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Maximizing the Benefits of Short-Term International Programs: Student Engagement and Reentry Guide for Global Routes Students and Leaders

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Maximizing the Benefits of Short-Term International Programs:

Student Engagement and Reentry Guide for Global Routes Students and Leaders

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Abstract

Study abroad programs have greatly increased in number and program type during the last decade. Due to factors such as academic and financial demands, students are finding short-term programs, typically lasting eight weeks or less, to be the most feasible option. Critics are skeptical of short-term programs questioning whether students are able to gain the depth necessary to achieve cultural awareness, personal growth and new perspectives. Supporters argue that if planned and managed correctly, short-term programs can have meaningful short and long-term impacts on students.

Global Routes, an international education organization headquartered in Windsor, New Hampshire, offers short-term exchange programs that aim to foster personal and international development. Their short-term programs strive to create an environment that engages students throughout their experience. An analysis of Global Routes curriculum using research on program structure and design, student learning, holistic education, youth engagement, empowerment, and reentry, demonstrates that Global Routes programs have a robust curriculum during their programs, yet the program format does not take full advantage of opportunities to engage students prior to or after their programs. In order to address this shortcoming a handbook was designed to supplement the existing Global Routes curriculum. The handbook offers activities, assignments and discussions designed to engage students in their own learning, development and personal growth, prior to, during and after their programs. The first two sections of the handbook (pre-program and during program) are designed for staff and leaders, while the third section is designed as a reentry handbook for students.

Introduction

Global Routes, is a U.S. based international education organization. Through cultural exchange programs, Global Routes aims to "foster personal and international development" and create an environment that engages students throughout their experience (Global Routes, *Our Mission,* 2014). Their programs for high school students range in length from two to five weeks and journey to South and Central America, Africa and Asia. In keeping with the Global Routes mission, students live and work with local community members, allowing both students and host communities to open their eyes to the differences in the world around them and give them the "opportunity to push past stereotypes and misconceptions to build strong relationships and self-understanding" (Global Routes, *Our Mission,* 2014). This enables both groups to "step outside of their boundaries and open their hearts and minds to new people, cultures and ideas" (Global Routes, *Our Mission,* 2014).

While working for Global Routes for nearly a year, I experienced an entire program cycle. This experience allowed me to observe the extent to which Global Routes programs engaged students in transformative thinking about other cultures. An analysis of Global Routes curriculum using research on program structure and design, student learning, holistic education, youth engagement, empowerment, and reentry, demonstrates that Global Routes programs have a robust curriculum during their programs, yet the program format does not take full advantage of opportunities to engage students prior to or after their programs. In order to address this shortcoming, a handbook was designed to supplement the existing Global Routes curriculum. This paper presents a thorough description of Global Routes' programs, a review of relevant literature, an analysis of the effectiveness of current programs, and suggestions for improvement, most notably, the Student Engagement and Reentry Handbook.

Exposure to intercultural communication and interaction is built into each Global Routes program by requiring a homestay and also a service project. For the homestay component students are paired up with another student and together live with a host family. Additionally each program partners with their local community on a project selected by the host community. Projects range from building classrooms, health clinics and community centers to teaching English to local children. These community service projects are primarily funded by student fundraising efforts, a purposeful design that helps to further engage students with the project from the start. Once on site, students are not only living with community hosts, but are also working alongside them. Students are able to practice their foreign language skills, observe cultural differences and share stories and passions with residents of the host communities.

During their programs students are surrounded by peers and guided by competent leaders who are skilled at helping students realize their potential to overcome cultural barriers. Once students return home, this supportive structure disappears and students sometimes feel their experience was isolated. They may be unsure of how to integrate their learning and experience with their life at home. Through observation and discussions with students and also with the director of Global Routes, it became clear that providing students with guided, structured material upon their return would help students take their experience and learning beyond the program itself. As I began to research the topics of reentry and student engagement, I realized that other aspects of Global Routes curriculum could also be improved. I analyzed the Global Routes curriculum, and took into account the nature and challenges of short-term programs. I consulted theories and frameworks on program structure and design, student learning, youth engagement, empowerment, and reentry. As a result I created a handbook geared toward increasing student engagement before, during and after their travel experience, better preparing students to transition and adjust to life at home and helping students to continue to reflect, grow and engage in their learning once they have returned home.

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Background

Global Routes' founders recognize that we live in an increasingly interdependent global community, and that our future depends on our self-knowledge, mutual understanding and respect of diverse cultures (Global Routes, *Our Mission*, 2014). For nations to become and remain active members in this cooperative global community, citizens must be educated to think globally, therefore helping to foster global citizenship. Stephanie Bell-Rose (2007), former President of the Goldman Sachs Foundation believes that by educating citizens to have an appreciation for other countries, their histories, struggles and successes, the U.S. will produce more effective global citizens and leaders. The results from a public opinion survey about the importance of international education, proves that U.S. citizens support exposing students to other cultures and languages (NAFSA, 2013). Inclusion of such opportunities will better prepare our next generations to bridge cultural and linguistic gaps not only within the U.S. but also far beyond its borders.

Not surprisingly international education and study abroad programs, such as Global Routes, have grown significantly in the last 10 years, not only in the number of students studying abroad, but also in the types of programs being offered (Institute of International Education, 2013). Because most study abroad programs traditionally last either a semester or full year, many students are unable to participate. Further, as Spencer and Tuma (2007) explain, because there are many more 'non-traditional' students, older students, those who are of minority backgrounds, employed, disabled or who have limited funds, study abroad programs have diversified their options in order to meet current demand.   One program model increasing in popularity is the short-term program model, which can vary greatly with regard to subject matter and the time of year they take place, but the duration is generally considered to be fewer than eight weeks. While the short term program model allows 'non-traditional' college students to study abroad, it also gives high school students,

who may be unable to commit to longer exchange programs the opportunity to spend time abroad and experience different cultures.

With short-term programs having become the most popular option for students studying abroad, there are critics who wonder if students will gain the depth necessary to achieve cultural awareness, personal growth and new perspectives, all aspects noted to be helpful in shaping effective global citizens (Mapp, 2012). It is common to think that the longer a program the more learning and awareness a student will gain, but Peter Hovde (2002) reminds us, "…if done right, short-term study abroad can have an extraordinary impact on students" (pg. 2). By developing a program that is structured with a student's learning and needs at the forefront, setting clear learning objectives and linking them throughout a program from orientation through to reentry any program regardless of length can have a lasting impact on a student's knowledge, skills and development. Global Routes is one such program that strives to create a learning environment that engages students through cultural immersion to learn about the world around them and then link their learning to their personal development.

Literature Review

In order to analyze Global Routes programs and design supplementary curriculum related to engaging students and helping them through their reentry process, it was necessary to complete a cross-sectional review of literature. The following review of literature includes five topic areas: program structure and design, student learning, holistic education, youth engagement and empowerment and reentry. Each explores important research, theories and/or frameworks and addresses important aspects, crucial to creating an engaging, safe, and stimulating learning environment for students. How a program is structured and designed plays an instrumental role in what students gain from a program. Consideration of learning styles and the cycle students move through when learning, is an integral aspect of engaging students. Additionally, knowledge of how

a holistic approach to education can aid in engaging and empowering students will also benefit a students learning. Finally by ensuring that topics and discussions related to reentry are included in study abroad curriculum, will help students to complete their learning cycle.

Program Structure and Design

There are a plethora of models for short term international education programs. There is no 'one size fits all structure'. Some programs have the luxury of meeting as a group prior to their departure, and again upon return. Other programs, like Global Routes, meet for the first time in the field and part ways once the program ends. Taking the following into consideration when designing the structure of a program will help students engage more deeply and take more away from their program.

Pre-departure orientation should be where the process of facilitating student learning begins. Topics should include practical and logistical information and also more philosophical discussions such as cultural differences and expectations for a home stay. A goal of any orientation should be to motivate students to learn and familiarize themselves with their host culture- helping to develop their intercultural understanding (Thebodo & Marx, 2005). Additionally pre-departure orientation can help students understand the programs goals and set personal goals for themselves.   Bruce LaBrack (1993) explains that orientations that are properly designed and conducted "assist participants to achieve positive intercultural adjustments as well as to attain personal goals" (p.242). This can be achieved by incorporating activities into orientation that allow students to gain knowledge about their host country, reflect on their thoughts and feelings, and set goals accordingly.

Cornelius Grove (1989) notes the intercultural learning aspect of exchange programs not only expands a student's knowledge and skills, but also allows a learner to change their perspectives on their life and the world around them, something that is a valuable asset for a global citizen (p.7).

Inclusion of such topics into orientation is vital, but Grove (1989) also reminds us that these discussions should not only occur prior to departure, but throughout the experience, allowing students to revisit, discuss and reflect on topics throughout their experience (p.12). Elizabeth Redden (2013) explains that when students are not guided through a reflection process, and simply left to process on their own, they are less likely to learn from their experiences and gain intercultural skills. Allowing students to have their own experiences, but guiding them through a reflective process will allow students to learn not only about their host culture, but also about themselves in relation to other cultures.

Programs that incorporate ample time for reflection inherently provide a structure for students to draw connections between their field experiences and their lives at home. When students are not given the structure to process, it is easy for them compartmentalize their experience. This can lead to a fear of losing their experience, due to the fact that they are unable to place their experience into either a personal or academic context something LaBrack (1993) refers to as the 'shoebox effect' (p. 250). While orientation is often seen as the most important aspect of a program, LaBrack (1993) encourages programs to link orientation and reentry, exploring the same general topics both in orientation and then again during reentry (p. 251). Developing a curriculum that links a student's entire experience from orientation to reentry, reflecting on similar topics throughout allows students to revisit what was 'theory' at the beginning of their program and add their personal experience ultimately helping students to conceptualize their experience (LaBrack, 1993).

Student Learning

Because short term programs, like Global Routes, have less time to make an impact on students, it is even more important that programs are designed and developed to maximize student learning. The nature of Global Routes program model is rooted in experiential education which

gives students the opportunity to learn and then reflect on their experiences, connecting them to

their personal development and visions for the future. Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory

(ELT) and work with learning styles provide a model in which a holistic approach is taken to ensure

that students engage in their experience abroad at more than just the surface level. This is

accomplished by giving students a shared responsibility for their learning (Passarelli & Kolb, 2012

p. 2). Kolb's ELT model, shown in figure 1, represents how one grasps an experience and then

transforms the experience into new knowledge.

Figure 1: Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

(Source: http://www.open.ac.uk/blogs/openminded/?p=318)
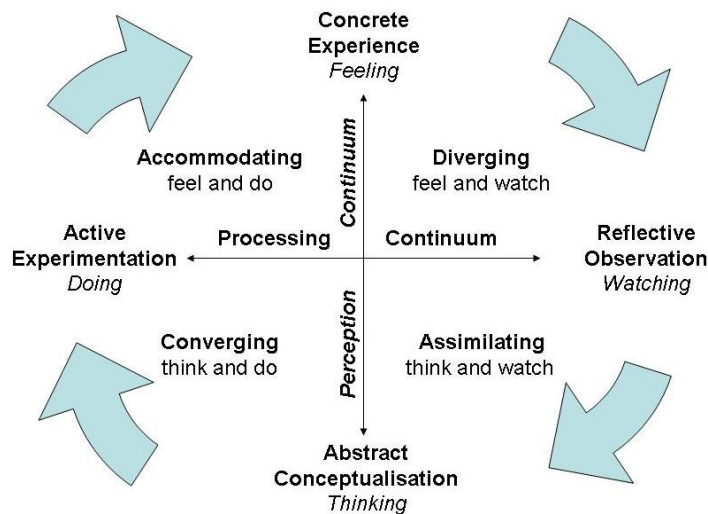
Kolb and Passarelli (2012) explain that there are two dialectically related ways in which one

grasps an experience, Concrete Experience (CE)/feeling and Abstract Conceptualization

(AC)/thinking and two ways of transforming the experience, Reflective Observation

(RO)/watching, and Active Experimentation (AE)/doing. How a person moves through the ELT

cycle describes their style of learning and their preference to either one of the four learning modes

CE (feeling), RO (watching), AC (thinking), and AE (doing) or a combination of two of the

learning modes, CE and RO (diverging), AC and RO (assimilating), AC and AE (converging) or CE and AE (accommodating) (Passarelli & Kolb, 2012).

