The following provides a report of the UMSAEP exchange programme from 22 June – 4 July 2014.

A trip to the University of Missouri...
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University of Missouri South African Partnership (UMSAEP) project

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF THE VISIT

The UMSAEP was awarded to the University of Missouri and the University of the Western Cape based on a collaborative proposal developed by UWC and UM colleagues. The proposal focused on UWC’s vision to extend its outreach and engagement with communities, neighborhoods and townships in Western Cape, positively affecting community leaders in a sustainable way while MU Extension wants to provide global understanding and experiences for community leaders that help meet emergent needs for leadership in local contexts. We recognized that UWC and MU Extension are not identical, but the objectives are compatible hence the purpose of this was:

*To collaboratively develop a community leadership program curriculum and seed the first exchange of community leaders from Missouri and the Western Cape Province.*

**Specific Project Objectives**

1. To add components of community engagement, community development, and extension to the long-standing relationship between the two universities. The relationship will also be expanded to include key non-profit organizations/NGOs in each country.

2. To use our collective knowledge and resources to create an innovative leadership program with a curriculum that is strengthened by the international partnership

3. To facilitate the development of effective community leaders (both emerging and existing) that have sustainable, positive impacts on their home communities
BACKGROUND TO THE UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI / UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN CAPE PARTNERSHIP

Since 1986, the University of Missouri South African Education Program Committee has sponsored an exchange program with UWC. The formal agreement, signed in June 1986, was the first ever between a U.S. university and a historically black South African university. The purpose of the UM/UWC Program is to advance mutual understanding between the institutions' faculties and to demonstrate the ability of the two institutions to cooperate in teaching, research, and service. The UM/UWC Faculty Exchange Program has sponsored more than 365 exchange visits between the two institutions since 1986.

In 1996, the University of Missouri System (UM) announced a new program to support collaborative projects between UM faculty members and a broad range of South African partners, including collaborators from historically disadvantaged tertiary education institutions (including UWC), South African government agencies, nongovernmental organizations in SA or other appropriate South African partners. For 14 years, MU has been a formal academic partner of the UWC in the offering of academic study. The partnership has included participation by MU Extension faculty throughout its history.
Over the past three years, MU Extension and UWC colleagues have made significant investments of time and resources into building a productive relationship centered on community engagement and development. The proposed project will take that relationship to the next level, partnering together to begin a community leadership development program that will culminate in an exchange between program participants in both countries.

THE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE...

The trip to Missouri commenced in an eventful fashion. As the flight bookings were made by our UM colleagues, the original flight was scheduled from Cape Town to London, via Vancouver (Canada) to Chicago and then onto St. Louis. This flight was scheduled to leave on Sunday, 22 June however upon check-in; we were alerted to the fact that a Canadian visa was required in order to transit Canada from our original destination of South Africa. Subsequent to several attempts at the airport to contact the Canadian embassy, we were informed that the waiting time for a visa was 30 days not negotiable. Unfortunately, Ms Damaris Kiewiets was checked-in already and her baggage had to be returned which delayed the original flight. We proceeded to alert Prof. Rod Uphoff, Letitia Johnson and Brenda Dennis about our dilemma, as well as informed the airline that we would be unable to fly that evening in order to save costs and prevent any additional expenditure in lieu of the grant.

The time difference worked to our advantage as frantic rearrangements were initiated by our American colleagues and following a patient interaction from Brenda Dennis and Tish Johnson with the travel agents, we were eventually placed on a flight from Cape Town to Heathrow, then to Chicago and on to St. Louis – this was scheduled for 23 June. There was a cost factor involved in the reallocation of the tickets and the total flight time amounted to 30 hours to Missouri as well as a 32 hour journey back to South Africa. An exchange that was initially envisaged to have been over a period of 9 days was extended to 12 days which was useful for the partnership however it had

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1 As the travel was booked by a US Travel Agency – the misunderstanding resulted as only Americans transiting Canada do not require a Canadian visa.
several cost implications. This was quite an eventful start to the exchange however the lessons learnt from this experience were invaluable.

