

Fall 11-2012

Exploring Sydney: An Onsite Orientation Program for Students Studying in Australia

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EXPLORING SYDNEY:
AN ONSITE ORIENTATION PROGRAM FOR
STUDENTS STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA

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PIM 70

A Capstone Paper submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for a Master of Arts in International Education at
SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont, USA

November 11-16, 2012

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Abstract

Exploring Sydney: An Onsite Orientation Program for Students Studying in Australia is a four-day onsite orientation program designed for students spending the semester in Australia. In this program design, the students explore Sydney and learn about the country's history and local culture. The onsite orientation is run by CISabroad, a third party provider based in Northampton, Massachusetts which offers college students affordable study abroad programs.

The orientation takes place prior to the start of the five Australia semester programs. The Australian site director leads the onsite orientation and is with the students for the entire program. The program takes place in Sydney because most of the students fly into the city before traveling to the final semester host school location. Sydney is Australia's oldest city (Sydney, 2012), making it an excellent place to learn an overview of the country's history. Activities are designed to acquaint students with the site director, other program participants, the streets and public transportation system in Sydney, and local culture. The activities build on the students' previous knowledge gained from the online pre-departure program orientations while enabling them to continue learning and growing in Sydney.

In order to create an effective, quality, and fun onsite orientation program, several learning theories, journal articles, and current CISabroad onsite orientation programs were researched. Reviews from past students and other staff members were consulted as well. Following implementation of the onsite orientation, the students and site director will evaluate the program through online forms and direct contact with CISabroad staff. The constant evaluation of the onsite orientation will ensure the quality of the program remains consistent throughout the years.

Introduction

Onsite orientations are programs run for students in the location of the study abroad experience, usually shortly after the students arrive (Forum on Education Abroad, 2010). The orientation typically includes presentations on the housing situation, the host country geography and climate, health and safety in the country, program rules of conduct, and any other issues which may crop up regarding acclimating and living successfully in the new location. In addition to presentations, onsite orientations can also include cultural experiences and activities designed to ease students into their new home.

CISabroad is a third-party study abroad provider established in 1999. It currently offers semester, year, summer, and January abroad programs in 19 countries throughout six continents, customizing faculty-led student programs in 31 different countries. These study abroad programs are a mixture of integrated university study programs and hybrid programs. An integrated study program is defined as a program where students are selecting classes from the regular university offerings, and take those classes with the local students (Forum on Education Abroad, 2010). Hybrid programs combine several of the study abroad program types. For example, a study center that emphasizes courses just for study abroad students but also lets those students enroll in a host university (Forum on Education Abroad, 2010), such as the CISabroad program in Perugia, Italy.

CISabroad thinks it is important for students to have a valuable learning experience while they are studying abroad. This is reflected in the company's mission statement: "The mission of CISabroad is to provide innovative education programs that broaden academic perspectives, promote global awareness, and encourage personal development while laying the foundation for participants to become engaged world citizens" (CISabroad, 2012b). The organization breaks

down the mission statement into several pieces which are explained in its guarantee. If the student finds a different program that offers the same program package but for a more affordable price, CISabroad will refund the student's money up to 60 days before the program begins. If a student goes abroad and believes the company did not follow through on parts of the guarantee, CISabroad gives the student 1,000 dollars off of a featured summer program.

The CISabroad guarantee was created in 2010 and has four sections to it: academics, value, support, and culture. CISabroad knows some students are only able to go overseas if they can fulfill certain requirements. To address this, the company website includes a search engine which allows students to find programs that offer specific subjects. The catalog also provides students with a matrix to ease their search for specific subjects, and lists program prices and what is included within the price. Many of the items students need are included in the program price, with students only having to cover food, visas and passports, airfare, and personal expenses on their own. Having affordable study abroad options makes CISabroad unique because the majority of programs offered (80 percent) are the lowest cost when compared with other providers' programs (CISabroad, 2012a).

Part of the program includes support for the students. They have access to one of the CISabroad advisors from the minute they enter the system until they return from overseas. Students enter the system through several ways: signing an information sheet at a study abroad fair or table visit; asking questions on the website; or calling the hotline number. Students are introduced to the onsite support team (the CISabroad site director) after being accepted into the program. The site director assists students with all of their in-country needs and emergencies, and is in charge of conducting the onsite orientation.

The final part of the guarantee is the culture piece and this takes place using CISabroad's La Vida Local curriculum. The aim of La Vida Local is to enhance the participants' cross-cultural experiences and to develop the learning that accompanies those cross-cultural experiences throughout the program (CISabroad, 2011). The enhancement and learning development is established through a number of activities and reflections, examples of which are in Appendix A. La Vida Local offers site directors broad guidelines on what types of activities to create and types of questions to ask students following the activities. Each site director uses the program to a certain extent but all of the activities and reflecting exercises will be created by the site director and customized to fit the specific location. Site directors are also welcome to design activities outside of what is mentioned in La Vida Local, for example the Barcelona site director brings students to a different neighborhood each week to allow them to explore the various areas of the city and see multiple aspects of the culture they might not experience on their own.

