



Objective

The objective of this initiative is to institutionalize at Lafayette College the cultural expectation and opportunity for students to take a bridge year at some point before their enrollment. As defined, a bridge year is a meaningful and intentional year of service that is taken by an individual to deepen practical, professional, and personal awareness. With rising concerns of sexual assault, binge drinking, and inequality in higher academia within the United States, the bridge year provides a necessary and appropriate contrast to a generation in urgent need of holistic perspective.

Current Summary for Lafayette College

Lafayette is actively seeking a partnership with Global Citizen Year with the intent of encouraging future students to take a bridge year before attending the college. Furthermore, actions are being taken to understand the potential of providing academic credit for bridge year programming and experiences to help encourage students to take a bridge year.

Future Action Items for Lafayette College

- ◇ Formalize a partnership with Global Citizen Year by **June 1st 2016**.
- ◇ Inform future students about bridge year opportunities.
- ◇ Consider financial support for students to pursue a bridge year experience
- ◇ Provide curricular credit and incentives for bridge year experiences

Appendices

Appendix A: Meeting Minutes

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Overview

According to the *First-Year College Experience Survey*¹ commissioned by the JED Foundation, 60% of students wished that they had received more emotional preparation before college. Furthermore, 87% of students said that high school focused more on academic preparation rather than emotional readiness while another 50% said their independent living skills needed improvement. Understanding this, then, one can surmise that the prolonged emotional adolescence facing students entering college is at the nexus of the issues currently facing many higher academic institutions such as increased binge drinking and sexual assault.

In order to address this lack in emotional development within a generation of young students, a recent movement in the U.S. known as the Bridge Year Movement has been championed by organizations like Global Citizen Year to help better equip college students in between the transition from high school to college. The bridge year (also known as the gap year) is a meaningful and intentional year that is taken by an individual in between high school and college to deepen practical, professional, and personal awareness.

Bridge students are perceived to be “more mature, more self-reliant and independent” with “motivation for and interest in study to be renewed” as compared to non-Gap Year students.² Although often stigmatized within the context of the US as a unintentional way in which to avoid higher education, according to Temple University’s Institute for Survey Research and the American Gap Association, 92% of respondents chose to take a bridge year to “gain life experiences and grow personally” to better inform their college experiences.

Furthermore, former Dean of Admissions at Middlebury College—Bob Clagett—developed a methodology to track bridge year students’ performance in college, which compared bridge year students to their predicted performance based on their academic rating, revealing that students who took a bridge year overperformed academically in college to a statistically significant degree. Most importantly, this positive effect of taking a bridge year was retained over all four years.

¹ <http://settogo.org/the-research/>

² Birch, "The Characteristics of Gap-Year Students and Their Tertiary Academic Outcomes." Australia, 2007

With respect to diversity recruitment, the bridge year also provides an incredible platform to ensure the success of students who come from underrepresented backgrounds. Especially in a program such as Global Citizen Year wherein 40% of the participants are receiving full scholarship, a fully-funded bridge year provides space for all students to receive the emotional development and leadership training necessary to better prepare them for college.

In summation, the three highest rated outcomes of bridge years for students are that of gaining "a better sense of who I am as a person and what is important to me" followed by "[the Gap Year] gave me a better understanding of other countries, people, cultures, and ways of living" and "[it] provided me with additional skills and knowledge that contributed to my career or academic major."³ Additionally, it is important to note that the bridge year experience goes beyond just the four years of college as 88% of bridge year graduates report that their bridge year had significantly added to their employability.⁴

Finally, in order to ensure future classes of mature well-intentioned students, a strategic initiative for students to pursue bridge years and partnerships with bridge year organizations such as Global Citizen Year are pivotal to the progression of higher education in the 21st century.

³ Haigler & Nelson, independent study of 280 Gap Year students

⁴ Milkround Graduate Recruitment Gap Year Survey, <http://www.milkroundonline.com>

The Lafayette College Model

(This model is an adaptation of partnerships and bridge year programs similar to other higher academic institutions that may be found in Appendix C.)

