




Community of Practice: Student Learning and Program Design

Faculty-Led Domestic and International Immersion Programs

Agenda


- Standards of Good Practice
- Program Design / Activity Ideas
- Student conduct/behavior
- Dissonance, Discomfort
- Re-entry
- Brining learning back to campus
- Student learning assessment





The Georgetown Consortium Project: Interventions for Student Learning Abroad

- Research sample of 1,159 students who studied abroad (many different models), and 138 control students on home campuses
- **“Mere exposure to new people, events, and institutions did not automatically produce effective learning”** (p. 4)
- “Students need to learn intercultural concepts and skills to cope with the cultural differences they experience abroad” (p. 5)
- Interventions needed: such as pre-departure orientations, programs designed to teach coping concepts and skills, orientation sessions abroad, constant reflection opportunities, before re-entry sessions
- Programs not done well can actually reinforce negative stereotypes
- **“The presence or absence of a well-trained cultural mentor who meets frequently with students may be the single most important intervention to improve student intercultural learning abroad”** (p. 25)



Standards of Good Practice for Short-Term Education Abroad Programs

By The Forum on Education Abroad

- **Mission, Objectives and Purpose:** The program relates to the education abroad mission of the organization and has well-defined academic and/or experiential objectives.
- **Institutional Policies:** The program is organized according to the mission and policies of the sponsoring institution.
- **Purpose:** The program has a clearly-defined purpose and clearly-defined academic and/or experiential goals.
- **Appropriateness:** The focus of the program is appropriate to the site chosen.

Student Learning and Development

- **Student Development:** The program provides opportunities that encourage student development (e.g., leadership skills, service orientation, maturity, tolerance for ambiguity, growth in cultural awareness).
- **Learning Outcomes:** The program fosters discipline-specific and/or interdisciplinary learning outcomes appropriate to the curriculum, site, and program goals.
- **Language and Intercultural Development:** The program provides language and intercultural development opportunities appropriate to its mission.
- **Intrapersonal Development:** The program includes opportunities for reflection during and after the experience.
- **Environmental and Cultural Responsibility:** The organization fosters faculty, staff and student awareness and minimization of harmful individual and program-related environmental and social-cultural impacts.
- **Assessment:** The student learning outcomes and overall student experience are assessed at the program's conclusion so that subsequent programs are improved based on this assessment.

Academic Framework

- ▶ The organization maintains clearly stated and publicly available policies on academic matters related to education abroad.
 - ▶ Program designed to fulfill graduation, general education, major requirement; service-learning (if offered)
 - ▶ Clear policies on enrollment charges, withdrawals, academic credit
 - ▶ Program makes effective use of the host locations for structured experiential learning
 - ▶ *Consider number of sites proposed and proximity: emphasis on in-depth experiences at each site rather than “seeing everything”*
 - ▶ Program seeks to integrate student learning with requirements and learning at students' home institutions

Student Selection and Code of Conduct

- ▶ The program maintains, and makes publicly accessible, its commitment to fair and appropriate policies regarding student selection and conduct. Program designed to fulfill graduation, general education or major requirement
 - ▶ Clear and transparent policies on student selection, prerequisites, requirements
 - ▶ The program welcomes and acts with respect towards students regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, physical ability, religion, or national and ethnic origin.
 - ▶ The program seeks to keep the program affordable for the greatest number of students.
 - ▶ The program informs students of its student code of conduct, disciplinary processes and the consequences of violations prior to the beginning of the program, and consistently applies them during the program.

Health, Safety, and Security

- ▶ The program has established and continuously maintains effective health, safety, security and risk management policies, procedures and faculty/staff training
 - ▶ The program leadership is aware of student health issues prior to departure and is well prepared to handle student, faculty, and staff health issues that may arise.
 - ▶ The program has contact information at the location to assist with emergencies and health and safety issues
 - ▶ Students have health insurance coverage that is applicable in-country, and in the countries visited by the program.
 - ▶ Students are well informed about what to do in the case of emergencies

Program Design / Activity Ideas

Predeparture:

- Social Contract
- “Hopes and Unknowns”

On-Site:

- Scavenger Hunt
- Lead the group for a day
- Lead morning discussion
- Group presentations on-site
- Be a “flaneur” / share experience
- Local Research
- Video Blogging / Blogging
- Journaling / Letter to self
- **Other ideas?**



Social Contract

- Empower students to create their own community—and expectations
- Leave the room while they create the social contract
- Review the social contract after students create it
- Everyone (including program leaders) signs it
- Bring it with you and refer back to it if there are issues



Guatemala Immersion Program
Winter 2020
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Guatemala Immersion Social Contract

Policies by the University

As an official program of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, every Guatemala Immersion participant (faculty and students) are expected to adhere to the academic policies of the university and conform to the standards of behavior indicated in the Student Rights and Responsibilities section of the University Policy Directory (<https://www.uwec.edu/campus-life/student-expression-rights-responsibilities/>).

