



SHADOWING: A PROGRAM OF CAREER DISCOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT

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This project integrates service learning for on-campus university students and encourages at-risk high school students to think about careers and the possibility of attending college to achieve their career goals. The purpose is to expose high school students to career opportunities in merchandising with special emphasis on cultural awareness and sensitivity. In order for students to survive and thrive in the new global environment, they must be prepared with knowledge that will assist them to interact within a culturally diverse work force.

A complete curriculum was developed focusing on three learning modules relating to merchandising business concepts. Module one explores Merchandising and a career option. Module two is called Currency and teaches factors that influence the stability of currency in the global marketplace. Module three, Shopping Around the World, focuses on culture, values and communication.

High schools with large populations of at-risk or first generation college students were invited to participate in the program. Three area high schools participated. University students desiring a service learning experience were selected to present the content and direct the activities with graduate assistant guidance. Four classroom presentations were made. Participating high school teachers selected 5-6 students from each class to attend a shadowing day on campus. Twelve students came to campus for a day of activities and learning. They attended an MSU class where students presented final projects, heard a discussion about financial aid issues, toured a dormitory, and ate lunch in the dorm cafeteria. In addition, students visited the athletic academic center and participated in another module from the curriculum. Evaluations from students were positive.