Lafayette College Bridge Year Strategy



Before attending Lafayette, students can indicate when they are applying that they would be interested in participating in a bridge year. Lafayette would then—in some capacity—provide need based financial aid and institutional support for students. After participating in Global Citizen Year, students will be rewarded by receiving academic credits, for example, for elementary proficiency in a second language. Additionally, students who are intending to complete the B.S. in Engineering and B.A. in International Studies program will be eligible to complete this program in four years as opposed to the historical five years. Lastly, fellows who complete a Global Citizen Year fellowship will also receive preferred consideration for positions as EXCEL scholars, study abroad fellowships, externships, resident advisors, community advisors, and other opportunities.

Lafayette College

Bridge Year Partnership with Lafayette College

Phase 1: Formal Partnership

- (1) Provost and Presidential approval
- (2) Enrollment Planning Committee review and approval
- (3) Secure financial aid for bridge year students
- (4) Formalize partnership with Global Citizen Year

Phase 2: Recruitment

- (1) Institutionalize a culture that is supportive of bridge years
- (2) Assign bridge year responsibilities to an administrator and admissions staff member.
- (3) Hold bridge year sessions at Admissions Open House
- (4) Participate in bridge year fairs as well as actively promote the bridge year in promotional materials.

Phase 3: Curricular and Institutional Support

- (1) Create a working group of faculty who will approve the allowable credits a bridge year student may receive.
- (2) Create specific programming that will allow for students to reflect over their bridge year experiences throughout their time at the college

Appendix A: Meeting Minutes

(10/21/15) Meeting Minutes

Attending: Barker Carlock and Greg MacDonald

This meeting started the initial conversation to formalize a bridge year initiative and partnership at Lafayette.

(11/12/15) Meeting Minutes

Attending: Barker Carlock and Greg MacDonald

This meeting continued to develop the idea and actualization of what a partnership at Lafayette could look like. Due to time constraints, further conversation was tabled until the spring semester.

(02/10/16) Meeting Minutes with David Stifel

Attending: Barker Carlock and Dr. David Stifel

This meetings centered around expansion of the Lafayette Initiative for Malagasy Education to a full year pre or post-year program as well as of the interest in forming a partnership between Global Citizen Year.

(02/11/16) Meeting Minutes

Attending: Barker Carlock and Greg MacDonald

This meeting was to re-connect and direct where the next steps for the initiative may be made in this spring semester. It was concluded that we contact David Omenn—Vice President of Development at Global Citizen Year.

(02/12/16) Conversation

Attending: Barker Carlock and Dr. Josh Smith

This was a casual conversation over the discussion of the potential of incorporating the dual degree B.S. in Engineering and B.A. in International Studies program. The potential for front-loading the program instead of back-loading seems to be preferential from a pedagogical point of view.

(02/25/16) Conference Call

Attending: Barker Carlock, David Omenn, and Greg MacDonald

This meeting was conducted over the phone with David Omenn from Global Citizen Year Headquarters in San Francisco to better understand what partnership between their organization and Lafayette could look like. David highlighted three partnerships that they have championed and are as follows:

- (1) Tufts University – 1+ 4 program where Tufts provides financial aid to students to

- complete a bridge year.
- (2) Dickenson College – A global citizen scholarship of \$10,000 is awarded to students who participate in a bridge year.
 - (3) The New School – 1+3 program wherein students receive their 1st year college credit through a curricular base provided by the institution through Global Citizen Year.

David also mentioned that GCY provides 80% of its students with financial aid, while 40% receive a full scholarship. Omenn further stated that the opportunity to participate in GCY provides students coming from underprivileged backgrounds the tools necessary to succeed in college.