Learners move through this model in a cyclical way; they have an experience, reflect on the experience, think about it and then act on the experience- repeating this cycle continuously. Passarelli and Kolb (2012) note that, "Attention must be paid to designing a learning experience that helps students fully absorb and integrate their experience at increasing levels of complexity," in order to maximize a students' learning (p.2). Simply taking students abroad, does not necessarily make the experience 'experiential'. Time must be spent processing and reflecting on the experience in order for students to gain new knowledge. Once new knowledge is gained then students can build on this knowledge by moving through the cycle repeatedly.   Kinsella, Smith-Simonet and Tuma (2006) explain that the challenge for short term program educators is linking the "doing and reflecting, experiencing and comprehending" in a short timeframe (p. 177).   Through intentional planning, programs can be designed with the ELT model in mind. Kinsella et al., (2006) find the ELT cycle helpful in planning all aspects of a program from pre-departure, to during the program to reentry. The cycle sets a structure in which students can see the relationship between their experiences, their ideas and how their ideas can be transformed into knowledge through reflection and experimentation.

Holistic Education

The holistic model of education abroad explains that programs like Global Routes provide an ideal setting for students to learn and develop. Such settings are perfect because students "encounter new places, and people, take in new ideas and information, test themselves and in the process, discover something new about themselves and their potential" (Gillespie, Braskamp & Dwyer, 2009, p. 445). This model not only compliments Kolb's ELT, but also encourages programs to evaluate how they are engaging and nurturing different aspects of a student.

Using the term global learning and development, the holistic model of education abroad shines equal light on a student's intellectual, social, and personal life (figure 2). The cognitive, or intellectual dimension, encourages students to question how they know information, forcing them to reflect on new information and then integrate it with existing knowledge (Gillespie et al, 2009). The intrapersonal (personal) dimension asks 'who am I?' and encourages students to understand themselves. Finally the interpersonal (social) dimension questions how we relate to others. This model follows an action-oriented, learning-by-doing flow, which helps students understand the "intersection of local, national, and global issues," become aware of cultural differences and self-awareness of one's place and responsibilities in society (Gillespie et al, 2009, p.447). By nurturing all three dimensions of this model concurrently students develop well informed viewpoints and more easily become part of diverse communities (Gillespie, et al, 2009).
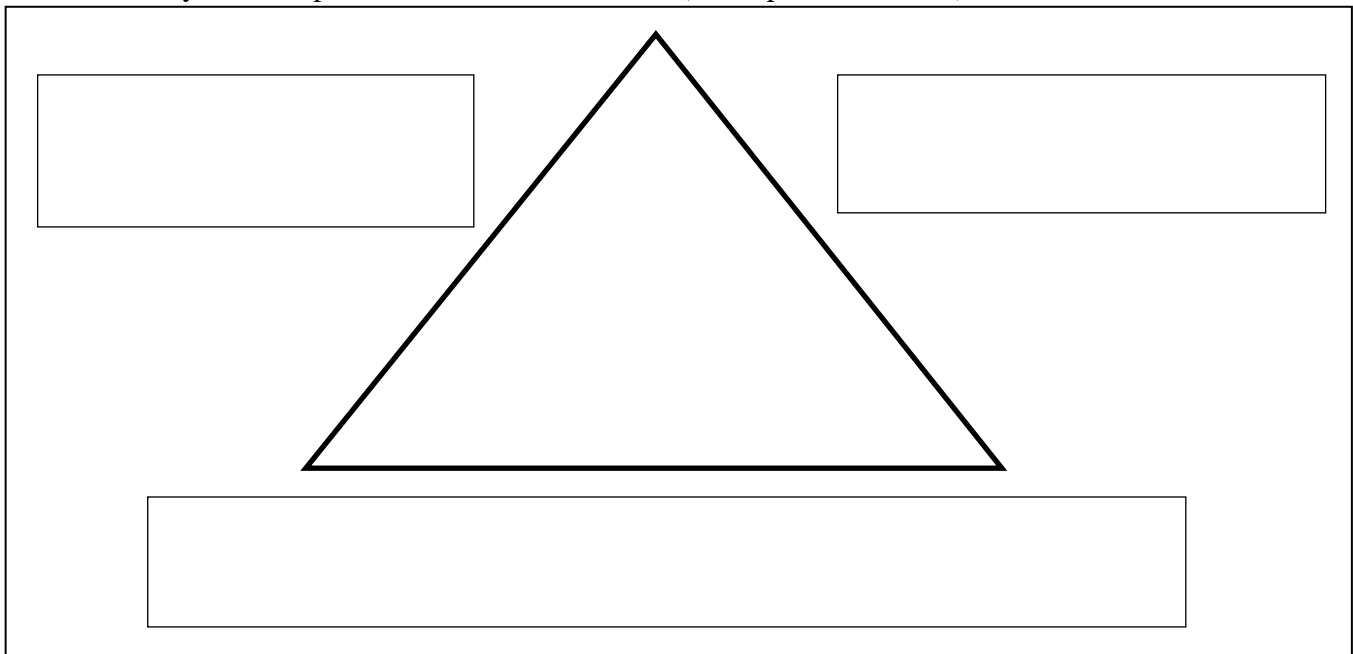
(Source: Gillespie, J. Braskamp, L. & Dwyer, M. (2009), p. 447)

Youth Engagement and Empowerment

There are many definitions of engagement, but for the purposes of this capstone, Fred Newman's, from the National Center on Effective Secondary Schools, will be used. Mr. Newman

defines engagement as, "active involvement, commitment and concentrated attention, in contrast to superficial participation, apathy or lack of interest" (Newman, 1992, p. 11). Programs that are effective at engagement assure that youth are not just physically present, but are "intellectually immersed, socially connected, and emotionally centered" (Youth Development Institute, 2008, p.41). For short term programs, like Global Routes, ensuring that students are present on all three levels will lead to students that are more engaged and gain more from their programs.

While some students may need less structure to stay engaged in their learning and growth, other students will derive benefits from more structured activities. Fredericks (2004) explains that there are three types of engagement; behavioral, emotional and cognitive. It is important to note that each type of engagement can be displayed in a positive or negative manner and that each type is independent. This means that a person can be emotionally engaged, showing interest, enjoyment and belonging toward a topic, but cognitively show signs of negative engagement, such as a lack of wanting to learn or be challenged in regards to the topic. Following a framework, such the Joselowsky's (2007) framework for Youth Engagement can provide a structure for designing programs that keep students engaged, behaviorally, emotionally and cognitively.

Joselowsky's (2007) framework is based on four equally important components designed to help structure strategies that engage youth in the present and also can be used to further promote long term program engagement. The framework includes: engaging youth in their own and their peers learning, involving youth in improving their educational opportunities and finally engaging youth in their communities and civic life. Engaging youth in their own learning can be achieved by balancing the challenge and relevance of an experience and allowing students to choose, and be responsible for, their learning through cooperative, project-based, and active learning opportunities (Joselowsky, 2007, p. 268). The second component suggests that students be involved in their peer's learning. Giving students the opportunity to learn together and support one another

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empowers students to be positive role models (Joselowsky, 2007, p.269). Engaging students in improving the opportunities in which they have participated, the third component of Joselowsky's framework, gives students the opportunity to share in the responsibility of refining programs. Students are likely to be more engaged when they are allowed to take ownership in the programs and their contributions to the programs. The fourth and final component of the Joselowsky's (2007) framework suggests that participating in community and civic life allows students to link their learning with real life experiences which ultimately can increase student engagement (p. 270).

DiBenedetto's framework of youth empowerment, compliments the models of holistic education abroad and youth engagement. Her framework identifies three key elements in the development of youth empowerment: intellectual challenge, emotional nurturance, and shared power (DiBenedetto & Ungerleider, 1997). Challenging students intellectually helps them develop their "ability and confidence to speak their minds and feel valued for their contributions to society" (DiBenedetto & Ungerleider, 1997, p. 62). Creating an environment where diversity is accepted, opinions and emotions can be expressed and student feel accepted, appreciated and safe is critical element to emotional nurturance (DiBenedetto & Ungerleider, 1997). DiBenedetto and Ungerleider (1997) explain that the third element of youth empowerment, shared power, consists of adults leading in a non-authoritarian, accepting manner, with students able to experience and exercise power. This ultimately guides youth toward taking action for social change. Challenging students to learn new concepts by thinking outside of the box, creating a safe environment for them to do so and finally allowing them to have a voice and shared power in their learning process not only empowers youth, but also engages them to learn and be positive, active members in society.

Reentry

Because many short-term programs, like Global Routes, do not have the ability to meet as a group after the program has concluded, it is imperative that topics related to reentry are included in

program curriculum. Literature dating back to the 1950's can be found addressing the transitions sojourners go through. The concept of culture shock, "the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse," was originally explained by Oberg's *U-curve theory* and has been adapted to address reentry and reverse culture shock (Oberg, 1960, p. 142). As noted by LaBrack (1993), the topics important to reentry should be introduced to a student during orientation. Orientations will likely always address the topic of culture shock, and students generally can imagine and anticipate that going abroad and adjusting to a different culture will be a transition. Students though, often do not anticipate the challenges they will face when they return home. La Brack (1993) explains that the problem is "characterized by two unique elements (1) an idealized view of 'home' and (2) a taken-for-granted familiarity with the home culture which fosters the illusion that neither home nor the sojourner will have changed" (p.253). It is also important to note that while each student will experience their own set of problems in regards to reentry, the experience of reentry "does seem to unfold according to a predictable pattern" (Storti, 2001, p.45).

Black and Gregerson (1999) offer a stage theory that explains a pattern which students go through upon their return home. Students arriving home generally are happy to be home, and focus on the positives, such as seeing family and friends, and enjoying their favorite foods. This initial phase is what Black and Gregerson (1999) refer to as the honeymoon phase. They note that the length one stays in this phase is based on two factors; "the degree to which [their] expectations are inflated" and "how quickly [they] must face the everyday grind" (Black & Gregerson, 1999, p. 49-50). Once reality has set in, so does reverse culture shock, according to Black & Gregerson (1999). They further explain that reverse culture shock does not happen overnight, "it takes some time for negative and frustrating things to happen," and it's the people around the sojourner that realize how challenging the return can be long before the sojourner does (Black & Gregerson, 1999, 53). Common symptoms of reverse culture shock are irritability, having less patience and also being

more withdrawn. The stress of reverse culture shock and adjusting to life at home, causes returners to either fight or flee, or in some cases "engage in both at different times" (Black & Gregerson, 1999, p.55). Black and Gregerson (1999) explain that there are two types of fight responses; an attack home response, described as being hypercritical of the culture, politics and home country in general, and a host attack response, which places criticism on the host country. Black and Gregerson (1999) describe three different flight reactions. The first, the MacArthur Response, named after Douglas MacArthur, who stated "'I shall return'" describes a person that can't wait to go oversees again (p.60). The blindfold response, though more rare, describes a person that denies ever being oversees, choosing to "just close their eyes to the fact they were away" (Black & Gregerson, 1999, p.57). Finally, the Ostrich Response, describes a returner who becomes "withdrawn, from their environment to avoid return difficulties" (Black & Gregerson, 1999, p.57). Once a returnee has worked through the previous two stages, they will eventually arrive at the adjustment and adaptation stage which Black and Gregerson (1999) explain is critical for two reasons, "it has a big impact on your work performance" and also ones overall happiness (p.64).

