Global Ethics from Theory to Practice in Six Months

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We supervise undergraduates and to a limited degree graduate students in a summer research program in Uganda and Brazil. The students conduct a wide range of health related research projects ranging from basic science wet bench work to qualitative assessment of public health issues. This program is designed to bring students into research that might not have previously considered research as a career. Since the students conduct their research in developing countries, global issues are an important part of the program. To prepare the students for their 2.5 months abroad we have developed three different mechanisms to raise awareness about pertinent ethical issues. Initially the students participate in a two-day retreat at Heifer Ranch in Perryville, Arkansas. During this retreat students are challenged to work together, observe developing-world living environments, and confront issues of resource distribution. They are challenged by scenarios that present real world conflicts that they might normally not experience, such as physical disabilities, pregnancy, and refugee status. Facilitators direct exercises with the group to increase global awareness and problem solving. Students are also required to complete an online tutorial in biomedical ethics before attending a one-day workshop with a local medical ethics professional. The tutorial and workshop cover history, theory and application of medical ethics in the 21st century. Students are encouraged to reflect on a range of ethical issues throughout their research experience, culminating in an essay and a presentation to the group in a capstone conference at the end of the summer. The presenters will offer challenges and opportunities gleamed from four years of ongoing development of this summer research program.

Technology and Equipment Needs
Computerized PowerPoint Presentation