



In the past century many famous world leaders including Mohandas Gandhi, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu and several U.S. Presidents have repeatedly talked about the need for world peace and an understanding of world issues. And although there has been much oratory, many books and poems written, the famous song written by Jill Jackson and Sy Miller “Let there be Peace on Earth and Let it Begin with Me” is actually a good reflection of why Global Peace Studies Programs should be taught in America’s community colleges.

Today almost 13 million students – almost half of all undergraduates in our country – are enrolled in over 1,200 community and junior colleges. We recognize the roles globalization plays in our economy, we prepare learners with the skills needed in a global society, we support international initiatives and partnerships, we promote and celebrate diversity and teach many of the same general education principles that are the framework of Global Peace Studies...conflict resolution, problem analysis, critical thinking, citizenship, diversity, social justice and understanding, communication skills.

Over twenty years ago Delta College created a Global Awareness program, began offering international travel experiences for our students and community residents, and initiated a sister college relationship with Rift Valley Institute of Science and Technology Kenya, Africa. Tracom College in Kenya joined the partnership in 2002. This very successful partnership has included students, faculty and staff exchanges, our collecting, shipping and then installing computers in their schools in addition to training their faculty, collecting and shipping books, developing distance learning strategies, and humanitarian projects. Two of the seven peace poles made by our students last year have been installed at the two colleges in Kenya. In 2010, with the leadership of Assistant Professors of Psychology Jeff Dykhuizen and Connie Watson, we will launch in our academic area our Global Peace Studies Associate Degree and certificate programs. Students can choose one of four degree tracks: Social Justice; International Business; International Relations; and, Global Environment.

Community and junior colleges are already intricately involved in community/economic development, sustainability, diversity initiatives, and globalization education. Expanding these interdependent concepts within a Global Peace Studies Program is a natural progression which I wholeheartedly endorse as our students need to redefine the parameters of what they define as their community.

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