Policies by Guatemala Immersion Faculty

The Guatemala Immersion faculty reserves the right to dismiss a student from the program at the student's expense. Grounds for dismissal may include: repeated behavior that is disruptive and detrimental to other students or the group, alcohol misuse, physical or sexual assault, harassment, theft, or possession, use, or distribution of illegal drugs.

Policies by Guatemala Immersion Students

Respect

1. I will treat others with respect, empathy, and understanding.

Timeliness

1. I will be on time or early to all group events.
2. If I am going to be late, I will [text](#) the "group message" and keep the group informed.

Safe Space

1. I will not bring anyone into the room at the hostel that is not associated directly with our program without consent of roommates.
2. I will be mindful of allergies/food preferences/medical needs/mental health needs of my classmates.
3. I will let my roommates/peers know about my medical needs if I see fit.
4. I will pick up an address card at the hostel at [check-in](#) so I have the address with me when I go out OR some form of map/location device.
5. I will be respectful of roommates' sleep schedules.
6. I will do my best to ensure everyone is comfortable and has the support they need ("teamwork makes the dream work").

Self-Control

1. I will not use derogatory terms about other people (for example, the "r" word).
2. I will be receptive to the suggestions regarding my conduct.
3. I will keep an open mind to new places, new people, and new experiences.
4. I will be mindful that I am representing my country and my university while I am a traveler in Guatemala.

Social Awareness

1. I will always let at least one other person know where I am if I choose to or need to do something on my own (go for a walk, get a bite to eat, visit a church, etc.).
2. If I need to or choose to go out at night to do things like go to the store, go for a walk, or visit a venue where alcohol is consumed (i.e. a dance club), I will do so with at least one student of the program. I will also return with at least one student of the program.
3. Look out for one another when out at night and try to communicate with each other in case of trouble.
 - I will NEVER leave someone alone when out and about.
 - Help word for the group text if in a problem where you can't say help: **JIMBO**
4. I will try to avoid imposing my opinions about divisive topics such as religion or politics.
5. When I locate a free wi-fi hotspot, I will share that knowledge with the group.
6. Although I will have specific groups that I hang out with, I will try to include as many people as possible and will be inclusive to the group.

Alcohol Use

1. I may choose to use alcohol in accordance to the laws of the host country, but I will not abuse it. Abuse includes indulging in alcohol to the point where it interferes with my learning on the trip and the learning and tolerance of others on the trip.
2. I will only use alcohol responsibly so that I am neither out of control when drinking or hung over the next day.
3. I will let my roommates know if I will be back late at night.

Balancing Group Needs with Individual Needs

1. I will be mindful of maintaining and communicating my health and respect the health needs of others.

How to resolve behavior issues (habitual lateness, rude behavior, indifference toward program...)

1. I will continually remember that I am on a funded UW-Eau Claire Immersion program (not on a vacation) and I aspire to get as much out of the program as I can, mindful of others.

“Hopes and Unknowns” in a Hat

- Could be fears, hopes, goals
- Anonymous comments read by program leaders with the group setting
- A way to share common concerns / fears / questions / desires
- Leaders become aware of the group’s concerns / fears / questions / desires