As previously mentioned there are several reentry stage theories that describe the stages a returner moves through during repatriation. Many of these models and stage theories share a similar flow. Craig Storti's (2001) model follows an almost identical flow as Black and Gregerson's model, noting only one difference. Prior to the honeymoon stage, Storti's (2001) model inserts the leave-taking and departure stage, which he describes as taking place prior to departing ones host country. He goes on to say that there comes a time when a sojourner switches gears from adjusting to their host culture, and begins to think about their departure. Storti (2001) stresses the importance of planning a departure, noting that a "botched departure can be very demoralizing and a source of considerable regret" once a sojourner returns home (p.48).

The common theme among these models is that upon a student's arrival home, they can feel emotionally stressed, just as they did when they arrived in their host country. Penelope Mitchell (2006) describes several issues that are common for students when they return home: they lack an awareness of both the changes that have occurred within themselves, and also the stress they will feel when they arrive home to a place that likely also changed while they were away. Taking the time to prepare students for their return home and providing them with structured materials, will aid in making their experience positive.

While the theories and frameworks reviewed share commonalities, each provides important information, integral to both analyzing Global Routes curriculum and also designing new curriculum. The similarities between designing and structuring a program and Kolb's ELT and work on learning styles, complement one another and add a great deal of depth to a program. Both topics note the importance of linking learning throughout a program, and providing students with time for thoughtful reflection. Kolb's ELT allows for students to see the relationships between their experiences and ideas, and a thought out program design allows students to transform those ideas and experiences into knowledge. Inclusion of the holistic model of education encourages programs to develop all dimensions of a student; cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. These dimensions provide a base on which to begin engaging and empowering students. An empowered student is challenged intellectually, nurtured emotionally and is given the opportunity to share in leadership roles. Empowered students are likely to also be engaged students. Programs that succeed at engaging students, involve them in their own and their peers learning, give students the power to improve their educational opportunities and also encourage students to connect their learning to real life through community and civic service. Because most study abroad programs hope students will continue to reflect on their learnings and grow from their experience, providing students with

information regarding their transition home will play a key role in how successful a program is at attaining this goal.

Program Analysis

The following analysis of Global Routes current programs examines the general structure and curriculum utilized by Global Routes programs. Internal Global Routes documents including manuals, marketing materials, student interviews and evaluations were reviewed and then analyzed using the frameworks reviewed in the literature review section of this capstone.   The goal of this analysis is to identify where Global Routes is successful and where their curriculum can be enhanced to better engage students early on and throughout their programs, better prepare students for their reentry back home, and help students continue their reflection, personal growth and engagement after their program. The analysis is broken into three program areas; pre-program, during the program and post program.   Using the results from this analysis a handbook has been designed to supplement Global Routes current curriculum.

Pre-program

Based on reviewed research, the time prior to a program is quite important and if utilized properly can add great value to a student's experience. During this time students should be motivated to learn and familiarize themselves with their host country, set goals for themselves relating to their program, and should also be provided with practical and logistical information. The following analysis of Global Routes pre-program curriculum will review the following:

•What information is provided to students?

•What information students provide to Global Routes?

•How students and Global Routes staff communicate with one another and how often?

•How students are asked to prepare for their program.

When applicable, recommendations for enhancing the program have been made.

Global Routes participants come from various locations throughout the U.S. making it nearly impossible for groups to meet prior to their program. Currently, enrolled students are provided with a program specific handbook which details the organizations expectations of students, fundraising information, optional readings and resources and logistical materials regarding flights, health concerns and packing lists. Additionally it includes more program and country specific information about the itinerary, the service project and host community. This helps students set the cultural context of their host countries and communities. Students are able to reach administrative staff in the months prior to their program with any questions they have regarding the materials they have been sent. Global Routes efforts to ensure that students receive clear information on program details and also that they are able to connect with Global Routes staff in the months prior to their program allows for an emotionally nurturing and intellectually challenging environment to be created.

Students are required to submit health forms, recommendations, and also each student and their parents are required to submit a questionnaire (Appendix A). These questionnaires are designed to allow staff and leaders to learn more about students' expectations and goals for their program, what they perceive could be a challenge, their previous experiences and interests and any red flags related to behavioral or medical issues. While the information included on these forms can provide great incite about students, leaders unfortunately do not see them until just prior to the program start. Despite Global Routes efforts to provide thorough information to its students and makes its staff available to students, the challenge still remains that they are unable to meet with students prior to their programs. Reflecting on Bruce LaBrack's (1993) research, Global Routes can work to improve utilizing the time prior to departure to help students gain knowledge about their host countries and also guide students in setting goals for themselves.

The information that is exchanged between Global Routes and students is sufficient. It is the lack of structured curriculum and conversation prior to programs that ultimately leads to students not being held accountable to learn more about their host culture or to reflect and set goals for themselves. Without a structure for students to conceptualize the information, students will likely lose the opportunity to engage intellectually and lack the motivation to learn and familiarize themselves with their host country and program topics. Global Routes should continue to include suggested readings and resources in the student handbooks, but also invite students to participate in short assignments, prior to their programs. This will engage students intellectually, and help them set a foundation for the learning that will occur on their program. An activity such as *Host Country Research* (Handbook, p. 31) allows students to not only work creativity with a peer, but also gives students a structure and encourages them to learn about their host country. Such an activity, initiates student's connections to one another and also each other's learning, helping to create a supportive, emotionally nurturing environment. Inclusion of short reflection activities (Handbook, p. 31) provides a reference point for students during orientation allowing them to begin processing their experience earlier. Additionally these reflective assignments also encourage students to engage their intrapersonal (personal) and intrapersonal (social) dimensions.

Another area that could be improved by Global Routes is the amount of interaction with students prior to their programs. By connecting students to their leaders several times prior to their program, leaders and student will be able to begin building rapport. Discussions can include students' personal goals and expectations for both the program and beyond, reveal concerns and challenges a student may have, outline skills a student would like to gain or contribute during the program as well as any general questions (Handbook p.32, 33). Such conversations not only help create "an environment of safety, closeness and mutual appreciation" but also begin engaging students in their own learning (DiBenedetto & Ungerleider, 1997, p.62).

The information exchanged between Global Routes and its students prior to a program is ample but lacks structure and accountability. By developing a pre-departure curriculum (Appendix D), that outlines both student assignments and Global Routes staff and leader roles and expectations, students are able to begin their intellectual and personal growth much earlier and will likely take more away from their program. Engaging with students prior to a program's departure through one-on-one 'meetings', staff can collaborate with students to set goals and discuss their ideas on their primary service project and begin to formulate ideas for secondary projects. Finally, requiring students to complete simple assignments and reflections prior to their program allows students to become invested in their learning and excited about their programs.

During program

While time can seem abundant during a program, if structured poorly, this time may go to waste. It is important to build and link students' knowledge from pre-program assignments and reflections with their experiences during their program. Using the theories and frameworks reviewed, the following questions will be asked to analyze Global Routes current curriculum during their programs:

•How is information presented to students and what types of activities are used?

•Are different learning styles accommodated?

 •How are students cognitive, interpersonal and intrapersonal dimensions nurtured?

 •Are students given shared power and opportunities to improve their educational experience?

 •How are students experiences linked?

•What happens at the end of programs in regards to bringing closure to the experience?

•What tools are students provided with to help in their transition back home?

Accolades and recommendations are noted throughout the following analysis.

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In keeping with the philosophy, to encourage students to go "beyond the border of their comfort zone," Global Routes builds programs "to safely and appropriately challenge students" (Global Routes, 2013, p. 25). Global Routes current programming follows Kolb's ELT nicely, laying solid foundations during orientation on which to build new experiences and lessons. Orientation is well thought out and designed to give students time to get to know one another, prepare for their community service project and the home stay components of their program. During orientation, activities that are utilized throughout the program and give structure to a student's experience are introduced. Group meetings and discussions allow students to process their learning. According to Kolb and Passarelli's (2012) research, if a student learns through discussing their feelings, or processing their thoughts, these discussions and meetings can be quite impactful. Students that learn through the other modes Kolb and Passarelli (2012) describe, watching and doing, are able to meet their needs through group activities, the community service project and also by interacting with their host families. For students who learn through a combination of the modes, participating in the variety of discussions and activities will nurture their learning style.

Leaders also begin to utilize and model the experiential learning cycle, by taking on the role of facilitator and using activities and discussions to begin the process of stretching students' perceptions and understanding through activities and reflections. Activities include icebreakers and group initiatives designed to help students develop as a group and also unearth any fears and anxieties. These then can be processed and reflected on as a group, ultimately bringing participants closer and building a foundation for peers to be involved in one another's learning experience.

During orientation students are also introduced to the evaluations they will complete weekly. Global Routes incorporation of weekly evaluations not only allows leaders to gauge a student's learning, emotional state, and level of engagement but also gives students the opportunity to be involved in improving the program and ultimately the education they receive. Both one-on-one

meetings with leaders, and also group discussions allow students to voice their concerns and opinions. This ultimately helps to create a safe, emotionally nurturing environment for students.

Orientation is also a time where culture, diversity, stereotyping and culture shock are addressed. Because Global Routes does not currently require students to explore these topics prior to their programs, more time is needed to address them. By requiring students to explore these topics before their program, through research and brief writing assignments, (Handbook p.31, 35) students will have learned and reflected on basic information. This will allow leaders to delve deeper into those topics, and also help to begin conversations about what life will be like in their host communities. One such journal assignment that students could complete prior to their program start, that will help create a discussion around culture shock, is entitled *Typical Day* (Handbook p.30). It asks students to record every detail of a typical day in their life at home. As a group, they will then share their typical daily patterns and discuss how these may be hard to maintain in their host communities. This discussion will lead nicely to a conversation about culture shock. Another way to engage students to independently explore their thoughts, feelings and goals is through a series of letters to themselves, writing the first letter during orientation (Handbook p. 36, 39, 47). These guided reflections allow students to explore their hopes and fears and over the period of their program and beyond, see their growth.

While in their communities during service work, students are encouraged to engage in dialog with their host families and other members of the community. These conversations and interactions provide experiences that students are able to reflect on and discuss with the group, building on conversations which were started during orientation regarding culture, stereotypes and identity. Students also begin to realize the importance of their peers, whom they are paired with for their homestay component as they work closely on their community service projects. In a recent conversation with students, they shared that traveling with and sharing their experience with peers

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had a positive impact on their experience. One student explained how she "needed their support in the new and challenging circumstance, and they needed [hers]" (personal communication, December 11, 2013). Because aspects of the program can be intense and challenging, the bonds students make are likely to last, and also help students to stay engaged during and after their programs. The foundation that Global Routes programs set, with regard to engaging its students in peers learning is quite solid. One way Global Routes can build on this foundation, is to help facilitate students connections once programs are over. This can be achieved by setting up a Facebook page for each group, allowing students to easily stay in touch and interact. Such a page can also be used as a forum to share news and topics related to their host community (Handbook p.48).

