

Quantitative Assessment

Please circle the answers to the following questions that best represent your position.

A. Overall assessment

1. Participating in the CARE conference and associated class activities (response papers, etc.) has positively contributed to my overall class experience in PAR 354.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree 2	Strongly Agree 4
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2. Participating in the CARE conference and associated class activities has positively contributed to my overall university experience.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree 1	Strongly Agree 5
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3. Participating in the CARE conference and associated class activities has positively contributed to my thinking about my life and career goals.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree 2	Strongly Agree 4
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4. Participating in the CARE conference and associated class activities has positively contributed to my intellectual development.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree 1	Strongly Agree 5
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5. Participating in the CARE conference and associated class activities has positively contributed to my moral development.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral 1	Agree 1	Strongly Agree 4
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B. QEP assessment

6. Participating in the CARE conference and associated class activities has helped me integrate real life experiences with the academic knowledge I have taken from PAR 354.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree 2	Strongly Agree 4
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7. Participating in the CARE conference and associated class activities has helped me clarify and act on my own purpose and values.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree 1	Strongly Agree 5
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8. Participating in the CARE conference and associated class activities has helped me practice civic engagement.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
			1	5

9. Participating in the CARE conference has helped me develop effective and responsible communication skills.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	3	2

C. Miscellaneous

10. The assigned response paper prior to the conference positively contributed to my overall experience with the CARE conference.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	3	2

11. The assigned response papers subsequent to the conference positively contributed to my overall experience with the CARE conference.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
		1	1	4

12. Having a mentor who had previously attended the conference last year was beneficial to me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	1	2	2

13. I would be interested in participating in the CARE conference again.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
			1	5

14. I would be interested in participating in the CARE conference again *as a mentor for first-time participants*.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
		2	1	3

Narrative Assessment

1. How would you describe your overall experience surrounding the CARE 2011 conference? What stands out to you most, positively and/or negatively?

My overall experience was really positive. It was incredible to meet so many people from all over the country interested in the same goals as we were. It was beneficial to hear from multiple view points and perspective. It was also a good experience to get to meet face to face with relief workers and hear their personal stories.

I had a positive experience at CARE. It was overall a great learning opportunity and expanded the scope of my perception regarding the suffering in the world. The lobbying opportunity of the third day stands out to me most positively, as I really felt like I was making a tangible difference in the lives of millions of people. Negatively, I felt as though the conference was not geared enough towards students, and first time participants, which comprised a large percentage of those lobbying on day three.

It was a great experience and I enjoyed learning all the content that I did. I met so many interesting people and learned a lot about government that I had no idea about before.

My experience with CARE was life changing. It opened my eyes to just how much suffering there is in the world and it showed me that we can actually do something about it. I was amazed at how many different people were united for the same cause.

I think that going to the CARE conference was a great experience, however, it did not live up to my expectations. I believe that the experience on the hill was the only significant thing that stands out in my mind, the rest of the conference was interesting but I was mostly neutral about it.

The CARE conference was overall an incredibly positive experience. The most important part, I think, was that it encouraged us as students to actually learn about and be involved in advocacy to members of Congress. The opportunity that presented—to actually be able to go to DC, meet with our representatives, and learn more about how advocacy can be effective—was something that most of us could not afford to do on our own. In addition, it required good communication skills, synthesis of research and ideas, and being able to form considered opinions quickly and effectively. As a somewhat nontraditional student, I felt comfortable with these things, but I was able to watch and to help the younger students with this process.

2. How, if at all, would you say that participation in this experience has contributed to or informed your life and career plans?

It has given me a clear direction for my career path. It showed me where my interests lie and how I can accomplish some of my life goals through different career paths.

I have always planned to, once I get a steady living income, to make a plan regarding which charities to donate to, and how much to give. Now, I think CARE will be a part of that plan, and as a future educator, I plan on making a similar field trip with my classes, funds and administrators permitting.

I've been interested in Elementary Education for as long as I can remember because I want to be the person to teach them what they're going to be using for the rest of their lives. So it actually didn't influence my career goals too much; if anything it reinforced my want to be an educator.

It has made me realize that I would really enjoy doing nonprofit work and that I am able to make a change in my own community.

Prior to the experience I was very interested in humanitarian aid and wanted to pursue that with my vocation and nothing was really changed from that perspective. However, I did learn the importance of the political support of foreign aid.

This experience has re-affirmed an interest in public service work, for me, which I had lost sight of during the process of selecting a major and a career while in school. In addition, the sessions were incredibly informative and gave me an opportunity to learn more about the different ways in which I could apply my education and career choices to making the world a better place. It was also, quite simply, incredibly nice to see that there were other people in the world committed to doing the same thing, both during college and after.

3. Please comment briefly on what you took from each of the following:

a) Kickoff concert

A sense of community with others attending the conference and globally.

It wasn't terribly interesting, and I didn't stay till the end. I couldn't really get excited because I didn't know what there was to be excited about yet.

Loved it! Nice to see celebs helping the world.

Really fun and great bonding experience.

The concert got me excited about the upcoming events.

This was incredible! It was an inspiring moment that brought many of us, particularly the students, together in a way that no speaker or other typical conference meeting could have done. It also created a positive "bonding" experience on the first night that made it easier to connect with other conference attendees the following day.

b) Issues training sessions

A broad base of knowledge about the important issues of our time.

I found these rather interesting, although some were hit-or-miss. I felt like I wasn't always the target audience, but generally took away good information.

