

Grand Valley State University

From the Selected Works of Danielle L Lake

2015

Students Develop Course for Black River Public Schools

Danielle L Lake



Available at: https://works.bepress.com/danielle_lake/29/

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

2015 Annual Health Report

Transforming Health Care

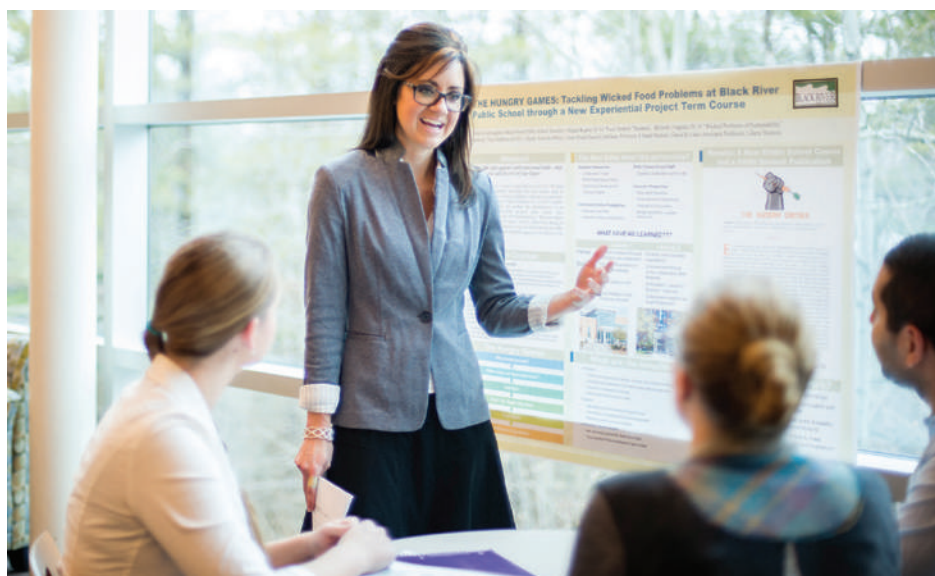


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Cook-DeVos Center
for Health Sciences





Liberal studies Professor Danielle Lake discusses the outcome of students' efforts in *The Hungry Games* project at Black River Public Schools.

Students Develop Course for Black River Public Schools

Recognizing the wicked (intractable and complex) dimensions of our current food system and its impact on children, the students of Professor Danielle Lake's LIB 322 class, *Wicked Problems of Sustainability*, were empowered to tackle an aspect of this system in the local community. The course is an offering of the Liberal Studies Department. These students, identifying themselves as "the curriculum artisans," envisioned the creation of an experiential, hands-on, farm-to-table course for local K–12 children. With their values, experiences, and interdisciplinary research in mind, the students worked with Black River Public School teacher Angela Aumaugher during the Winter 2014 semester to create the project-based, term course.

As the Fall 2014 semester arrived, students from professor Anne Marie Fauvel's LIB 342 class, *Food Matters*, reviewed the published findings of the "artisans" and took up the work of designing a course for Black River Middle School students. Through interdisciplinary research on food pedagogies, the students from Fauvel's class helped establish community

partners for Black River students and developed curriculum for the course. The students ultimately created a new course called *The Hungry Games*!

This new project-based, term course was offered in the spring of 2015. *The Hungry Games* begins by asking middle school students why they should care about food. Through field trips, guest speakers, and community partnerships, students in the class explored where their food comes from, its nutritional components, and various disposal practices. *The Hungry Games* empowers agency in response to our current food system by using a learn-by-doing approach with the students. At the end of the course, the students are able to synthesize their learning and present their findings in their local community. According to Lake, this was a unique opportunity for the faculty of the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies to bridge semesters and courses, allowing students to integrate and innovate around complex social issues. Students had the reward of seeing their work provide an immediate impact.

Grand Valley students' published findings can be viewed at <http://scholarworks.gvsu.edu/wickedproblems/>.

Hospitality Students Research Restaurants and Diabetes

One of the triumvirate of important strategies in diabetes management is diet. Three sections of students enrolled in HTM 375, *Hospitality and Tourism Research*, during the Fall 2014 semester used the Nutrition Environment Measures Survey (NEMS) restaurant instrument developed by the Center for Health Behavior Research at the University of Pennsylvania to examine the menus of the 315 restaurants in Grand Rapids. Students, led by Professor Michael Scantlebury, assessed the availability of healthy food items and foods prepared with healthy methods. The types of restaurant in the study included fine dining, quick service/fast food, bars and pubs, casual/American dining, and ethnic restaurants. Students discovered that it was primarily

the quick service/fast food establishments that provided nutritional information and dietary options.

Students also explored the question: Do diabetics pay a premium for healthy dining options? Complying with informed consent practice, each of the 60 students engaged three persons with diabetes in a qualitative survey using a convenience sample framework to interview friends and family. Responses varied between Type I or Type II diabetes, and respondents' age. Older Type II diabetics, who had the condition for a number of years, indicated that they would not likely pay a premium for healthy food. Younger Type I diabetics, especially Grand Valley students, indicated that their limited financial resources restricted their ability to pay a premium for healthy dining options. The project afforded students the opportunity to apply research methods to real-world problems.