EXCHANGE ACTIVITIES IN MISSOURI

We arrived in St. Louis on Tuesday 24 June at 9pm and Tish Johnson met us at the airport and transported us to our overnight stay at the Comfort Suite in St. Charles. Tish Johnson was with us for the duration of our stay and transported us to where we needed to be. This also facilitated opportunities to have work sessions during the long drives across Missouri enroute to various site visits. Day one of the trip was a recovery day with a stroll around St. Charles which was historically the first capitol of Missouri. After lunch we drove to Columbia and checked in at the Stoney Creek Inn where Anita Hampton also joined up with our group and stayed with us until we left Bolivar.

A few pictures in St. Charles
Thursday, June 26

This was the first working day at the University of Missouri and the work session commenced at Witten Hall. We met with Dr. Mary Leuci-Simon and Dr. Julie Middleton where we initiated discussion around the development of the leadership programme. We provided a framework which was developed through a brainstorming session by the UWC group on our journey to Missouri which was incorporated into the existing plan and programme\(^2\) and which was shared in

\(^2\) The base document was developed in the several Skype sessions prior to our visit.
the session and used as a document from which to commence our way forward. A mid-morning meeting was arranged with Dr. Michael Ouart, Dr. Beverly Coberly, Mary and Julie where we were welcomed and engaged in discussion around the importance of this project for Missouri Extension and where we were shown the 100 year celebratory video of the University of Missouri. The history of the institution was evident as we walked down the corridors and viewed a mural in honor of Dr. C Brice Ratchford. This was followed by a lunch at the Heidelberg where Dr. Jim Scott joined us. Mary and Julie provided us with a walking tour of MU campus after which we continued with the work session and we were joined by Dr. Johanna Reed-Adams.

Mural in honor of C. Brice Ratchford

The reception in the Memorial Union was a great occasion and we felt very honored as our group met up with the several executive members of the University including Dr. Michael Middleton, Dr. Michael Ouart, Dr. Jim Scott who proceeded to provide us with a warm welcome to the University of Missouri and it was special that Dr. Ron Turner was also in attendance as he was the initiator of the University of Missouri - UWC partnership. It was also great to meet up with fellow UWC colleagues who were at the University of Missouri at the time.
Friday, 27 June

We returned to Witten Hall and continued our work session with Mary Leuci-Simon and we were joined by Dr. Wilson Majee who presented his research on a community leadership. It was interesting to hear the research process that was utilized and contemplate possible ideas of how a structured research process could be utilized and integrated in the planned programme. This session was followed by a lunch with Steve Henness and Alison Copeland (4-H programs), John Stemmle (Health Communication Research Center) and Melissa Maras (College of Education). All have been involved in health/leadership engagement work with youth and communities.
Subsequent to an informative lunch session, Dr. Johanna Reed-Adams coordinated and arranged a site visit to Moberly where Mr Sam Richardson and Ms Penny Henry provided us with a driving tour of Moberly where we were able to view the development in this community with the prime purpose of renewal and attracting youth to the areas. This was followed by dinner at the home of Sam Richardson after which we proceeded to the local community college for an evening presentation by Excel leadership program graduates. Prof. Daniels thanked the community and the presenters for their contributions and for providing us with examples of the outcomes of successful community leadership interventions.
Saturday, June 28

The weekend kicked off with a visit to the Columbia Farmers Market where a display of local organically and chemical free produce was on display. The group split up with Prof. Daniels and Ms Kiewiets accompanying Dr. Mary Leuci-Simon to Lexington MO while Ms Tracey-Ann Adonis continued to Bolivar with Ms Anita Hampton. The group in Lexington had lunch at the Victorian Peddler which was an example of a successful entrepreneurship project and was given a presentation on Extension’s Community Arts Program (Lexington is the pilot) by Lee Ann Woolery. This was followed by a walking tour to three artist-entrepreneur sites: Limrick’s Fine Things, the Purple Turnip, and Gypsy Vardo and key to these sites was the linkage it has to tourism and keeping small towns sustainable while keeping the youth in the towns. The drive to Bolivar was quite eventful as we experienced a Mid-West thunderstorm while crossing an expanse of water enroute to Bolivar. Once in Bolivar, the Hampton family entertained the group with dinner at Boone’s Barbeque Barn and we stayed over at the Comfort Inn, Bolivar.
Sunday, June 29