Another important component of Global Routes programs is each group's participation in service projects. Students are initially introduced to their groups' primary project prior to their program, when they begin fundraising in their home communities. As mentioned earlier, this aspect of the program is purposeful, as it helps to engage students in their projects early on, ultimately engaging students in their own learning. In addition to the primary project, groups often take on several secondary projects that are smaller in scale, but always provide an important tool or service to the community. Examples of past secondary projects are painting a world map on a classroom wall, building a garden or creating a recycling and trash center. Global Routes currently does not begin discussions about secondary projects until the group is in the community. While these projects depend greatly on the needs of the community, students can begin to explore what projects may interest them, what skills they can provide in regard to the projects and also research and learn new skills prior to the program. While flexibility must be stressed, encouraging and allowing students to begin exploring secondary project ideas prior to the program will help engage students earlier (Handbook p. 32-33). Once the group is in the community, students and community

members can discuss project ideas, taking both the communities needs and the students' skills into consideration. Allowing students to take the initiative and the lead on secondary projects, gives students shared power, ultimately helping to empower them.

The final component of Global Routes programs, the final travel/ debrief, is "a critical opportunity for students to reflect on who they were both before and after the challenge of the community stay and service project and how they hope to incorporate this growth into their lives in the future" (Global Routes, 2013 p. 68). Prior to leaving the host community, leaders begin to discuss the challenges, and emotions students may encounter when saying goodbye to their hosts. Ensuring that this period, the leave-taking and departure stage is well planned and thought through is an important aspect of reentry (Storti, 2001). Leaders work with both students and community members to plan a closing ceremony, where closure can occur. Students are encouraged to exchange contact information with their hosts, but are warned to not promise things which they might not necessarily be able to follow through with.

Once the group has relocated to their final travel and debrief location, leaders begin to revisit topics discussed during orientation and throughout the program. Students are able to examine the goals they originally set when they meet with their leaders for a one-on-one conversation. During this meeting their first *letter to self* will be returned. Reflecting back on what they wrote during orientation allows students to reflect on their experience and see how they have grown. They then should write a second letter to themselves, which will be mailed to them 3-4 months after their return (Handbook p.36). The second letter encourages students to look to the future and set further goals for themselves.

Incorporating discussions that revisit concepts such as stereotypes, diversity, and culture shock, will help students to integrate and build on their previous knowledge and link these topics to reentry. Reminding students of the *Typical Day* activity from orientation and integrating concepts of

culture shock into the discussion can help students build on their existing knowledge and skills.

While current Global Routes curriculum does encourage leaders to discuss reentry, there are very

few activities and discussion questions offered to help them address the topic. Leaders are asked to

share their own experiences with reverse culture shock, walk students through the general emotions

they might feel once they return home and brainstorm coping mechanisms with the group. By

providing leaders with activities and discussion questions, they will be able to better prepare

students for their upcoming reentry. An activity that helps students prepare 'their story' (Handbook

p.36) allows students to sort through their experience, and select the aspects they find important to

share. This activity can relieve some of the initial stress a returner may feel when they first arrive

home to excited friends and family, who want to hear about their experience. Other topics that can

be addressed through activities and discussions are: developing an action plan to stay involved and

engaged (Handbook p.37) and discussing how to stay in the moment and celebrate the group and the

experience (Handbook p.38).

Global Routes current curriculum during their program is quite robust. By simply

supplementing their existing curriculum with activities and discussions (Appendix E) that link a

students learning and experience, students will likely take more away from their program. By

linking assignments and reflections completed prior to the program, with activities and discussions

on the program, students will be able to see connections and build on their knowledge. Taking

these activities and discussions one step further, and connecting them to a student's transition home,

will allow students the opportunity to see the learning and growth they accomplished.

Post Program

Once a program has concluded it is rather easy for both an organization and its participants

to move on from the program and focus on the future. To ensure that the learning and experiences

from a program are carried over to a student's life at home, an organization needs to provide clear,

structured guidance and students need to take the time to reflect and incorporate their experiences into their lives.   In the following analysis of Global Routes post program curriculum the following questions will be asked:

•What information is provided to students upon their return home?

•How are students guided through their reentry process?

Global Routes programming ends once staff and students are safely back home. The organization sends a welcome home email and asks parents to complete an evaluation of the program (students complete their evaluations during the last day of the program). Global Routes encourages students to participate in their annual photo contest and also sends a bi-annual newsletter as a way to stay connected to students. Like many organizations in the industry little is done to help students transition and build on the momentum of their programs. Upon reviewing other similar organizations, the lack of connection and support of students after their programs is common. While it is not clear exactly why this happens, lack of resources seems to be a likely cause. Another reason why organizations seem to put less effort towards engaging and supporting students after a program may be a belief that there is a lack of interest on the students' part. While this may be true for some students, for other students they may simply be over involved with extra-curricular activities, jobs, and a social life. Providing students with a handbook (section 3) that offers clear, structured information on reentry and ways to stay engaged and involved will benefit a student's transition.

The activities in the student reentry handbook model the frameworks reviewed in the literature review section of this paper (Appendix F). The handbook begins by revisiting the topic of reentry and reverse culture shock (Handbook p. 41), which leaders explained and discussed with the group during their final travel. Giving students a clear explanation of the phases they will likely move through, can help students better understand their emotions. Additionally in the following

section a description of some of the feelings and frustrations students may encounter along with coping mechanisms is provided (Handbook p.42). It is also important to provide students with methods to reflect and digest their experience. Otherwise students may suffer from what Craig Storti (2001) refers to as 'shoeboxing' or placing their entire experience into a 'box'.   During the program, leaders and peers help guide this process. Providing students with creative ideas of how to continue their reflection is important. The handbook offers a variety of avenues students can take to process and reflect on their experience (Handbook p.45). Staying connected with peers from their program can help students to work through their adjustment, and also by supporting one another they are continuing to stay engaged in program topics.   The handbook offers several suggestions about how to stay connected with one another and also their host communities (Handbook, p. 47) Once students have worked through their honeymoon and reverse culture shock phases, it is important that they involve themselves with program areas that interested them, as this will help students continue their engagement and further their growth. Global Routes can offer several way for students to stay connected with the program itself, such as acting as a reference, or applying to be an alumni ambassador. Both positions allow students to share their experience with prospective students and also offer suggestions to improve the programs, ultimately further engaging students (Handbook p.47). For students who would like to branch out and become involved in new and different opportunities, the handbook offers a list of other organizations they may be able to become involved with.

Because Global Routes current programming has minimal curriculum on the topic of reentry, ensuring that leaders are provided with supplementary curriculum to support students as they begin their transition home is crucial. Additionally providing students with an electronic copy of the student reentry handbook as soon as they return home will allow students to continue reflection on their experience and also discussions their group had during their final days of the

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program. The handbook not only reiterates the information about reverse culture shock, but also provides students with coping mechanisms. Finally encouraging students to stay connected with one another will encourage students to stay engaged in program topics and continue their learning and growth.

Conclusion

Analysis of Global Routes current programming demonstrates that the curriculum is solid and meets many of the best practices described in the theories and frameworks researched for this capstone. Using the foundation that the current curriculum provides, implementation of the student engagement and reentry handbook will enhance students learning and engagement. Additionally it will provide leaders with the structure needed to help guide students through their learning and growth.

Inclusion of pre-program assignments into Global Routes current curriculum, will allow students to begin programs with basic knowledge about their host communities and countries and help students to set goals for what they would like to accomplish during their program. Having set a solid foundation on which to build, pre-program assignments will help leaders to link learning from pre-departure through to reentry.   The variety of activities within the handbook are designed to engage different learning styles, ultimately helping all students link their learning throughout their program. The activities also provide a structure, which helps to connect learning throughout and keep students engaged. Upon return providing students with a reentry handbook (section 3 of the following handbook) will give students a resource that helps them through the sometimes difficult process of acclimating to life at home.

It is important that Global Routes continues to evaluate their students' experiences and opinions on all aspects of the program. Inclusion of this handbook into the evaluation process is imperative to ensure student needs are being met in regards to their reentry process.   Further

evaluation on how this new handbook and curriculum effects student's engagement and their transitions after the program could shed light on ways to continually improve Global Routes programs.

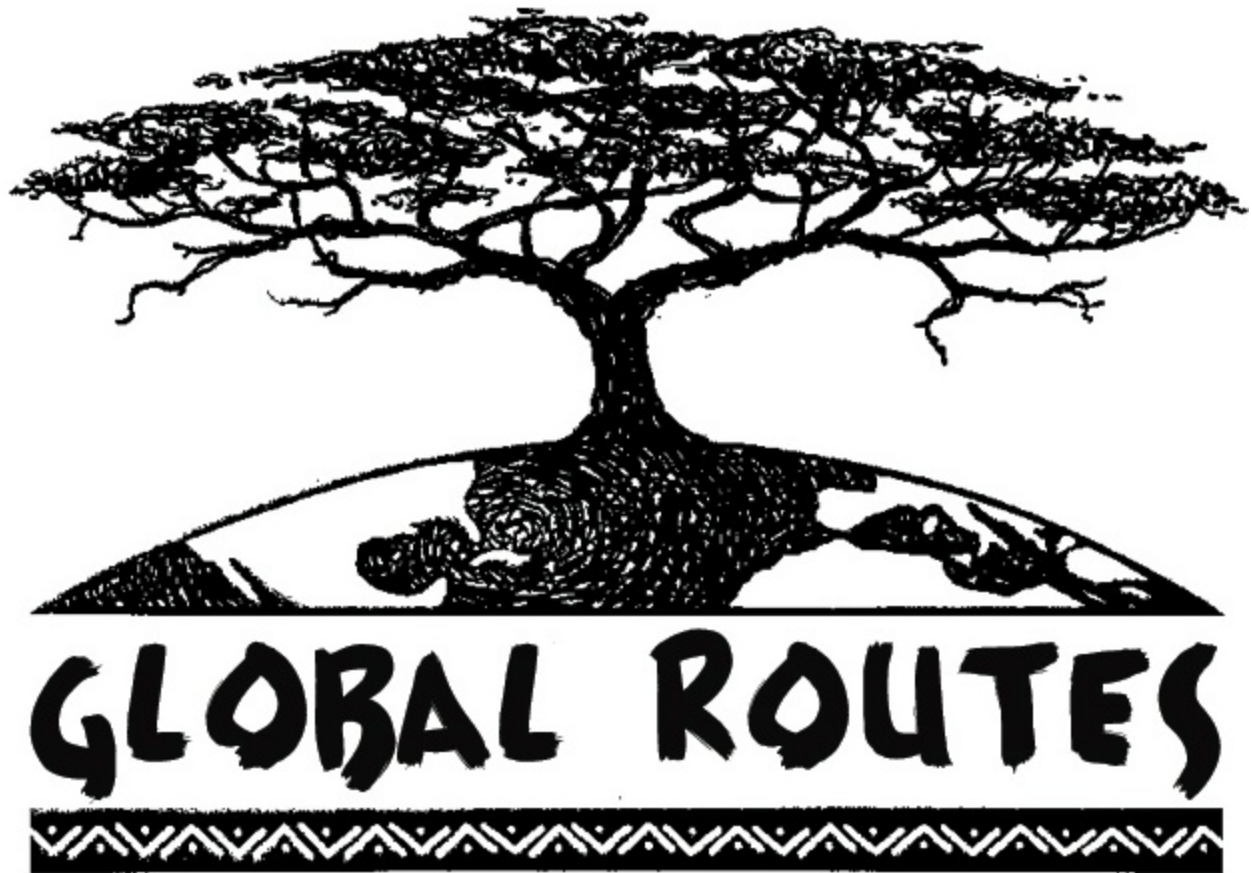# Student Engagement &

Re-Entry Handbook

Table of Contents[1]

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[1] This handbook is designed to supplement current programming for all Global Routes programs. For administrative staff and program leaders sections 1 and 2 are meant to be used in addition to existing curriculum. Section 3 will be given to students once they have returned home.

