PROPOSAL TO PARTNER WITH JBU’S “LINK YEAR” PROGRAM

BACKGROUND
About ten years ago some colleges in England began to offer special programs to students who would be freshmen. These programs were aimed at those who were not quite sure if college was right for them and/or were unsure about a major or even a direction in life. Called “Gap Year” programs because they bridged the gap between high school and college, the universities offered about half or more of the typical freshman year of academic credit and were experiential in nature. Gap Year students traveled all over Europe and the world participating mostly in service and humanitarian aid jobs while intentionally learning about themselves and the culture.

Naturally, as these programs grew in Europe, Americans began to take notice. A handful of Christian camps in the States have started Gap Year programs, and Princeton University started one this year called the Bridge Year. Princeton sends these students to one of five locations around the world to live and work for nine months. The Christian programs in America look very different than the European model, however. They tend to be much more “academic” looking by putting the students in a classroom setting at least half of each day and teaching them basic Bible, theology, and apologetics. Philosophically, the purpose is to prepare the Christian students to go to public universities and defend their faith. They also typically have a month-long international mission trip experience included.

More and more Christian camps and organizations are considering a similar program. Camps are just one great fit for this because they have a natural recruiting base (students who grew up attending their camps) and facilities that go largely underutilized September through May.

The term “Gap” Year has a different connotation in England (a space between to destinations) than it does in America (a lack of something). Therefore we prefer the term Link Year, communicating the idea that this program provides a “link” between high school and college.

We are actively seeking partner organizations whose theology and mission are similar to JBU’s, and who are interested in providing a strongly holistic and disciple-making program. This program would offer 15 hours of college credit so students can have something to take to college after the program is completed, and to encourage parents to allow their sons and daughters to participate.
CURRICULAR COMPONENTS
Since the goal of this program is to develop holistic disciples who will be better prepared for college, we have identified the following domains and learning outcomes: As a result of completing the JBU Link Year Program, the students will. . .

Mental/Intellectual Domain
- Gain knowledge of the Bible as a whole
- Learn key leadership Theories
- Better understand ethical living
- Improve their critical and analytical thinking skills
- Have a working knowledge of a variety of worldviews
- Learn important apologetic principals
- Understand the role of good personal financial management
- Gain decision making skills

Emotional Domain
- Better understand who they are
- Commit to building emotionally healthy relationships
- Practice reconciliation skills
- Gain a healthy view of dating and romance
- Control and manage their more challenging emotions
- Practice good conflict management
- Learn to better communicate with the opposite sex
- Appreciate the variety of ways people express themselves
- Consider the dynamics of their family and how that shaped them

Socially
- Practice healthy conflict management
- Learn how to live in a secular society
- Understand interpersonal dynamics
- Gain good communication skills
- Understand how to choose good friends
- Evaluate how they present themselves
- Practice good active listening skills
- Become a leader of others
- Become a servant of others
- Set healthy boundaries in social settings
- Learn good teamwork skills
- Learn proper social etiquette

Spiritually
- Commit to biblical discipleship
- Experience living in a Christian community
- Understand spiritual diversity
- Learn basic Church history
- Practice spiritual disciplines
- Probe issues of sin/recovery from sin
- Work towards discovering their spiritual gifts
- Get into the biblical text and learn to read it well

Vocationally
- Learn to apply their spiritual gifts
- Learn about their personalities through various inventories
- Be involved in a variety of work experiences
- Learn how service to others is part of learning
- Gain resume’ writing and job interviewing skills
- Consider what it means to be a Christian in a secular job
- Consider the implications of full-time Christian Vocation

Cultural
- Be exposed to various cross-cultural experiences (spiritually, ethnically, socio-economically, generationally, gender, etc.)
- Better understand how to think about, evaluate, interact with, and engage with secular culture
- Gain a missional mindset
- Evaluate church culture
- Improve their cultural intelligence

Physical
- Learn healthy sleeping habits
- Learn how to have a healthy diet
- Participate in regular exercise
- Commit to healthy sexuality
COURSES
Based on the curricular goals above, we are requesting a total of 15 credit hours. The programs would actually use curriculum for these courses as developed in conjunction with JBU faculty. Students will enroll as JBU students for the spring semester and receive JBU credit for these. The courses and rationale for each follows:

- **COR 1002 Gateway: Worldviews** (To give the Link Year students the same introduction to Christian higher education as our on-campus students, and to use a study of worldviews as the topic) Taught by your organization’s qualified personnel or adjunct staff.
- **COR 1012 Wellness** (The physical domain is one that will be emphasized at these programs, so offering our Wellness course will give the leaders of the camps a framework to work from) Taught by your organization’s qualified personnel or adjunct staff.
- **COR 1181 Physical Activity** (Will be required as part of the physical domain curriculum, probably Aerobic Walking & Jogging) Offered as an on-line course.
- **IDS 1101 Career Planning** (Another emphasis will be the vocational domain, so guiding students though a variety of personality assessments to go along with the practical experiences they will have and job hunting skills is a good fit. This will also help guide students as they consider majors for college.) This would be primarily taught at JBU as part of a campus visit.
- **CMN 1213 Christian Leadership and Service** (Part of the vocational and spiritual domains of the curriculum, this class will help students grasp the Kingdom nature of their interaction with culture.) Taught by your organization’s qualified personnel or adjunct staff.
- **COM 2083 Masterpieces of Film** (Culture is another domain for the Link Year curriculum. Including this class seems like a natural fit to help the students learn to watch and evaluate movies through a Christian world view.) Taught by your organization’s qualified personnel or adjunct staff.
- **ICS 2993 Study Abroad Experience** (Each of these programs will have a 4-week trip abroad and will be approved on a case-by-case basis by the appropriate committee) Taught as part of the cross-cultural trip experience.

A FEW DETAILS
- **Tuition**: JBU will charge 50% of one semester’s undergraduate full-time tuition for this program. Students will take a total of 15 hours of JBU credits. That amount for the 2010-11 year would have been $4711.
- **Admission Process**: There will be a two-step admissions process. First, the student has to be admitted to the host program. Then the process could be the same as our TUG admission, requiring GPA, ACT/SAT, references, an essay, etc.,
with any applicant not falling under our standards going to the Admissions Committee for approval.

- **Financial Aid:** Students would be full-time JBU students during the spring semester of the Link Year program. The students would be able to apply all financial aid to their tuition and Link Year expenses. JBU would not offer institutional aid to these students, but they would be eligible for such aid if they matriculate to the Siloam Springs campus after their Link Year experience is complete.

- **Faculty:** Each host organization has to demonstrate that it has enough qualified personnel to serve as JBU approved adjunct instructors for each course. This approval would come through the application process and be evaluated by the JBU Program Director and the appropriate Dean.

**PROCESS**

1) Complete a JBU Link Year Partnership Application form.

2) Upon approval, the Program Director will send the organization’s liaison information about expectations for each course. The organization will then use those minimum expectations to create syllabi for each course, which will be returned to JBU for approval.

3) The host organization will work with JBU to find qualified adjunct faculty for each course. However, each faculty is approved by JBU.

4) The host organization may promote the partnership with JBU, including appropriate use of JBU logos and graphics, in printed materials and on its website.

5) The host organization determines its own application procedure and requirements, which will be separate from JBU’s.

6) Once students are accepted by the host organization, they should apply to JBU for official acceptance with the university.