**Mapping space through literature, art, and geotechnology (GIS, GPS)**

1. The proposed project aims to work with approximately twenty female youth offenders who range in age from 15-17 years old. They come from different parts of Texas and may be of any ethnic background. This population has been selected because there is a paucity of research on education models for at risk youth.

The number of participants will depend on how many are at the facility at the time of research, proposed for Fall 2010 as well as those youth who have shown good behavior.

1. Participant youth will be identified by staff based on behavioral observations that demonstrate the youth will be cooperative with the researchers, staff and their fellow participants. Once identified, the youth will be asked to assent to participation. Youth are considered wards of the state, and a staff supervisor serving as a guardian will also sign the consent form. Youth at the Hays County Juvenile Center have set activity schedules they are to participate in. The researchers will work with the youth during this set time. If youth do not want to participate, the officer on duty will find another task for this youth to do.
2. The “Mapping space through literature, art, and geotechnology (GIS, GPS)” project is a collaborative effort between Mr. Grady Hillman (Director, Center for Community Arts, School of Art and Design) and Dr. Niem Huynh (Department of Geography). Mr. Hillman has 25 years of experience working with young offenders, helping them reflect and heal through the arts. Dr. Huynh researches geographic education with focus on technology as a tool to teach spatial thinking and exploration of one’s external space (e.g., mental maps).

This project is centered on the development of an interdisciplinary curriculum (arts, geography, geotechnology) to contextualize experiential learning for youth offenders in a San Marcos correctional facility, the Hays County Juvenile Center. Working relationships have been established with Mr. John Griffis, a supervisor of the correctional facility. Eight sessions, each two hours long, have been developed to introduce the females to the concept of personal space and to explore this through the arts and geotechnology. A summary of the proposed sessions is included in the Appendix.

At the end of the eight sessions, small group sessions will be held to better understand the effectiveness of the curriculum in the youths’ view. The identity of participants will be identified with their initials only and no personal data will be collected other than a recording of the discussion with an mp3 player. The proposed questions will be part of the interview:

1. How would you describe the experience of the eight sessions?
2. What did you learn about yourself?
3. What did you learn about the different places in your life?
4. How does this change the way you see the world?
5. What other activities should be introduced in the future?

In addition to the participants, staff and correctional supervisors will be interviewed to learn if any behavior changes have taken place. Some proposed questions for this discussion include:

1. Since the inception of this program, have you noticed any changes in the participant’s behavior?
2. In your opinion, what needs to be added or changed to the pilot curriculum to serve the needs of the students?

The Hays County Juvenile Detention Center staff generates daily behavioral reports on youth within the facility. Behavioral indicators before, during, and after the workshops will be examined to correlate staff interviews with the hard date collected to analyze program impact. An aggregated record of participant offences before, during, and after the treatment will be requested from Mr. John Griffis.

1. The researchers anticipate little potential risks, physical, psychological, social or legal. A female officer will be in the classroom at all times and ground rules will be set prior to the classes. The topics presented are non confrontational or threatening but rather sessions are presented in artistic ways to allow students to express their emotions, opinions, and to engage in hands-on map reading exercises.
2. To minimize potential risks, the supervisor will only allow youth who have demonstrated good behavior to be part of the sessions. During each sessions, a female officer will be present. In terms of materials brought into the facility, writing utensils and paper, they pose little risk as weapons.

Youth confidentiality will be safeguarded by collecting little personal information other than acknowledging them by their first name. During the interviews, only the initials will be required to identify the youth. Once the data are collected, they will be transcribed by a R.A. Transcriptions and recordings will be stored in Dr. Huynh’s office, in a locked cabinet. The confidentiality of court-involved youth is a requirement of law stipulating that no identifiable likenesses or names be shared with the public outside the facility. Staff is trained to maintain strict confidentiality and will monitor the researchers as they are accustomed to doing with volunteers assuring there will be no offending photographs or identifiers generated or recorded by the researchers. In addition, they will review the product of the research to determine that the youth’s confidentiality is protected.