Section 1: Pre-Program

Timeline and Tasks

Timeframe	Student Task	Global Routes Task
3 months prior to program	Submit all required forms	•Review all forms and address any red flags •Ensure all students received program specific handbooks
2 months prior to program	Student should have read program handbook in its entirety	
Prior to Call #1 (1-2 months prior to program)	Reviewed assignments, completed Call Preparation Form	Set-up call and remind students of tasks to complete prior to call
1-2 months prior to program	Participate in call with program leader or GR staff.	Set up one-on-one calls with students
1-2 months prior to program	Complete required readings and assignments	
1-2 weeks prior to program	Participate in call with program leader	Leaders to call students

Student Assignments
Assignment #1: Typical Day Reflection[2]

This assignment is designed to help you reflect on your daily life at home. It is important that you take the time to fully complete this assignment, as it will be used during your orientation. Your answers will only be shared with the group, if you chose to share them.

Instructions:

Choose a day that reflects your most typical day. Over the course of the day, write down EVERYTHING you do throughout the day, from waking up to going to bed (when, where, why, with whom, what time, etc.) No detail is too small. Below are some guiding questions/topics to help you get started. It would be best for this reflection to be written in a journal that you will bring on your program with you, so it will not be forgotten and will be easy to access for group discussions.

Guiding Questions/Topics:

Morning routine	Wake-up time, getting ready (shower/bathing, toilet use, use of water etc.), breakfast
School/Work	Relationships/interactions with classmates and professors, class participation, class/work duties, homework
Afterschool	Do you have a job? Participate in any extracurricular activities?
Relationships	Connections/interactions with Family/Friends
Use of electronic devices, electricity, transportation	Telephone and internet use, television
Evening/Bedtime routine	Do you eat dinner as family? Watch TV?
Other activities	Shopping, banking, eating at home vs. restaurant, doctor visits

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[2] Adapted from La Brack, 1993, p. 252 and Dowell and Mirsky, 2003, p.62

Assignment #2: Journal Reflections[3]

Please take moment prior to leaving on your program, and answer the following questions in your journal. These will not be turned in or shared, rather they are designed to get you to think about your home and host cultures and will be used for discussions on your program.

Journal #1:

What do you know about the host culture you will be staying with? Do you have any stereotypes about this culture? What are they? Where do you think these stereotypes come from?

Journal #2:

How do you explain what it means to be from your country/culture to someone from another culture/country? How do you think your country is perceived by other countries? Think about political, social and economic contexts.

Assignment #3: Host Country Research[4]

This assignment is geared to prepare you for your program (community service projects and homestay), and also allow you to get to know another students from your program. It is important that you take the time prior to your program to research your host country and community. You will be paired with another student from your program and will be assigned one of the topics below. It is up to the two of you to work together (over the phone, skype or email) to research your assigned topic, as you will be presenting your findings in a fun and informal way to the group during orientation.   These presentations are not designed to make you nervous, but rather to share your new knowledge with the group! Please be prepared to explain your new knowledge to the group, in a fun creative way. Keep in mind there will be no access to computers/internet.

Government	Type of government, current leader(s), major political parties, who is in power, current/past events important to the country
Economy	Name of currency, exchange rate, denominations of bills and coins, products produced in host country, imports/exports
History & Geography	•Can you explain a brief overview of the country's history, and how it led to the country's current situation? •Familiarize yourself with a map of the country (where you will be traveling/staying, largest cities)
Local Cuisine	What time are meals served, what are common/traditional dishes, what types of foods are available and how does their cost compare to your home country?
Daily Life	•What types of transportation exist, how do most people travel? •What are the big holidays? How are they celebrated? Will any of these holidays be celebrated while you are there? •What are the bathrooms like (squat toilets, flushing procedures etc.) •Homestay etiquette (shoes on or off in a home, gift giving etc.)

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[3] Adapted from Dowell and Mirsky, 2003, p.74
[4] Adapted from Dowell and Mirsky, 2003, p 27

Culture	•What is the pace of life, how does it compare to your culture? •What religions are practiced? How does religion influence the culture/daily life? •What is the traditional music? Who are current popular musicians? •Who are famous artist from this country? What role does art/architecture play in the country's history? •Are there any famous films, documentaries, or television programs about this country? Any famous actors or writers from this country? •What are the primary sports/teams? •What aspects of this country are its citizens most proud? What are they most concerned about? •How do men and women dress? Are there any customs you will need to follow? •What are some cultural do's and don'ts
Language & Communication	•How do you say; hello, goodbye, thank you and other basic greetings •What are common physical gestures (i.e. handshakes, waves) •What are some Do's and Don'ts relating to communicating
Safety, Health, Medical system	Are there any health or safety concerns that the country is struggling with? Describe the country's medical system, if any.
Education	•How is the education system structured? •Are there public and private schools? What is the cost of each? What the requirements to be admitted? •What is the grading system? •Is it common for students to go to University? Do they move away from their families or stay at home?

Assignment #4: Call #1 Preparation Form

Prior to your first call with either your Program Leader or Global Routes Staff, please complete the following questions. These questions are meant to help you think of any questions, or concerns you may have regarding your program and reflect on your goals for your program.

1. What made you chose Global Routes and the particular program you are signed up for? What expectations do you have of the program?

2. What are your goals for your program? (Personal, academic etc.)

3. What do you hope to gain/learn from this experience?

4. Do you have any concerns about the program? (Related to traveling internationally, with peers you do not yet know your homestay, language barriers, etc.)

5. Have you started fundraising for your programs primary service project? What methods are you using?

6. What skills are you excited about using in regards to the primary service project? What skills do you want to develop or expand?

7. Have you brainstormed ideas for secondary projects within your host community? What skills could you contribute/develop with this project?

Leader/Admin Tasks

Leader/ Admin →Student Call #1

This outline is designed to guide the conversation between students and their program leader or Global Routes staff member. Be sure to ask and record answers to questions #3 as these answers will be used during orientation.

Prior to the speaking with the student, review the students questionnaire they submitted (Appendix A) and also be sure to ask/review the questions listed in the previous student assignment (Call preparation form). The additional questions below will help you to acquire more information.

Welcome, explain process

- Exciting opportunity to get to know you and hear more about your goals & expectations
- Share about the program and answer any questions

1. What did you learn from your past experiences that will help make your Global Routes program a success? What character traits do you have that will make the experience a success?
2. Why do you want to go to (program location) and why with Global Routes?
3. What are you most nervous about? Most excited about? What do you think will be the most challenging? What will you miss most about home?
4. What do you like best about yourself?
5. In your own words, describe the program.
6. What skills of yours are you eager to use for the service project? What skills would you like to improve?
7. Based on your research about the community you will be visiting, have you thoughts about any secondary project ideas? What skills could you provide this project?

Leader →Student Call #2

The second call with students is designed for leaders to check in with students and review the following:

1. Answer any questions regarding;
   a. Packing and equipment
   b. Travel
   c. Communication
2. Ensure student understands the program expectations of them (review students contact)
3. Review and ensure student has completed all pre-trip assignments
4. Address any student concerns

Section 2: During Program

The following activities and discussions are meant to be used to supplement Global Routes existing curriculum. See Appendix B for sample orientation schedule.

Activities for Orientation and Beginning of the Program
Discussion #1: Stereotyping, Culture, Diversity and Identity [5]

This discussion is designed to utilize the two short journal assignments students completed prior to their program and also complement the existing Global Routes activities and discussions on **stereotyping, culture, diversity and identity.** This discussion can be done during orientation or during the first few days in your host community.

Journal #1:
What do you know about the host culture you will be staying with? Do you have any stereotypes about this culture? What are they and why?

Journal #2:
How do you explain what it means to be from your country/culture to someone from another culture/country? How do you think your country is perceived by other countries? Think about political, social and economic contexts.

Use the following questions to guide a conversation on stereotypes, culture, diversity and identity.

1.) What is a stereotype and why do we have them?
2.) What stereotypes do you have about our host culture/country?
3.) Why do you have these and where did they come from?
4.) Since arriving have you observed any to be true?
5.) What stereotypes do other cultures have about the U.S. (and other countries represented in the group)?
6.) Do you think these stereotypes are accurate? How do they make you feel?
7.) If so, is there anything you can do to change the impression you make?
8.) How have your hosts responded to you? How do they speak to you? Look at you?
9.) How do these interactions make you feel?

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[5] Adapted from Dowell and Mirsky, 2003, p.57-61.

Discussion #2: Culture Shock[6]

This discussion is designed to process the Typical Day assignment students did prior to their program start. It is meant to be done within the first 1-2 days of students being in their homestays. Additionally it is important to note that the topic of Culture Shock should be address generally during orientation, using current activities in the Global Routes leader manual.

Using information you and your co-leader obtained from students during your first call (questions #3), write up answers to what students are most looking forward to, most nervous about, and what they will miss from home. Use these answers to discuss any apprehensions and to help build rapport among the group. This discussion will lead nicely into a discussion about what a typical day at home is like for your students and how it compares to their days in their host community.

Some questions to help guide the discussion:
1. Are anyone's answers not represented on these lists? (question 3 answers)
2. Do you notice a theme?
3. Why are you nervous/excited about_____?
4. Why will you miss_____ about home?
5. Using your typical day journal to help you reflect on life at home, what activities or part of your routine from your life at home are different or challenging to do in your host community? Why?
6. Reflecting back on our discussion about Culture Shock during orientation, what are some ways to deal with those feelings?

Discussion#3: Host Culture 101

Have student groups present their *Host Country Research* assignment they prepared prior to the program. Then use the Global Routes current discussion outline, to lead a discussion during orientation about your host country and community. This conversation is meant to help students be better prepared for their homestay. Be sure to address the following:

•General history of country (politics, economy, religion)
•Geography (where will you be traveling)
•Local traditions and customs
•Food
•Bathrooms/bathing and hygiene
•Appropriate dress
•Homestay Etiquette
•General Do's and Don'ts

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[6] Adapted from LaBrack, 1993, p. 252-253.

Letter to yourself #1 [7]

During orientation have students answer the following questions in a letter to themselves, explaining to students that they will be returned to them at the end of their program. While some of these questions will have likely been address during pre-program calls and also during other orientation activities, having a written copy of their feelings will provide insight into their personal growth. Also remind students that no one will read the letter.

> •What are five things you are most looking forward to about your program abroad?
>
> •What are five things (people, places, activities etc.) you think you will miss most about home while on your program?
>
> •What are five things (people, places, activities etc.) you think you will miss least while you are away?
>
> • Your greatest challenge on your program will be…
>
> • Additional thoughts or reflections

Re-entry Activities

The following activities and discussions are designed to help facilitate topics related to reentry.

Telling your Story [8]

This activity is designed to help students prepare "their story" about their experience abroad. It can be done as a group or independently. If done as a group, students will verbally share their story with a peer. If done independently students can write their story in their journal.