Sunday proceeded with a drive to Springfield where several site visits were organized. This included a tour of Greene County Botanical Center and a presentation of the Master Gardener program by Extension horticulture specialist Patrick Byers. This was followed by a presentation on community revitalization plans with Jeff Barber, extension housing and environmental design specialist, who had arranged for a driving tour of the Ozark foothills south of Springfield. The service-learning programme which he presented was a great exemplar of how students engaged collaboratively within the community and the UWC delegation could identify several similarities and challenges in the experience of building relationships with the community and the process of implementing ‘true’ service-learning programmes especially with regard to the philosophy of the teaching and learning method. The tour included a stop at Hess Pottery at a yurt in Reeds Springs followed by lunch at Papouli’s, a local based Greek restaurant in this area. We concluded the day with a visit to Anita Hampton’s shop for a light dinner and debriefing session at her home.
Patrick Byers, Tracey-Ann Adonis, Priscilla Daniels, Jeff Barber, Damaris Kiewiets, Anita Hampton

Demonstration Gardens
Monday, June 30

As we were nearing the end of the visit, another work session was arranged to consolidate what we have learnt thus far and to commence work on the poster that was to be presented by Dr. Mary Leuci-Simon at the Community Development Society conference in Dubuque, Iowa on the Mississippi River from 20 – 23 July. This work session occurred in the foyer of the Comfort Inn and continued in the car as we proceeded to meet with Georgia Stuart-Simmons in Warrensburg, Missouri. Georgia is an extension community development specialist who has worked with the Excel-model leadership programs in Johnson County CD programmes. After a very productive day where the title of the poster was finalized, the structure of the poster developed and the various categories of the leadership programme analyzed in detail with regard to content, we ended the day at Columbia Mall and met with Mary for a light supper. We lodged at the Stoney Creek Inn, Columbia for our penultimate evening.

Tuesday, July 1

The morning commenced with the UWC delegation developing a model of the webinars, which formed part of the poster. The model was presented to Dr. Julie Middleton and Dr. Mary Leuci-Simon over a lunch meeting at the ‘The Uprise’, Columbia. After discussing the framework of the poster and the sections that would still needed to be completed, Tish proceeded to transport us to St. Louis where we lodged at the Drury Pear Tree Inn Airport, St. Ann, Missouri. As Tish had to return for a meeting in St. Genevieve, we enjoyed a relaxing evening at the Drury Inn and dinner at the nearby Bandana’s Bar-B-Q.
Wednesday, July 2

This was the day where we did some sight-seeing in St. Louis and experienced St. Louis from a tourist perspective by visiting the St. Louis Arch.

Our journey to the University of Missouri was an intense period filled with various activities and site visits and where several objectives needed to be realized as we engage in the collaborative venture of developing a community leadership programme and extend our partnership with the University of Missouri. It was evident that we achieved several goals during the course of this visit however it was a compact programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. A key lesson which we would like to recommend is that travel arrangements be arranged by the travellers to prevent hiccups or to be able to respond directly to any changes therefore decreasing the margin for error.
2. The programme was compact and impacted the extent to which we were able to engage with several components of the programme.
CONCLUSION

The UMSAEP award facilitated the opportunity for academics to engage in an exchange with our partner university namely the University of Missouri Extension. This provided several opportunities to engage with staff and academics from the University of Missouri. The visit was valuable to the academic development of the staff that visited and ensured that we were able to gain an insight into the context at the University of Missouri and to develop a plan for moving forward and proceeding to the next stage in the development of the collaborative community leadership programme. The visit definitely contributed to our understanding and provided several ideas which were generated through engaging in the site visits.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank the University of Missouri Executive for the opportunity and the warm reception and there were several people in particular who were instrumental for the coordination of the visit namely Dr. Michael Ouart and Dr. Beverley Coberly; Dr. Mary Leuci-Simon, Dr. Julie Middleton, Ms Tish Johnson, Mrs Anita Hampton, Dr Rod Uphoff and Ms Brenda Dennis and Ms Janet Kelly for facilitating and coordinating the visit which guaranteed an educational experience. A special thanks to all the academics and staff who took the time out of their busy schedules to provide us with site visits and information sharing sessions that contributed to the development of the community leadership programme. We would also like to acknowledge the UWC Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, Prof. Ramesh Bharuthram, for providing staff in the Community Engagement Unit with the opportunity to visit the University of Missouri.