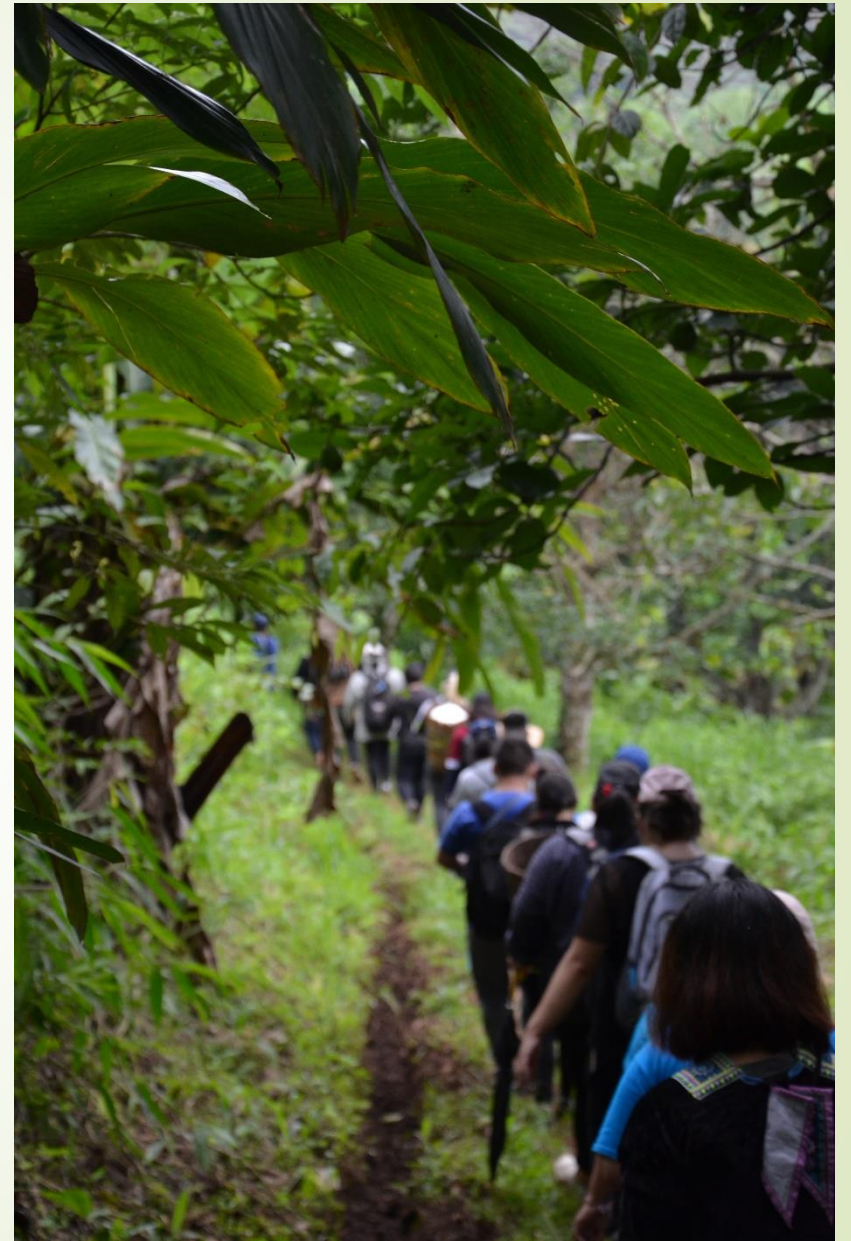
Scavenger Hunt



- First day or two of the program
- Small groups, with a map and specific goals
- Find “never before seen object”
- Explore a local market or neighborhood, interact with locals, take public transit

Lead the Group for a Day

- Each student has a day on the program (or in pairs / small group)
- Must follow the itinerary and get group from one place to another, keep the group on time, make sure everyone is there
- Empower students to take charge of their own learning



Lead Morning Discussion



- Each student has one day (or more?) to lead the morning discussion on the program (or in pairs / small group)
- Perhaps reflects on one week or one day of experiences, challenges, etc., and what's next?
- Meet the night before with their fellow group leaders to perhaps come up with a theme to guide the discussion.

Debrief, debrief, debrief!

- Journaling
- Local Research
- Video Blogging / Blogging
- Letter to self
- **Other ideas?**