It can be overwhelming to retell your experience to your friends and family back home in a way that is both succinct and not overly draining for you.

> •Take a moment (or ____ amount of time) to review your journal, and/or photos.
>
> •What 3 words come to mind?
>
> •What was the most challenging for you?
>
> •What skills have you gained? What are you the most proud of?
>
> •What are 3 highlights from your program?

Using the questions above to guide you, write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing your experience. OR tell a peer about your experience in 1-2 minutes. Once complete, ask for volunteers to share.

Discussion questions:

> 1.) What was challenging about this exercise?
>
> 2.) Who might you tell 'your story' to?
>
> 3.) What did you learn about yourself/ experience through this exercise?

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[7] Adapted from SIT Study Abroad toolkit for Returning Students, 2008, p.34
[8] Adapted from Melibee, 2012, p. 14

Revisiting Stereotypes Discussion

This discussion can be used as a way to revisit stereotypes and also prepare students for their return back to their home culture.

1.) Revisit the stereotypes the group mentioned about your host culture during orientation.
2.) Having spent the last few weeks in your community, getting to know their culture, are these stereotypes accurate?
3.) What stereotypes did you community have about you/your culture?
4.) How do these compare to the list of stereotypes we created during orientation?
5.) Are these stereotypes accurate?
6.) What have you learned about stereotypes?
7.) How can this lesson help you as you return home?

Goals revisited: Journal

Have students reflect back to before their program and then answer the following questions in their journals. What were the goals you wished to accomplish on your program? Did you accomplish them? If no, why not? If yes, what helped you accomplish them? What skills did you gain? How will you incorporate those skills into life back home? Do you think your new skills will challenge you once you have returned home? Once students have completed their journal entry, discuss the topics and answers as a group or during 1-1 conversations.

Staying Involved discussion

As a group, discuss what new skills students thought they gained from their program. Then lead into what types of activities/jobs utilize these skills. Brainstorm activities, organizations, volunteer opportunities where students can continue to build on the skills they gained during the program.

Acting on Inspiration [9]

This activity is designed to help students channel their excitement and newly gained skills and experience into an action plan for once they are home.

•Ask students who would describe their program as 'life-changing'. With that thought in their mind ask students to answer the following questions in their journal.

1. What moment from your program are you most proud of?
2. What was the most humbling experience from your program?
3. Did you experience any changes to your lifestyle that enjoyed?

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[9] Adapted from Melibee, 2012, p.32

4. Based on your experience on your program and in your host community, are there any new causes, activities, hobbies, or interests you would like to pursue?

5. Has your experience impacted your career goals? If so, expand.

•Once students have finished, ask for volunteers to share their answers. This will allow students to continue thinking about their experience and add to their lists.

•Next have students create a list of concrete goals they would like to achieve once they are home. Remind students these can be big or small, and to imagine they have unlimited resources.

•Have students organize their goals in a way that helps them see the flow of achieving them. This can be done by using circles, or arrows. Then have them identify 1-2 long-term goals, 3-5 medium-term goals and 5+ Now goals.

•Have each student write down 2 of their Now goals to be read anonymously aloud. By hearing others goals, students will be able to add to or tweak their plans.   Conclude by asking for a volunteer to share their plan. This can lead to a brainstorming session of how different goals can be met.

Staying in the Moment

This activity should be done either at the end of a groups community stay or at the beginning of the final travel portion of a program. Have group read the article entitled _Watch out for the moment when a trip ends before it's over_ by John Flinn (Appendix C).

Once they have finished reading the article, students can either reflect independently in their journals or as a group through a discussion. The following questions can be used to help guide either a discussion or independent reflection.

1. Have you experienced a 'moment of apogee' on another trip/experience?
2. How did it affect your experience?
3. Is anyone feeling this way about our current trip?
4. What can we do help ourselves and the group stay in the moment?
5. What reminders can we give ourselves for future similar situations?

This activity should be done during the final travel and debrief portion of your program. Have students answer the questions below and then return the letters that students wrote to themselves during orientation. Have students compare the two letters. This can lead into a discussion (see questions below to help the discussion). Have students return second letter (and the first if they like) to you. The Global Routes office will mail these letters to students several months after programs have returned.

Questions to answer in Letter #2

>   I definitely do not want to forget….

>   Instances that made you laugh out loud

>   Instance that brought tears to your eyes

>   Your greatest personal insight

>   Your biggest cultural blunder/embarrassment

>   Your biggest cultural success

>   What are the five things that you are the most worried when you think about returning home?

>   What are the five things you missed the most about home?

>   What are the five things (people, places, activities, etc.) you will miss least about your experience/program?

>   What are the five things you think you will miss the most about your experience/program?

Discussion Questions:

>   After comparing the 2 letters you have written, where there any surprises?

>   What can/have you learned from this reflection?

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[10] Adapted from SIT Study Abroad Toolkit for Returning Students, 2008, p. 35

Section 3: Re-entry Handbook for Global Routes Students

Welcome home students!

We hope that you are settling into life back home and are reflecting on the cultural enrichment and personal growth you experienced on your program abroad. We realize that returning home after such a transformative experience can have its challenges. While we are confident your leaders prepared you well for your initial re-entry back home through activities and discussions, we wanted to supplement those materials you covered on your program with additional information. We have designed this handbook to help inform you about the phases you may encounter during reentry, give you structured activities to help you reflect on your time abroad and also guide you in ways to stay connected with the people and topics related to your program.

We hope that you will find the information in this handbook informative and helpful during your re-acclimation period. Your experience abroad has given you great insight into not only other cultures, politics, and beliefs, but also yourself. Allow yourself time to let your experience sink in, and be patient with both yourself and those around you.

Global Routes welcomes you home and hopes you will stay in touch with us through our alumni network.

Sincerely,
The Global Routes Team

What is Re-entry?

The process one goes through after spending time abroad is considered to be their re-entry period.   This period of time can be filled with many emotions, as your time abroad likely allowed for much personal growth, and engagement in a variety of new topics.

While the topic of re-entry has been described by many theorists, all follow a similar flow.   It is common to not expect many of the emotions you are currently feeling. Returners can often have an idealized view of what home will be like and also forget that life has gone on while you were away.

The following stages summarize the process of reentry. Each returner will move through these phases at their own pace and at varying levels of intensity. Factors that can affect the pace at which you move through reentry are:

1.) How inflated your expectations for your return

2.) How quickly you must return to your daily routine. It is important to listen to yourself and give yourself time.

Stage 1: Honeymoon Phase

> This phase occurs when you first arrive home and are riding the wave of excitement! You focus on all the positives that occurred during your program.

Stage 2: Reverse Culture Shock

> Reverse culture shock will arrive once reality sets in that you are home and no longer on your program with your new friends having the time of your life. Reverse culture shock is similar to the feelings you may have experience when you first arrived in your host community. Symptoms can include; irritability, having less patience and also being more withdrawn.

> It is important to realize that the stresses caused by reverse culture shock can you to either fight or flee situations. See Black and Gregerson's chart describing these two responses

Basic Response	Specific Response	Description		Basic Response	Specific Response	Description
FIGHT *Attack the Threat*	Home Attack Response	Attack the home country, culture, etc. Home is messed up, not them.		FLIGHT *Flee from the Threat*	MacArthur Response	Like the famous general Douglas MacArthur, these people will look to immediately go abroad again. Yesterday is not soon enough.
	Host Attack Response	Attack the country, culture, people, etc., of the country they were just in. It was the international program that caused the problems not them.			Blindfold Response	These people feel that if they can just close their eyes to the fact that they were away, their problems with their return will disappear.
					Ostrich Response	These people stick their head in the sand and withdraw from their environment to avoid return difficulties.

(Black & Gregersen, 1999, pp. 56-57)

Stage 3: <u>Adjustment and Adaptation</u>

> Once you have worked through the two previous stages, you will eventually begin to readjust back into your life. Arriving at this stages means you have integrated your experience abroad with your life at home and are finding ways to process your experience, and cope with the feelings that come with reentry.

Common Feelings and Frustrations[11]

1. Boredom

After all the newness and stimulation of your time abroad, a return to family, friends, and old routines (however nice and comforting) can seem very dull. It is natural to miss the excitement and challenges that characterize study in a foreign country, but it is up to you to find ways to overcome such negative reactions. Remember a bored person is also boring. Try new things, travel domestically, and continue cultural and linguistic studies.

2. No one wants to hear

One thing you can count on upon your return: no one will be as interested in hearing about your adventures and triumphs as you will be in sharing those experiences. This is not a rejection of you or your achievements, but simply the fact that once they have heard the highlights, any further interest on your audience's part is probably unlikely. Be realistic in your expectations of how fascinating your journey is going to be for everyone else. Be brief.

> **Think of..**
>
> There may actually be some people who will be interested in your stories and hundreds of pictures. Think about who they might be and make a list. Contact them when you return and ask if they would want to hear about "My experience in [fill in the blank]" Give them a chance to change their minds but respond now with a message that says you are really looking forward to your date.

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[11] Taken from LaBrack, 2003, http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/index.htm

3. You can't explain

Even when given a chance to explain all the sights you saw and feelings you had while on your program, it is likely to be at least a bit frustrating trying to relay them coherently. It is very difficult to convey this kind of experience to people who do not have similar frames of reference or travel backgrounds, no matter how sympathetic they are as listeners. You can tell people about your trip, but you may fail to make them understand exactly how or why you felt a particular way. It's okay. Reflect back on the 'Telling your Story' activity you did at the end of your program.

4. Reverse "homesickness"

Just as you probably missed home for a time after arriving overseas, it is just as natural to experience some reverse homesickness for the people, places, and things that you grew accustomed to as a student abroad. To an extent, writing letters, telephoning, emailing, and generally keeping in contact can reduce them, but feelings of loss are an integral part of international sojourns and must be anticipated and accepted as a natural result of study abroad.

5. Relationships have changed

It is inevitable that when you return you will notice that some relationships with friends and family will have changed. Just as you have altered some of your ideas and attitudes while abroad, the people at home are likely to have experienced some changes that are very important to them. These changes may be positive or negative, but expecting that *no* change will have occurred is unrealistic. The best preparation is flexibility, openness, minimal preconceptions, and tempered optimism.

6. People see the "wrong" changes

Sometimes people may concentrate on small alterations in your behavior or ideas and seem threatened or upset by them. Others may ascribe any "bad" traits to the influence of your time abroad. These incidents may be motivated by jealousy, fear, or feelings of superiority or inferiority. To avoid or minimize discomfort, it is necessary to monitor yourself and be aware of the reactions of those around you, especially in the first few weeks following your return. This phase normally passes quickly if you do nothing to confirm their stereotypes.

7. People misunderstand

A few people will misinterpret your words or actions in such a way that communication becomes difficult. For example, what you may have come to think of as witty humor (particularly sarcasm, banter, etc.) and a way to show affection or establish a conversation may be considered aggression or "showing off." Conversely, a silence that was seen as simply polite overseas might be interpreted at home, incorrectly, as signaling agreement or opposition. New clothing styles or mannerisms may be viewed as provocative, inappropriate, or as an

affectation. Continually using references to foreign places or sprinkling foreign language expressions or words into an English conversation is often considered boasting. Be aware of how you may look to others and how your behavior is likely to be interpreted

8. Feeling of alienation/seeing with "critical eyes"

Sometimes the reality of being back "home" is not as natural or enjoyable as the place you had constructed as your mental image. When actual daily life is less enjoyable or more demanding than you remembered, it is natural to feel some alienation. Many returnees develop "critical eyes," a tendency to see faults in the society you never noticed before (e.g., Americans are so wasteful, materialistic, fat, in a hurry, etc.). Some returnees become quite critical of everyone and everything for a time. This is no different than when you criticized the host culture while abroad. In both cases, being critical is closely related to discomfort during readjustment and mild "culture shock." Mental comparisons are fine, but keep them to yourself until you regain both your cultural balance and a balanced perspective.