(03/01/16) Meeting Minutes

Attending: Barker Carlock and Dr. Gisella Gisolo

This meeting was held to better understand the institutional perspective in trying to form partnerships that may be outside of the United States. Dr. Gisolo was supportive in providing advice that entails the necessity of the three following items:

1. Faculty advocates
2. Institutional Financial Support
3. And general student body support

(03/04/16) Meeting Minutes

Attending: Barker Carlock, Greg MacDonald, and Dr. David Stifel

This meeting was held to better understand the next steps into the process of formalizing a bridge year expectation at the college. In terms of academic curricular support for bridge year students, Stifel was helpful in illuminating key constraints and a feasible path forward. Greg raised concerns about the issues surrounding financial support for five years and is currently reviewing the college's options.

(03/31/2016) Conference Call with Global Citizen Year

Attending: Barker Carlock, Greg MacDonald, Abby Falik, and David Omenn

The founder of Global Citizen Year—Abby Falik—was able to share her thoughts on the experiences that the organization has had when partnering with other institutions such as Tufts University. It was mentioned that the potential of partnering with both Lafayette College and the Posse Foundation could be something that would be of interest. Lastly, the details of formal integration were briefly discussed, as follows:

- (1) Students applying through Lafayette could be eligible to receive a reduced tuition fee through a partnership.
- (2) Lafayette might also be able to incentivize students with financial aid to pursue a year through Global Citizen Year.
- (3) The creation of a freshman seminar specifically for bridge year students could help

in the normalization of the bridge year in the academic setting.

(04/07/16) Meeting Minutes

Attending: Barker Carlock and Greg MacDonald

The next steps for formalization were discussed. Of importance, the need to be on this semester's Enrollment Planning Committee (EPC) was made a high priority.

Appendix B: Bridge Year Testimonials

Personal Narrative by Barker Carlock (Global Citizen Year Fellow '12-'13, Chemical Engineering Major, 2017)

When I was thinking about going to college, I was frustrated. I was frustrated because I felt as though that the pieces of paper that were supposed to represent my achievements and accomplishments felt lost among the many other applicants. In many ways, I felt like a number in an industrial machine moving people from one step to the next--high school to college. Beyond this, though, I simply wanted more before going to college. I wanted to actually gain some real world experience. In high school, I played football, worked in student government, and sat on a leadership board for a hospital but none of these seemed to touch upon the experiences for which I was looking. I still wanted to break from the bubble that was my high school and try to really figure out what I wanted to do in the world. I mean, really, how do we expect an 18 year old kid to know what he wants to do with his life, much less study in college? I didn't even know how to put my own pants on in the morning, and I was supposed to go to college?

And this is my fear...that most students and young high school students in the U.S. feel this way. That they feel as though they are just a part of a machine, but, because college is an immediate expectation, they MUST go right away if they have the privilege in which to do so.

I still remember when I told my parents about wanting to do this program called Global Citizen Year. The immediate response was, "Absolutely, no." A six hour conversation then ensued. To them, having grown up in lower class homes in Alabama and Arkansas, giving up college for a year was like giving up on college all together. They couldn't see--like many parents--that this experience had the potential to be more informative than the previous 18 years of my life. And it was.

I went from living in a 99% white and Christian community to a 99% black and Muslim community. My program could not have crafted a more perfect reversal for me. Apart from the culture, perspective, and hands on work in the medical clinic, the most important part of this whole thing was my ability to construct an identity for myself. I was able to deconstruct the identities I had created growing up in the south and reinvent an identity away from my cultural influences that was a genuine and true reflection of who I am.

I went from being able to speak 1 language to 3 languages. I went from having friends from a couple states to friends around the world. I went from wanting to be a medical anthropologist to a chemical engineer. But, most importantly, I went from being a regular kid from the southern white suburbs of Texas to a mature, passionate student with global perspective ready to dive head first into his higher education and make the world a better place around him.