Student Conduct and Behavior

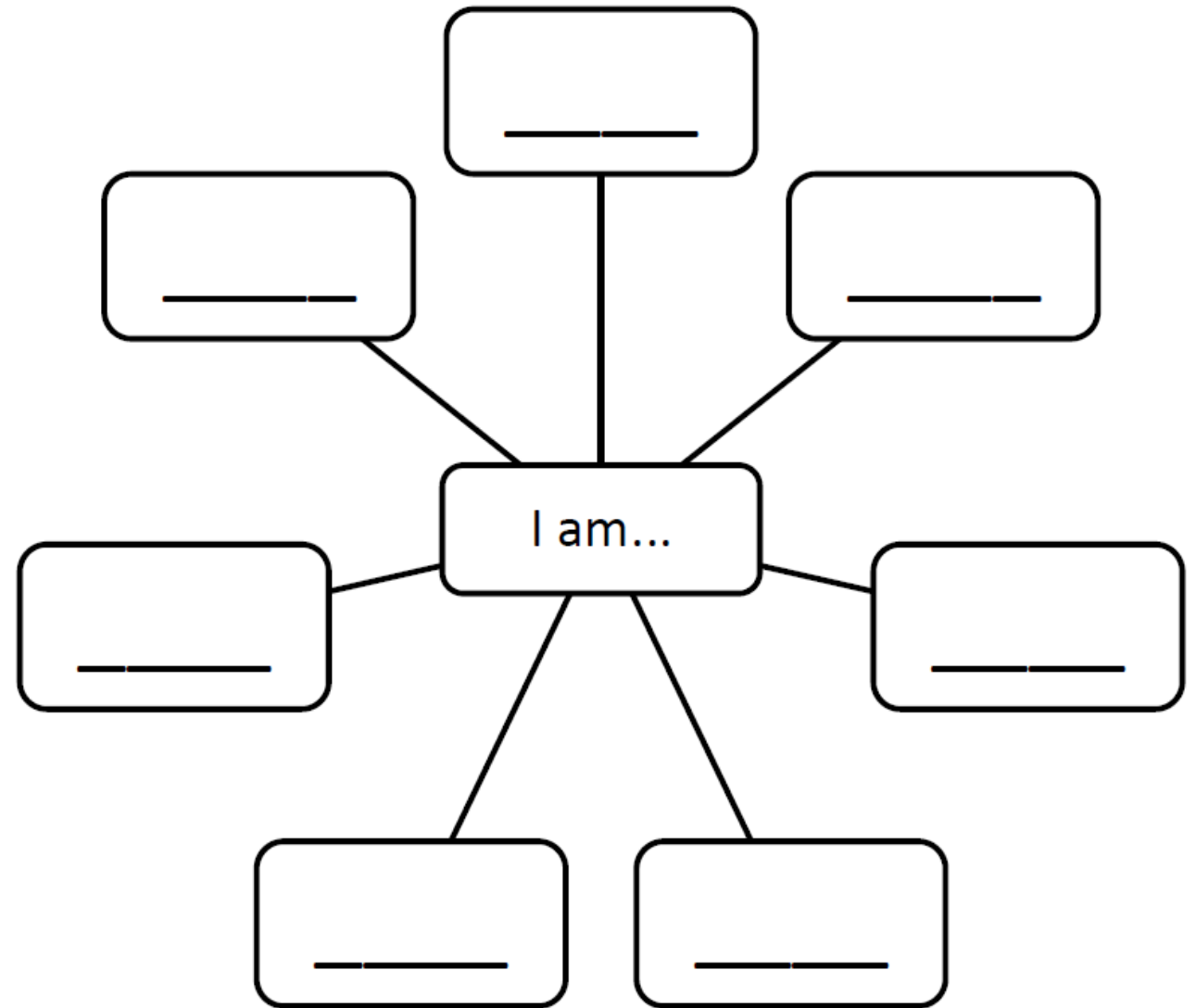


- What have been your experiences with students drinking? Have you run into any problems?
- What have been your experiences with students going out? Have you run into any problems?
- How much supervision or independence do you give your students?
- What are the risks and liability to consider in each location?

I Am...

- In pairs, get to know each other
- Start the conversation about identity and awareness
- Incorporate discussion of privilege and oppression
- How might this look different in different locations?

Take a few minutes to complete this diagram. In as many circles as you can, write a word you feel describes you or is a significant part of who you are or how you choose to identify yourself to others.