9. Inability to apply new knowledge and skills

Many returnees are frustrated by the lack of opportunity to apply newly gained social, linguistic, and practical coping skills that appear to be unnecessary or irrelevant at home. To avoid ongoing annoyance: adjust to reality as necessary, change what is possible, be creative, be patient, and above all, use all the cross-cultural adjustment skills you acquired abroad to assist your own reentry.

10. Loss/compartmentalization of experience ("shoeboxing")

Being home, combined with the pressures of job, school, family, and friends, often conspires to make returnees worried that they might somehow "lose" the experience. Many fear that it will become compartmentalized like souvenirs or photo albums kept in a box and only occasionally taken out and looked at. You do not have to let that happen: maintain your contacts abroad; seek out and talk to people who have had experiences similar to yours; practice your cross-cultural skills; continue language learning. Remember and honor both your hard work and the fun you had while abroad. To the extent possible, integrate your overseas experience into your ongoing life and activities. You can explore more on how to combat "shoeboxing" in the next section.

(Taken from LaBrack, 2003, http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/index.htm)

Activities and Reflections:

The following activities and reflections are designed to help you cope with Reentry and Reverse Culture Shock

Photos

Use your photos to make a scrap book or Day in the life photo board

- For creative ideas for scrap booking check out Pinterest http://www.pinterest.com/skantanie/scrapbooking-ideas/
- Post and share your photos online on a site such as Flickr or Picasa
- Enter your top 5 photos in the Global Routes photo contest. Send photos to mail@globalroutes.org

Art

Art is a tool used to help express oneself. There are many ways to incorporate art into your reentry experience. Listed below are just a few suggestions of ways to use art to help you reflect.

- Flip through a catalog and pull out photos, ads, words etc. that remind you of your program, describe how you are feeling, how you would like to feel, goals you would like to accomplish etc. Using these images or words, create a collage. If you wanted to go a step further you could journal about your collage.
- Using a photo from your program or an imagine in your mind, draw or paint that imagine. If you stay in touch with your host family, this could be a nice gift.
- Create a memory box to store all your photos and memorabilia from your program.
- Using textiles, imagines, designs or photos from your program, cover a photo frame. Then fill the frame with your favorite photo from your program.

Journal

Continue to keep a journal. Use the following topics to guide your reflections;

- Describe a day in the life [12]during your program, similar to the 'Typical Day' assignment you did prior to your program. Reflect on what you miss, what you have incorporated into your routine since returning, and things that are challenging to merge into your routine and things that are no longer part of your routine. Think about your friends, family, food, how your time was spent etc. If you could bring one aspect back, that you do not have at home, what would it be? How can you work to incorporate aspects of your host culture and their values into your life? What aspects of your home culture have you come to appreciate more/less?

- Being home is…

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[12] Adapted from Melibee, 2012, p.48-49

• Revisit your goals[13]

  Which goals that you achieved left the greatest impact on you?

  If you had known then, what you know now, would you set different goals? What would they

  be?

  Were there any goals you did not accomplish? Why not?

  What did you accomplish that you never expected to?

  If you could do it over again what would you change and why?

• Write a letter to your future self [14]

Once your second letter arrives in the mail (it should arrive 3-4 months after your return), read the letter

and use the following questions to reflect on your reentry.

  •Where there any surprises when reading your second letter?

  •What have you learned from this reflection?

  •What are the five things that have bothered you the most since returning home?

  •What are the five things you have enjoyed the most since returning home?

  •What are the five international things (people, places, situations, activities, etc.) that you miss

  the least returning home?

  •What are the five things you miss the most about your experience/program since returning

  home?

  •How can you apply these learnings to future expectations about life?

  •How can you apply the skills and knowledge you gained from your experience to important

  areas of your life and future transitions?

Music

Make a **music** mix of songs from the trip

  Create a mix CD with songs that remind you of your program. Include traditional music from the culture in

  which you stayed, current popular music you may have heard while travel, or music introduced to you by

  other students on your program.   If you make a slide show of your photos, you can incorporate these songs

  into the slideshow.

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[13] Adapted from Dowell and Mirsky, 2003, p. 101
[14] Adapted from SIT Study Abroad Toolkit for Returning Students, 2008, p.36

Ways to stay connected

- •With your group
    - •Join the Global Routes Alumni Facebook page and your Specific program Facebook page
    - •Follow and contribute to the Global Routes Blog
- •With your host community/culture/country [15]
    - • Stay in contact with your host family and friends from your host community through letters, emails, phone calls, or plan a visit!
    - • Stay up to date with current events in your host country by reading newspapers, magazines and books. Sign up to receive RSS feeds from your host country newspapers
    - • Watch the news, TV, films from your host country
    - •Listen to music or the radio from your host country
    - • Find out if your community/city has a sister city near to your home and stay connected. Find out if you host community has a sister city here: http://www.sister-cities.org/
    - • Find local restaurants that offer the cuisine from your host country and bring friends and family with you to introduce them to your favorite dishes.
    - • Stay connected to the language of you host country by finding a language partner to practice your skills.

Ways to stay involved/get involved

For many Global Routes students, their experience abroad ignited a fire within to create positive change in their communities, cities, states, countries and around the globe. The following is a list of ways to get engaged.

1. Global Routes
    a. Be sure to complete **Post Program Evaluation** that will be sent to you in the months after you have returned. And participate in a follow up interview.
    b. Become a **reference** for your program: email us at mail@globalroutes.org if you would like to be added to our reference list. This means that prospective students will be able to reach out to you to ask you question about your program and hear firsthand all about the program.
    c. Apply to become a **Global Routes Alumni Ambassador:** email us at mail@globalroutes.org expressing your interest in becoming an alumni ambassador. Being an alumni ambassador means attending conferences, workshops, student recruitment events and fairs, to share your perspective as a student.

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[15] List adapted from SIT Study Abroad Toolkit for Returning Students, 2008, p. 11

2. Explore ways to integrate your experience into your academics
   a. Give a presentation at your school, community center and/or church about your experience.
   b. Join clubs at school related that focus on areas related to your program
      i. Foreign language clubs
      ii. Key Club
      iii. School newspaper: write an article about your experience for your school or local newpaper
      iv. Model UN
      v. Social Justice Club

3. Research organizations where you can learn more about issues that are important to you, and/or volunteer within your community.
   a. Student Conservation Association (http://www.thesca.org/)

      SCA's mission is to build the next generation of conservation leaders and inspire lifelong stewardship of the environment and communities by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land.
   b. Ashoka's Youth Venture (https://www.youthventure.org/)

      Youth venture aims to invest in youth to provide them with the skills and tools necessary to become change makers.
   c. Habitat for Humanity (http://www.habitat.org/)

      Habitat for Humanity believes that every man, woman and child should have a decent, safe and affordable place to live. This organization builds and repairs houses all over the world using volunteer labor and donations. Partner families purchase these houses through no-profit, no-interest mortgage loans or innovative financing methods.
   d. United We Serve (http://www.serve.gov/)

      United We Serve is built on the belief that ordinary people can come together and achieve extraordinary things when given the proper tools. This initiative aims to both expand the impact of existing organizations by engaging new volunteers in their work and encourage volunteers to develop their own "do-it-yourself" projects.
   e. Idealist (http://www.idealist.org/)

      Idealist connects people, organizations, and resources to help build a world where all people can live free and dignified lives.
   f. Americans for an Informed Democracy (http://www.aidemocracy.org/)

They aim to empower, educate and mobilize young people to take informed action around our individual and collective roles as global citizens

g. United States Student Association (http://www.usstudents.org/)

USSA is the country's oldest and largest student led national organization aimed at developing current and future leaders. It helps to amplify voice at the local, state and national levels through grassroots efforts.

h. Institute for Policy Studies (http://www.ips-dc.org/)

IPS helps turn ideas into action for peace, justice and the environment

i. So Just (http://www.sojust.net/)

This website documents the history of social justice, civil rights, equity, peace and activism.

Parting thoughts

We hope that this handbook helps you to adjust to life back home, reflect on your experience abroad and also helps guide you to continue to engage in opportunities that challenge you to keep exploring and growing. We hope that you will stay connected with the Global Routes community and share your journeys and achievements with us.

Thank you for participating in a program with us!
All the best,

The Global Routes Team

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Appendices

Appendix A

Student Questionnaire

1. Please describe your previous summer and travel experiences (if any). What did you enjoy most and why?
2. What are your extracurricular activities, sports, hobbies and interests? Why are your drawn to these activities? Do you have a job at home, at school or in your community?
3. What are you most looking forward to this summer? What do you hope to gain from your program? What do you feel you can contribute?
4. Considering the inherent dynamics of living and traveling abroad in a group setting, discuss one aspect of the program you feel might be challenging for you, and why.
5. Who are the significant people in your life?
6. Sharing who we are despite cultural or language barriers is one of the most exciting and challenging parts of travel. Imagine that you are having dinner with a member of your host family or community. Choose an event of personal significance, a daily routine, or a family tradition of yours to describe to that person. Explain what it is and why it is important to you.

Parent Questionnaire:

1. What would you like your child to gain from a Global Routes program this summer?
2. What type of travel experiences has your child had so far?
3. What are your child's major strengths and weaknesses in terms of personal qualities, social skills and proficiencies? Please contact us with any additional information or concerns you may have to help us provide the best possible summer experience for your child.
4. Is there anything in particular you want to tell us about your child that will not show up on any of the other forms?

Appendix B:

ORIENTATION ACTIVITIES CHECKLIST:

Many activities for these workshops can be found in the *Program Tools Manual*. Some of these may be repeated or revisited throughout community stays and or final travel (such as Goals, Getting To Know You activities and Safety and Health talks).

<table>
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First twenty-four hours:

- WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS
  - Count-Off
  - Name Games (1 or more)
  - Review orientation / lay of the land

- GROUND RULES
  - Goals & Expectations
  - Roles
  - Rules (rule rap, contract, our group)
  - Safety

- HEALTH

- FEARS (evening activity)

- INDIVIDUAL GOALS

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First few days of orientation:
(activities should be less intense earlier on)

- ICEBREAKERS *1 or more*
  - Peanut Butter and Jelly
  - I Love My Neighbors
  - Two Truths and a Lie
  - Interviews
  - M & M stories

- GROUP INITIATIVES (low-level) *1 or more*
  - Line-Ups
  - Ants on a Log
  - Ball Toss Challenge
  - Inner Tube Challenge
  - Trust Wave

- LANGUAGE LESSONS

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Later on during orientation:
(activities should be more intense later on)

- COMMUNITY PREPARATION:
  - Expectations/ Attitude
  - Homestay/ Group living
    - Pairings
    - Tasks/ responsibilities
  - Service Projects
  - Situation brainstorm/role plays

- GROUP INITIATIVE (high-level) *1 or more*
  - Peanut Butter River
  - Spider Web
  - Electric Wire

- GETTING TO KNOW YOU activity *1 or more*
  - Round Robin
  - Questions in a Hat
  - Dream Game (evening activity)

- DELVING DEEPER
  - Horseshoe (evening activity)

- WEEKLY EVALUATION

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Any time during orientation:

- CROSS-CULTURAL TRAINING
  (not all in one meeting)
  - Host-culture 101
  - Culture shock discussion
  - Stereotyping
  - Cultural Exchange:
    - Anthropologist
    - Wil/Jil (Pirates/Ninjas)
    - Minoria/Majoria
    - Bafa Bafa
    - Queen's Festival

- GENDER DISCUSSION

- ONE-ON-ONE CHECKINS

- Anytime activities for idle time or on long bus rides to bring the group together & have fun:
  - Ah So U
  - Ro Sham Bo
  - Lover
  - Mafia

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Appendix C
Watch out for moment when a trip ends before it's over
February 09, 2003|By John Flinn   from the SFGate
Source: http://www.sfgate.com/travel/departures/article/Watch-out-for-moment-when-a-trip-ends-before-it-s-2671643.php

As the final notes of "Chan Chan" faded away -- the song, from "Buena Vista Social Club," is the new "Guantanamera" for Cuban musicians -- I drained the last sip of my mojito, tossed a couple of dollar bills on the table and prepared to stand up.