National Survey Narratives⁵

"...as someone once reminded me, and as I now remind each incoming class at Princeton, 'the person each of you will spend most of the rest of your life with is yourself, and therefore you owe it to yourself to use your college years to become as interesting a companion as possible.' But I am also convinced that one's college education is greatly enhanced by the more maturity, experience, and perspective a student can bring to it. Alas, it strikes me that these three traits are the very ones that are most difficult for most young people to come by given the lock-step nature that currently characterizes such a large part of the school-to-college process...Indeed, of all the enthusiastic letters I send to students in one year, none are more enthusiastic than those I send in response to students requesting to defer their entrance to college." - Fred A. Hargadon (former Dean of Admissions, Princeton University)

"My gap year has really made me realize how much more there is to learn about how the world works by interacting with it and seeing processes in action, rather than merely reading about them remotely. I learned...about complicated systems, considered them from varied perspectives, and questioned assumptions I didn't even realize I had. It's made me aware of how much learning happens through experiential means, and I am determined to make the most of all the different avenues for learning here at college. It's also made me even more astutely aware of what a privilege it is for me to get to go to college like this, and have the luxury of study. I'm motivated to get as much as I can out of my classes and my time here, so I can be better prepared to share it with more people in the world who haven't had the same opportunities I have." – Anonymous Bridge Year Participant

"It was an awakening. I am thankful every day that I took a gap year. I was ready for college; I could have gone straight from high school and I would have done just fine. But my life has been so enriched by the experience, and so many doors are opened everywhere I go simply by the change in perspective my gap year has given me. My friends who haven't taken a gap year look around and see only college, classes, internships, resumes... I look around and see the entire world waiting for me. Everybody should take a gap year." – Anonymous Bridge Year Participant

⁵ <http://www.americangap.org/testimonials.php>

Appendix C: Global Citizen Year⁶

Mission

Global Citizen Year is an award-winning, non-profit social enterprise forging a new educational pathway for America’s emerging leaders. By immersing a diverse corps of fellows in developing countries during a “bridge year” after high school, we prepare them for success in college, careers and our global economy. We envision a world in which this “bridge year” becomes a common expectation and opportunity—transforming education, and unleashing the potential of our next generation as social innovators and global citizens.

Why we exist

The impact of tomorrow’s leaders depends on the quality of today’s education. And yet the American education system is failing to prepare our young people to tackle the world’s most pressing challenges.

High school graduates are entering college underprepared, families are questioning their return on investment, and colleges are facing growing concerns about relevance and retention. Today, America has the highest college dropout rate in the developed world. And for those who make it through, many emerge unable to meet the demands of today’s professional world: U.S. business executives believe today’s college graduates lack the values, attitudes and skills needed to lead in our global economy.

Global Citizen Year exists to change this trajectory by forging a new educational pathway for America’s emerging leaders.

Each year, we recruit and train a diverse corps of high potential high school graduates and support them through a transformative “bridge year”^{*} before college. Through intensive training and immersion in communities across Africa, Latin America (and eventually Asia and the Middle East) our Fellows contribute to local efforts in education, technology, health and the environment while developing the global competence, entrepreneurial savvy and self-awareness they need to be transformative leaders in college, careers and life. We are re-defining education in America beyond this core program by partnering with colleges, media, and policy-makers.

Ultimately, we envision a world in which this bridge year becomes a common expectation and opportunity—transforming education, and unleashing the potential of our next generation as social innovators and global citizens.

^{*}Why do we use the term “bridge year” instead of the more traditional term “gap year”? The gap year is often perceived as a luxury reserved for privileged kids, or those who are somehow “off-track.” In contrast, the notion of a bridge year conveys an intentional transition from one life stage to the next. Crossing a bridge is a better metaphor

⁶ For more information, visit www.globalcitizenyear.org.

than falling into a gap; and, with the right design, the bridge becomes a launching pad for a lifetime of leadership.

