International migration, globalization and national identity are constantly evolving, ever-changing topics that require continuous updating and professional development. Teaching a course entitled “KSU111 Tomorrow’s World Today” challenges me to stay abreast of how employability, academic skills, and education itself are all shaped by migration, but often times I am limited to perspectives that are grounded in US policy, the bi-partisan political landscape and domestic contexts. To build competencies about our increasingly porous boundaries, and the impact on national identity, from a transnational and collaborative lens, was tremendous opportunity. The geographic locale, and first-hand testimonies from officials provides a truly global frame that enhance and complement current knowledge in a rich and transformative manner that was not be possible in a domestic setting.

Global education serves as a central theme in my teaching and research agenda. Whether its taking students out into a global learning environment or bringing global topics into the domestic classroom, I am most interested in how we can encourage students to adopt new perspectives and cultivate global citizenship. To state it simply, this workshop armed me with important insights to meet this goal. In terms of outlining how this workshop helped me in the development of instructional resources, tools and other scholarly projects, I summarize 5 action items of what I am doing and what I plan to do in the future:

A. Develop a research project about what is most impactful in a workshop abroad that aims to develop perspectives in global issues. My research agenda is not only concerned with cultivating transformative internationally educative experiences for students, but also with how other faculty prepare to teach their own globally themed course content. Inspired from a meta-lens, one hope I have for this workshop is to develop a research study that identifies the top three impactful activities, discussions, site visits, speakers, excursions, or topics that most profoundly encouraged a global perspective or new method of thinking about the world. Further, I hope to facilitate follow-up interviews with the other participants selected for the trip to discuss the ways that these new insights were utilized in their own instructional approaches after the workshop.

B. Identify a network of individuals to serve as resources to be utilized in the “Ask the Experts” initiative. As aKSU1111 faculty member and course coordinator, I am tasked to house instructional material related to the course, but also to develop new resources that help full time and part time instructors access updated global insights and course material. “Ask the Experts” is a project initiative that serves as a social and innovative resource in the way of a network of individuals who might serve as (virtual, or F2F) subject matter experts in the KSU1111 classroom. This could allow for one or more guiding critical questions to serve as the point of inquiry for the day, and students to interact with their own perspectives and comments in a critical and collegial fashion (i.e. how does immigration impact national identity? How might new legislation like Executive Action impact the local/regional/national community?). Subject matter experts identified abroad, or internally (other KSU participants) could also be utilized in our annual co-curricular Global Challenges Panel (an interactive live tweet discussion), another initiative that promotes dynamic and engaging social interaction with subject matter experts across campus and first-year students.

C. Revamped two course modules on Introduction to the Global World and Population to include more recent and relevant discussion on migration as a tool to encourage a. synthesizes across topics and b.) critical thinking. Population serves as the first and foundational course module of the 7GlobalChallenges (7GCs) because of the transcendent and interconnected nature of population growth, migration and urbanization on all of the other 7GCs (Resources, Technology, Knowledge/information, Economic Integration, Conflict and Governance). First-year, and often times, first semester students find it challenging to a.) synthesize across disciplinary boundaries and course topics, and b.) engage in critical thinking about global topics. Using insights from the
workshop, I have re-formatted my 2 introductory modules on the 7GCs so that students are utilizing migration as a core concept, and can then synthesize connections to other relevant and timely topics such as economic, social, environmental and political impact.

D. Identifying new KSU 1111 course content for the Global Fellows Program in Montepulciano involves teaching KSU1111 in a domestic and international setting. Ultimately, students in this learning community need practical and relevant course content that enhances their international experiential educative journey in Italy. To that end, my goal was to use insights from the workshop to develop a new course module that focuses on how different governmental and nongovernmental organizations approach migration and the 7GCs using a singular example issue (i.e. Refugee status, forced deportation, naturalization). Students compared how that particular issue is handled from an EU perspective and from a US perspective. In drawing comparisons and contrasts between the two institutions (or more), students confronted critical questions about motivations, long/short term impact and potential outcomes within the global landscape.

E. Assess the impact of new globally themed course content in a first-year seminar. In keeping with a well-integrated teaching and research agenda, it becomes important to develop projects that assess the impact of new instructional interventions in the KSU1111. Was it more successful or less successful than previous instructional approaches? Why or why not? This involves developing an assessment that invites students to reflect on what they connected to in the newly developed course modules (mentioned above in C. & D.) and whether or not these were important resources in helping them: a.) synthesize understandings across disciplinary topics and b.) engage in critical thinking.