1. *Arts Programs for Juvenile Offenders in Detention and Corrections: A Guide to Promising Practices* published by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention and the National Endowment for the Arts documents the positive effects that arts programs can have on incarcerated youth including reduced incidents rates of misbehavior within the correctional setting and reduced rates of recidivism after release. In addition, positive and safe environments for learning provide students with opportunities to be educated and to adopt alternative ways to think and learn.
2. No compensation of any nature will be provided.
3. The researchers contend that any risks due to participation in this project are no different from that experienced daily in the facility. This project does not seek personal information, discuss personal or sensitive topics. The goal of this project is to show youth alternative ways to express emotions (e.g., anger) and to develop a pertinent skill required in society (map reading and spatial thinking). If participants choose to use arts to express themselves, this will be a positive shift from behaviors which initially propelled them into the facility. In turn, this is a benefit to society as youth will learn ways to express their emotions in constructive and non-threatening ways to others.
4. The researchers will be working with Hays County Juvenile Center and a verbal approval has been granted by John Griffis, a supervisor at the facility. A written letter of approval is being prepared.
5. Researchers are faculty on campus. Mr. Grady Hillman (Director, Center for Community Arts, School of Art and Design) and Dr. Niem Huynh (Department of Geography). Mr. Hillman has 25 years of experience working with young offenders, helping them reflect and heal through the arts. Dr. Huynh researches geographic education with focus on technology as a tool to teach spatial thinking and exploration of one’s external space (e.g., mental maps)
6. This is part of a community outreach project – it is not related to student work.
7. This study has not been reviewed/approved by another IRB.

1. Dr. Huynh and Mr. Grady will have full access to the data. A report will be produced on the impact of this curriculum and it will be presented to the Hays County Juvenile Center. All youth names and identifiable information will be deleted or submitted with a pseudonym.

Appendix

**Session 1: Tuesday, July 6**

***Topic:*  Introduction and reflection of space (physical and personal)**

This session will introduce students to think about their space in their home town/city. Through mapping, students will identify areas of social interest to them, areas of safety and danger.

Grady: Image Diagram/Free writing/cluster mapping

Niem: Mental map of lived space and color code physically/emotionally safe/unsafe areas

***Equipment required****:*

Writing utensil (pencil, pens, color pens/crayons)

Paper

Transparencies (copy the mental maps to color in safe/unsafe areas)

**Session 2: Thursday, July 8**

***Topic:* Social boundaries and emotions**

This session will introduce students to how geography frames how students see their own community compared to how data represents their lived space. Using data shown in a Geographic Information System (GIS), students will learn to read a map, identify spatial patterns, and dissect the social boundaries faced. These emotions will then be captured in poetry.

Niem: Patterns of demographics through GIS/student reaction and personal stories

Grady: Poetry

***Equipment required:***

Projector for computer

Paper

Writing and drawing utensil

**Session 3: Tuesday, July 13**

***Topic:* Real versus imagined space**

Students will be introduced to the different worlds that we live in, the cognitive or ‘imagined’ world where memory and dreams lie and the physical or ‘real’ world that we live in. The former will be explored through looking at memory and dreams where the latter will examine how the meanings of ‘place’ and ‘location’ and how to find them on different mapped sources.

Grady: Memory and Dreams

*Niem:* Map reading with paper maps and online maps (e.g., Google). This will be important for GPS use in the next week.

***Equipment required:***

Computers with internet access

Paper

Writing and drawing utensil

**Session 4: Thursday, July 15**

***Topic:*****GPS use and practice**

This session will introduce students to what GPS are and how to use it. Students will play a simply geocache game on Texas State University campus.

Niem: GPS theory and practice on school ground

***Equipment required:***

GPS (borrow from Texas State University, Department of Geography)

Map of campus

**Session 5: Tuesday, July 20**

***Topic:* Ghost stories told by students**

Students will pair up, retell, and write ghost stories heard about their home town/city. They will take notes and record the stories they hear from others as well. The location of ‘sighting’ should be known or approximated and detail recorded.

Grady: Student retelling of ghost stories

Niem: Map out locations on map of ‘ghost sightings’

***Equipment required:***

Paper

Writing and drawing utensil

Maps

**Session 6: Thursday, July 22**

***Topic:* Staff ghost stories**

Staff members will retell a ghost story within San Marcos/corrections facility. The location of ‘sighting’ should be known or approximated and detail recorded.

Grady: Student interview staff of ghost stories

Niem: Map out locations on map

***Equipment required:***

Paper

Writing and drawing utensil

Maps

**Session 7: Tuesday, July 27**

***Topic:* Community ghost stories**

Community members will retell a ghost story within San Marcos. The location of ‘sighting’ should be known or approximated and detail recorded.

Grady: Student interview staff of ghost stories

Niem: Map out locations on map

***Equipment required:***

Paper

Writing and drawing utensil

Maps

**Session 8: Thursday, July 29**

***Topic:* Ghost search**

Grady and Niem: Search of ghostly areas and GPS to record location points. Students will also take pictures/draw out area for online web mapping.

***Equipment required:***

Van for transportation, Camera, Map of area, GPS unit