History

Global Citizen Year Founder & CEO, Abigail Falik, has dedicated her life to unlocking the potential of our next generation leaders. From an early age, Abby knew that her most formative learning took place far from home – and well outside the bounds of a traditional classroom. This insight inspired the vision for Global Citizen Year.

After nearly a decade working as a social entrepreneur in the US and communities around the world, Abby enrolled at Harvard Business School to develop the skills, strategy and networks to bring her long-held vision to life.

In the spring of 2008, Abby entered the Harvard Business School “Pitch for Change” competition with a bold vision: she proposed that one day, a global “bridge year” before college would be the norm, not the exception in America.

Abby won first place in pitch competition that day – catalyzing Global Citizen Year’s transition from a “big idea”, into a reality.

Under Abby’s leadership, Global Citizen Year quickly built momentum, raising seed capital from lead investors including the Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation and The Mind Trust, and receiving early features in prominent national forums including The New York Times, the Aspen Ideas Festival, Pop!Tech, and the Clinton Global Initiative

In the fall of 2009, Global Citizen Year launched a pilot program with 11 diverse, passionate Fellows from across the country. Today, we have nearly 400 program alumni, a talented global team and board of directors, and a growing base of prominent funders and partners.

Examples of University Partnerships with Global Citizen Year

- Eugene Lang College at The New School - Students enroll in The New School but spend their first year participating in Global Citizen Year, augmenting their in-country experience with complementary academic coursework and gaining a full year's worth of college credit in the process. Students continue on to the Eugene Lang College following their Global Citizen Year with sophomore standing, better prepared to integrate their firsthand learning in the field with their ongoing studies in the classroom.
- Florida State University - High school seniors who have been admitted to FSU and who are interested in deferring enrollment to take a bridge year can submit a short application detailing proposed plans for the bridge year, learning objectives for the year, and how the year will support their educational goals. FSU is proud to be one of the few universities in the country to offer financial assistance to students taking a gap year. Students applying for a bridge year deferment will automatically be considered for a scholarship of up to \$5,000 to support their bridge year.
- Dickinson College - Fellows who complete a Global Citizen Year prior to matriculating at Dickinson will be eligible for up to \$10,000 in tuition credits through the school's unique Public Service Fellows program. Public Service Fellows also receive priority consideration for positions as resident advisors, community advisors, and other opportunities to further reduce tuition and fees.
- University of North Carolina - UNC launched the Global Gap Year Fellowship, which provides \$7,500 to each student for use toward a gap year that is committed to service abroad. Fellows integrate their experience into their education when they return to campus with the support of GAPPL, a student community dedicated to advocating gap years and supporting gappers and Fellows upon their return.
- Middlebury College - Former Dean of Admissions Robert Clagett conducted a study on bridge year outcomes and found students performed stronger academically than would otherwise be expected. In 2013, three Middlebury students founded a gap year organization on campus to foster a sense of community, which the university now funds.
- Tufts University - Tufts University's Tisch College of Citizenship and Public Service has launched a 1+4 year program where students can indicate when they

are applying for college that they would be interested in participating in a bridge year, before the traditional four years of college. Tufts' model includes financial aid for students during their bridge year and they plan to launch the program with 50 students in their first cohort, with hopes to expand it to as many as 200 students per year in the near future (15% of the entering freshman class).

Appendix E: Related Information and Readings

American Gap Association. <http://www.americangap.org/educators.php>

The New York Times. *TUFTS UNIVERSITY OFFERS FINANCIAL AID FOR STUDENTS' YEAR OFF*. <http://www.globalcitizenyear.org/press/tufts-university-offers-financial-aid-students-year-new-york-times/>

Time Magazine. *Here's How to Make a Gap Year Before College Count*. <http://time.com/3896925/gap-year-college-count/>

Forbes. *A Year Off Before College Isn't A Gap, It's A Launching Pad*. <http://www.forbes.com/sites/deniserestauri/2015/03/13/a-year-off-before-college-isnt-a-gap-its-a-launching-pad/#38f3049d4407>