Longggg.... A lot of info to try and absorb.

Very helpful. Without it I would have had no idea what to do.

These were very informative but were not the most interesting.

These were one of the most intense learning exercises I've ever undergone, but I think that was beneficial. Knowing that there was a deadline for assimilating this knowledge—in effect, that I needed to understand as much as I could before our appointments with the Representatives and Senators—probably increased the amount that I was able to understand, evaluate and make my own.

c) Legislative lobbying training sessions

Good concepts of how to make and enforce points.

These were absolutely necessary. My group used this time to coordinate who would go to which meetings, and how we would divide up the talking points at those meetings. Without the lobbying training sessions, the lobbying day would have been a catastrophe.

Nice to hear from people who have been before.

Was very good to get help and meet with the group I was lobbying with.

These were informative as well.

These sessions were helpful, but I almost felt like they were too much information. Personally, I would have preferred to have the additional time to learn more about the information on which we would be presenting. Alternatively, it would have been nice to spend less time on the ins-and-outs of meeting our representatives and more on the voting record and potential of each representative to support our cause. We knew that, being primarily first-time attendees, we would encounter certain protocols and procedures that we didn't know; yet I felt that was just something we should expect, and that the common-sense details—wear dress clothes, be patient if you have to wait, get the names of the staffers with whom you speak—could have been transmitted in a shorter session.

d) Plenary sessions and keynote speakers

A sense of what all is being done in many different places by many different people.

These were enjoyable, and the speakers were high caliber. I do wish that International Women's Day had been made a separate event, because I felt that the speakers were focused very much on IWD, and not so much on CARE and the work we were doing.

It was nice seeing people I've heard of in power being a supporter.

These sessions/speakers were very inspirational and motivating.

I enjoyed the speakers, especially Melinda Gates and the Congresswoman from Texas, these were informative and enjoyable.

Most of these were really awesome. I particularly loved that Melinda Gates was there, and that in addition to people whose work really had made differences around the world, they also featured women leaders from around the globe who were taking that assistance and making further differences in their communities.

e) Lobbying day sessions on Capitol Hill

An understanding of how individuals can make a big difference.

This was the highlight of the trip. The sense of significance of our work, combined with the experience of walking into congressional offices was almost overwhelming.

Good to know they want to hear from us.

Great experience. Not many people can say they have been to their senator and told him/her about an issue they are passionate about.

While I was very nervous on this day I do feel it was a great experience, and showed me how influential my voice can be.

These were incredibly informative, and empowering – it was an honor to be able to do that. I never thought I would have the means, or the time, to travel to DC to actually meet the people who are there to represent my family and me. It meant so much to be able to go.

f) Class assignments prior to and subsequent to the conference

The assignments prior front loaded the experience and allowed me to gain a general understanding of some of their issues and concepts and how they fit into the understanding of the course. De-briefing after the conference allowed for reflection and feedback.

I think we might have been better prepared for the lobbying sessions if we had known before hand which issue sessions were lobbying issues and which were not. Other than that, I think the class assignments were helpful. However, I think I missed out on a bit of the class, because I only wrote two philosophy papers – the first response paper, and the ending term paper. I never really got much of a chance to respond to the texts through writing as I did in PAR 101. Perhaps smaller CARE assignments could be substituted, and the philosophy papers still required.

Good preparation.

The assignments were a great way to become informed about the issues as well as to let us engage with the material.

I wished we would have focused on the 3 points we were going to be arguing on Capital Hill instead of the other sessions. I also thought that the letter was a nice way to tie up the whole experience.

These were very helpful, and as we discussed in the follow-up session I think even more could be asked of conference participants prior to the trip. I believe that students who are interested in attending something of this magnitude and impact would also be willing to put the extra time into learning more about what they're getting into.

4. If WCU were to send another contingent of students to CARE next year, what changes would you make to improve the experience?

I would think somehow being able to work in a trip to the Holocaust museum would be beneficial to the overall class and concepts of global suffering and the consequences of not helping others in need.

I would stay another night, because the ending session is wonderful, but getting out of the city between 5 and 7 is an absolute nightmare. Driving through the night isn't a good idea, not just

because we have class the next day, but also because it presents a safety issue. Whether we simply leave Friday morning, or we do some tourism and leave by mid-afternoon, I think Friday should be the day of departure.

Maybe make it another day longer and go sightseeing. Other than that, if I could change CARE'S schedule, I would give more breaks; I was exhausted cause it started really early, went all day, and ended late.

I think the only thing I'd change would be the length of the stay. I felt rushed and think it would have been nice to have a little time to do things like visit the Holocaust museum since that is a major part of this class.

I think that you would definitely need to stay another night and I think study sessions beforehand about possible congressmen we may see and the issues.

-Stay in a less expensive hotel, and travel to and from the conference – the days are so jam-packed that there isn't much networking or social activity that we would miss during the late evenings and early mornings. This would help the university be able to send more students who wanted to participate, and would also give the students a chance to see what it's like to move around in a city with a guide. I was surprised how many had no idea how to navigate themselves in a city at all.

-Do more work and research as a group prior to the trip. We were fortunate to have a small group with many commonalities, and we were able to build good relationships as we traveled, but I think it would have been additionally helpful to get to know the other students beforehand. Many of us had different experiences abroad and in service projects that would have been beneficial to share prior to the trip. Further research would also have been welcome, especially having heard from a previous attendee how much we would be expected to learn while there.