But before I did, I paused. I'd come to an invisible but major turning point in the trip -- what I've come to call the "Moment of Apogee."

Every trip has a Moment of Apogee. When it comes, the journey ceases being about pushing forward and making new discoveries. From this point on, everything you do is merely a long process of going home.

In this case, there would be the walk out of the jazz club into the fragrant night. The stroll through the darkened, cobbled streets of Trinidad, a handsome colonial town down the coast from the Bay of Pigs. The ride to the hotel in the fume-burping Russian Lada taxi. The long bus trip back to Havana the next day. The farewell lunch on the Plaza de Armas. The farewell mojito at the rooftop bar of the Hotel Ambos Mundos. The bus ride to Jose Marti International Airport, and finally a series of flights back to San Francisco.

The moment I stood up in the jazz club, the trip lost its forward momentum, and my mind began to turn homeward. In some important ways, the journey was essentially over.

I borrowed the term "apogee" from the world or rocketry, where it means, among other things, the point when a suborbital missile expends its last bit of thrust, loses its battle against gravity and begins to fall back to Earth.

And so it is with travelers. Apogee comes at different times on different journeys, but it always comes. On a week's vacation on Kauai, it might not happen until the final morning, when you pack up your swimsuits and aloha shirts and prepare to head down to the check-out desk. On a month long trip around New Zealand, it might come when you say goodbye to the woman who runs the B&B in Dunedin and head to the bus station to begin the leisurely, four- day bus and ferry journey back to Auckland.

Leafing through my journals of past trips, I can always spot the Moment of Apogee. It's when I find the first entry looking ahead to life after I got home -- about the project I want to get started at work or about finally getting the hardwood floors refinished. The spell of the journey has been broken; my thoughts were no longer focused entirely on the moment.

This, of course, is the big danger. One of the finest things about travel is that it overwhelms you with so many new images, smells, sounds and ideas that your mind stays riveted to the moment -- in the here and now, as the Buddhists like to say. If you're having a conversation with new

Czech friends at a Prague cafe, you're absorbing every word, not looking over their shoulders and thinking about the stock market or your kid's next visit to the orthodontist. When you're riding on the roof of an Ecuadoran train through the Avenue of the Volcanoes, you're giving your full attention to the snowy heights and the villagers with their bowler hats and alpacas, not to the Giants' bullpen troubles.

Once your thoughts turn homeward, travel begins to lose its magic. Your journey may still have days or even weeks left, but you're in danger of missing its special moments because at least part of your mind has checked out early.

You can beat this danger if you work at it. Years ago, I ended a trip around the world with a monthlong climbing expedition in Nepal. I distinctly remember standing on the summit of a 20,000-foot mountain and thinking that my very next step would mark the beginning of the end of this round-the-world journey, the biggest adventure of my life.

There would be the descent of the knife-edge ridge, the series of rappels down to the glacier, the long trudge back to base camp, the week's walk down to the airstrip at Lukla, the flight to Kathmandu, and so on.

Once I was safely back on flat ground, thoughts of home began to bubble up in my head. I was already paying less attention to the snow plume blowing off the top of Makalu and the magnificent fluted ice ridges of Lhotse Shar. I found myself wondering if I'd get my old job back in the bureau or move into the newspaper's main office.

The following day, alongside the moraine of the Imja Glacier, I spotted a few hardy tufts of grass poking up through the frost, the first bit of greenery after days of nothing but ice and rock. Gnawing on the grass were four furry yaks. I wandered over to photograph them and met a tiny old Sherpa woman with leathery skin and a necklace of prayer beads. She was from the village of Chukkung and had come up to take the beasts down to lower pastures for the fast-approaching winter.

Big boulders were blocking the icy wind, and there in the sunshine it actually felt warm. I unzipped my goose-down parka and let the delicious sensation soak into my bones for the first time in weeks.

The Sherpa woman apparently felt the same way. She made a gesture that seemed to say, "Doesn't this feel wonderful?" and flashed a toothless smile. And in that moment I felt a visceral, whole-body sense of happiness well up in me. I wasn't feeling sad that my round-the-world trip was coming to an end, I wasn't eager to get home, I wasn't thinking about life after the plane touched down at SFO. I was just deliriously, giddily happy to be right where I was, basking in the warm sunshine with the old Sherpa woman and her yaks.

After spending a month among Tibetan Buddhists who know how to live in the here-and-now, a little of it had thankfully rubbed off on me.

Appendix D

Pre-Program

New Curriculum/ Activities	Topic/Framework					
	Program Structure & Design	**Student Learning: Kolb/ELT**	**Holistic Model of Education Abroad**	**Youth Engagement**	**Youth Empowerment**	**Reentry**
	Pre-program: Motivate students to learn, Set goals, familiarize with host culture **During Program:** Continued reflection, prepare for return, reflect on orientation **Post Program:** Link to orientation and program topics	•Experience> Reflect-> Think->Action •Shared Responsibly of learning •Build on experiences-helps see relationship between experiences	3 equally important aspects to student development/ learning: •Cognitive (intellectual) •Intrapersonal (Personal) •Interpersonal (Social)	•Engage in own learning •Engage in peers learning •Involve in improving educational opps. •Engage in Community/civic service	•Intellectual Challenge •Emotional Nurturance •Shared Power	Reflect on culture shock prepare for return-review **reentry models**: •Leave-taking and departure phase •Honeymoon phase •Reverse Culture Shock Phase •Adjustment & Adaption Phase
Typical Day Reflection		Shared Responsibility, sets foundation for learning, and builds on experiences	Intrapersonal & Interpersonal	Engaging in own Learning		
Journal Reflections		Beginning of Reflection	Intrapersonal & Interpersonal	Engaging in own Learning		
Country/community Peer Research	Familiarize with host culture		Cognitive	Engaging in own Learning & Peers learning	Intellectual Challenge	
Call prep form	Set goals, motivate students to learn	Reflecting on goals, lays foundations on which to build /challenge goals	Intrapersonal	Engaging in own Learning	Shared Power	
Calls #1 & #2	Set goals, motivate students to learn		Intrapersonal & Interpersonal	Involve in improve ed.opps & Engage in Comm service	Emotional Nurturance & Shared Power	

Appendix E: During Program

New Curriculum/Activities	Topic/Framework					
	Program Structure	**Student Learning: Kolb/ELT**	**Holistic Model of Education Abroad**	**Youth Engagement**	**Youth Empowerment**	**Reentry**
	Pre-program: Motivate students to learn, Set goals, familiarize with host culture **During Program:** Continued reflection, prepare for return, reflect on orientation **Post Program:** Link to orientation and program topics	•Experience> Reflect->Think->Action •Shared Responsibly of learning •Build on experiences-helps see relationship between experiences	3 equally important aspects to student development/ learning: •Cognitive (intellectual) •Intrapersonal (Personal) •Interpersonal (Social)	•Engage in own learning •Engage in peers learning •Involve in improving educational opps. •Engage in Community/civic service	•Intellectual Challenge •Emotional Nurturance •Shared Power	Reflect on culture shock prepare for return-review **reentry models**: •Leave-taking and departure phase •Honeymoon phase •Reverse Culture Shock (RVCS) Phase •Adjustment & Adaption Phase
Discussion #1: Stereotyping, Culture, Diversity & Identity	Reflection, familiarize with host culture	Builds on previous learning through reflection	Cognitive, Intrapersonal & Interpersonal	Engage in own learning	Emotional nurturance	
Discussion #2: Culture Shock/Typ. Day Reflection	Reflection	Reflection, builds on previous learning	Intrapersonal & Interpersonal	Engaging in own & Peers learning	Emotional nurturance	Helps to lay foundation for RVCS phase
Discussion #3: Host Culture 101	Motivate students to learn, familiarize w/ host culture	Building on previous learning	Cognitive, Interpersonal	Engaging in own& Peers Learning	Intellectual Challenge	
Letter to Self #1	Reflection	Reflection	Intrapersonal	Engage in own learning		Lays foundations for reentry
Telling your Story	Prepare for return	Reflects and prepares for action	Interpersonal & Intrapersonal			Honeymoon and RVCS
Revisiting Stereotypes	Prepare for return, reflect on Orientation	Building on previous learning	Interpersonal		Intellectual Challenge	Leave-taking and Departure phase
Goals Revisited	Reflect on Orientation	Reflection	Intrapersonal	Engaging in own Learning	Emotional nurturance	
Staying Involved	Preparing for return	Thinking into Action	Cognitive	Engaging in comm/civic service	Intellectual Challenge	
Acting on Inspiration	Preparing for return	Thinking into Action	Cognitive, Intrapersonal	Engaging in comm/civic service	Shared Power	
Staying in the Moment		Reflection	Intrapersonal & Interpersonal	Engaging in Peers learning	Emotional Nurturance	Leave-taking and Departure phase
Letter to Self #2	Reflection on Orientation	Reflection	Intrapersonal	Engaging in own Learning		

Appendix F

Post Program

New Curriculum/ Activities	Topic/Framework					
	Program Structure	Student Learning: Kolb/ELT	Holistic Model of Education Abroad	Youth Engagement	Youth Empowerment	Reentry
	Pre-program: Motivate students to learn, Set goals, familiarize with host culture **During Program:** Continued reflection, prepare for return, reflect on orientation **Post Program:** Link to orientation and program topics	•Experience->Reflect->Think->Action •Shared Responsibly of learning •Build on experiences-helps see relationship between experiences	3 equally important aspects to student development/learning: •Cognitive(intellectual) •Intrapersonal (Personal) •Interpersonal (Social)	•Engage in own learning •Engage in peers learning •Involve in improving educational opps. •Engage in Community/civic service	•Intellectual Challenge •Emotional Nurturance •Shared Power	Reflect on culture shock prepare for return-review **reentry models**: •Leave-taking and departure phase •Honeymoon phase •Reverse Culture Shock Phase •Adjustment & Adaption Phase
What is Reentry?	Links to learning in Culture Shock		Cognitive		Intellectual Challenge	Explains stages
Common Feeling and Frustrations			Intrapersonal & Interpersonal			explains Reverse Culture Shock, and ways to cope
Reflective Activities	Linking back to orientation	Reflection	Intrapersonal		Emotional Nurturance	Reverse Culture Shock
Ways to stay connected			Interpersonal	Engage in service		Reverse Culture Shock
Ways to get involved		Acting on learning		Engage in own & peers learning, improve ed opps, service	shared power	Helps to adjust and adapt