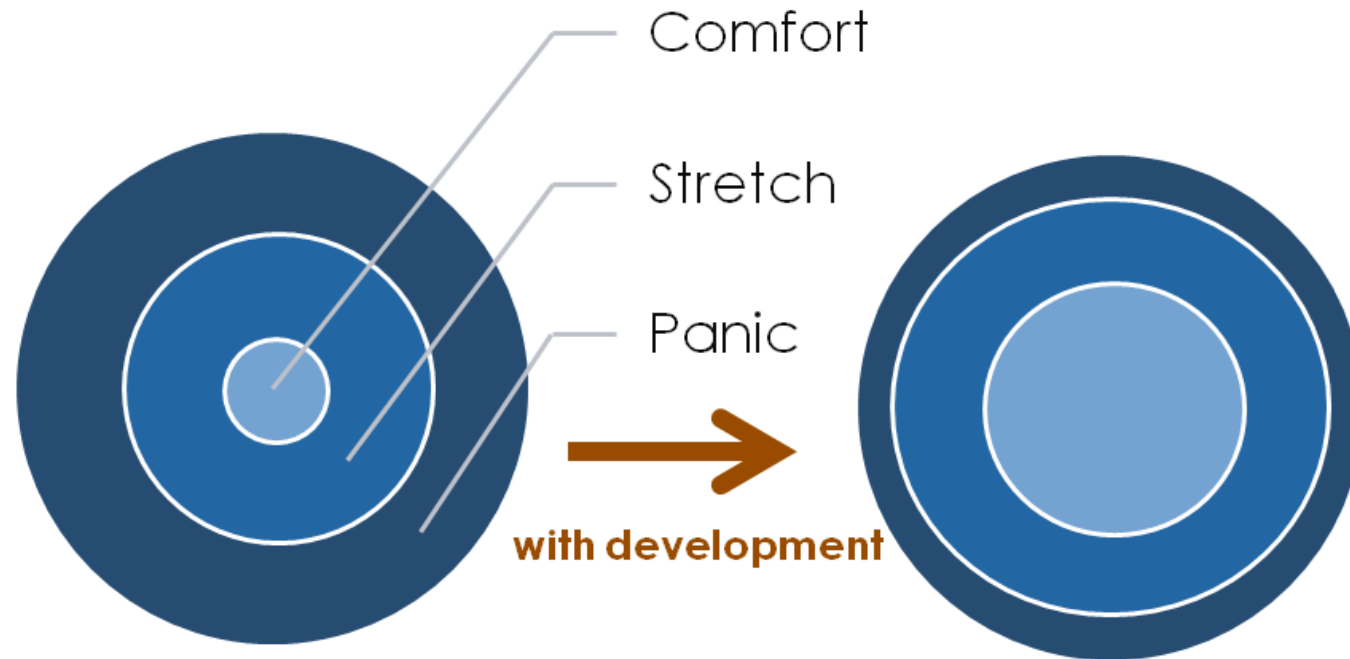
Reflection



- Cannot just be a reflection at the end of program - must be **continuous** before, during and after the program (preferably daily)
- Teach students how to reflect with specific prompts
- Group discussion to push the conversation forward
- How do you get students to “dig deeper”?

Balancing Challenge and Support

Comfort, Stretch and Panic Zones



Dissonance, Discomfort



- Think about timing (culture shock)
- Programs are meant to be disruptive, meant to be challenging and we intentionally put students in that place
- Being uncomfortable is transformative
- **Appropriate challenge**
- Balance challenge and support

Decolonizing Study Abroad

- Marketing, promotion, representation
 - Students should be learners
 - Often positioned as tourists
- Program Design
 - “culture as a museum” or “authentic”
 - Are we ever “objective observers”?
 - Consider reciprocal designs, equal partners/collaborators
 - Redefine learning from an asset-based model
- Assessment and Evaluation
 - Include partners and their perspectives
 - In program evaluations, who is centered? Can we get other perspectives?



Assessment



- ▶ LE Core (R2)
- ▶ Best Practices
 - ▶ Include all stakeholders, at all stages
 - ▶ Clarify the purpose, timing and uses
 - ▶ Triangulate methods
 - ▶ Timing

Re-Entry Resources

The greatest culture shock students encounter is when they come home: “Reverse Culture Shock”

- ▶ Expecting to return to comfort and familiarity, but their perspective has changed.
- ▶ Overwhelmed by the options or differences in lifestyle.
- ▶ Feel disconnected from their community, friends, and family who don't understand their experience.
- ▶ Don't know how to talk about their experience when asked “How was your trip?”
- ▶ Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing
 - ▶ Then mourning? (Richard Kiely)
 - ▶ Is it ethical?
- ▶ What is our responsibility post-program with re-entry?
- ▶ How do we help students deal with that dissonance?



Bringing Learning Back to Campus

- What are examples of how you helped students bring their learning and understanding back to campus?
- How does this help students with re-entry adjustment?

