success Criteria
3.	Identify initial partner organisations and design programme to share information and understanding about them. Identify key experts and draw on their experience and resources. Create closer ties with Waterbury area.	Continue to develop relationships with initial partners, and transition responsibility to student leaders. Link to service learning programme, clubs and global speaker series. Begin process for joining Round Square.	Use student leaders to oversee relationships with community partners and education of Taft community about key issues. Use all opportunities for regular traffic between Taft and Waterbury.		Sustained, informed partnerships with a few key organizations, local, national, global. Taft community aware and engaged in issues relating to those organizations. Taft working with expert partners such as Round Square. All Taft students familiar with Waterbury.
4.	Create dedicated space on campus for a Centre for Global Literacy and Activism. Commitment made to hiring for key faculty leadership roles	Resource Centre developed and stocked. Lead faculty in post. Leadership Institute planning underway.	Global Centre, and Resource Centre up and running. Leadership Institute up and running.		Taft Centre for Global Literacy and Activism an active part of campus life. Leadership institute working with all constituencies. Full programme of visiting speakers and scholars.

Reading and Resources

International Ed

Rischarad 20:20

'Education Abroad is not Enough'

Karen Jenkins and James Skelly; International Educator, Winter 2004

'Prep for the Planet: Effective Internationalism in Education'

Malcolm McKenzie; Alliance for International Education, Education for International Mindedness, Dusseldorf, 1-3 October 2004

Round Square

Global Leadership Adventures, or other expert partners for international service-based trips

Community Interaction

'Citizenship First: the Case for Compulsory Service'

James Crabtree & Frank Field; Prospect Magazine, March 2009

'Building a Residential Curriculum'

Carol Hotchkiss and Ed Kowalchick

Leadership / Citizenship

New Thinking
SHIFT happens (YouTube)

Facing History and Ourselves

'From Good to Great'
Jim Collins

CITYterm (Masters School)

'Change Leadership: A Practical Guide to Transforming Our Schools'
Tony Wagner and Bob Keegan; Change Leadership Group, Harvard Graduate School of Education

'The Evolution of Leadership'
Thomas Hoerr, in Independent School Magazine, Spring 2009, excerpted from
School Leadership for the Future: Leading an Independent School, NAIS Feb 2009

'Transformational Leadership: Leading Schools in a time of Global Cultural Shifts'
Jerry Larson, Independent School Magazine, Spring 2009

'A New Emphasis on Teaching Leadership Skills to Students'
Rich Gamble, Independent School Magazine, Spring 2009