The idea behind the guarantee is to ensure students get the most out of their experience through the academic classes offered at partner universities, the global awareness that comes from the cultural activities and reflective pieces, and the personal development that comes from the entire abroad experience.

As a University Relations Representative for New England for CISabroad, I hear the concerns of study abroad advisors and students (and parents on occasion) when it comes to traveling to foreign locations. Advisors want students to learn about the host culture and to be supported. Students want to have a contact person in the host country to answer their questions and to be there in case they need help. They also want to have fun. Parents want their children to be taken care of and supported whenever possible for an affordable price tag.

I realized these concerns were not being completely met by the current orientation offered by another provider called Globalinks. This program is a six day adventure orientation located in Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef on the Northeastern coast of Australia. It includes a number of fun activities, information about life in Australia, excursions to scuba dive or snorkel, and a day volunteering with the local population (Appendix B). Reviews of the program by returned participants explained CISabroad students were not being met at the airport by the Globalinks leader and they were not being supported by the leader either. The outside program raised costs for students which did not align with idea of program value. In addition to high cost and lack of support, there was no way to determine what students were learning and no way to ensure students were being prepared for life in Australia with the Globalinks program. The CISabroad guarantee was not being held to the standard set by other program orientations offered by the organization, which means the Australia onsite orientation needed to be updated.

Theoretical Foundations

Numerous researchers have explored the components of onsite orientations and curriculum designs they feel are needed to create the best onsite orientation program. Researching the components has led to determining which theories and models assist with creating orientations that best enhance student learning and cultural awareness. Two of those theories and models are Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory and Baxter Magolda's Learning Partnership Model, which are described after the sections discussing onsite orientations and curriculum design.

Importance of Onsite Orientation

The onsite orientation is extremely important in helping students adapt to the new area and host culture, and is a way for the site director to communicate the expectations of both the director and the institution to the participants. It is also the time to reinforce the information provided to the students during the pre-departure orientation, correct anything that was incorrectly stated, and to fill in those students who missed the pre-departure orientation.

According to Grove (1989), there are six approaches to planning orientations and disseminating the information to the participants: 1) *Fact-Oriented* where you present general facts about the host location and culture to the students; 2) *Attribution Learning* where students learn to explain behaviors and events from the local people's points of view; 3) *Cultural Awareness* where students are introduced to the nature of cultural differences and the concept of culture; 4) *Interactional Learning* where students engage in different types of facilitated interaction with experienced expatriates and/or locals from the host country; 5) *Cognitive-Behavior Modification* where participants are taught from principles of learning to cross-cultural adjustment problems; and 6) *Experiential Learning* which allows students to engage in participatory and practical activities that are focused on learning about and participating in the host culture. Keeping these fundamental theoretical concepts in mind, it is key to integrate these approaches when planning and implementing orientation activities.

A great onsite orientation not only addresses practical issues but also the cultural challenges that students will be facing during their time overseas (Spender & Tuma, 2007). The orientation needs a solid beginning to give the program a strong foundation, and it will allow the participants to establish some respect and trust among themselves and the site director. The

sessions which make up the orientation are more important than just being fun exercises; they are meant to prepare students for the weeks ahead (Spencer & Tuma, 2007).

There are two things to keep in mind when planning the onsite orientation to make sure the effectiveness is not undermined (Grove, 1989). The first is cultural sensitivity and ensuring the activities are appropriate to the host culture. The second is regarding the physical environment of the orientation and the emotional and mental atmosphere. If there are too many activities and events scheduled, the students are less likely to pay full attention and the events or activities might lack in quality. According to Grove (1989), planners need to think about the *gathering location* (too loud, too crowded); *duration and scheduling* (students too tired, activities too long); *general mode and dress* (students not likely to view an event as important if the leader is dressed for the beach); and *explicit and implicit expectations of the learners* (if an event is not mandatory, students might take it less seriously than if it were).

The best method for successful onsite orientations is to break the orientation into four layers: the arrival and survival portion, general information, academics, and housing (Spencer & Tuma, 2007). Breaking down the orientation allows students to take time to process what they have learned without rushing into the next segment and overloading their brains. The arrival and survival section of the orientation should cover immediate necessities such as providing students with maps that have important locations marked on it like nearest pharmacies, ATMs, the police station, subway and bus stops, and places to buy food. The site director will give students their housing information, keys and linens, and explain the rules and regulations of the accommodations, possible curfews, security, and explain how to use the facilities (Spencer & Tuma, 2007).

A general orientation follows the arrival and survival section. This includes general information pertaining to the area and can be a recap of the information provided in the pre-departure orientation. The topics covered in this section include: the program itinerary, money and banking, telephones and post office, transportation system, and health and safety. Orientation leaders need to stress the differences between the home community and the host city when it comes to locations where the people drive and walk on opposite sides of the road so students are prepared when exploring the area on their own.

Students who are comfortable with their housing arrangements tend to acclimate to their new environment much more easily than those who are unhappy with the accommodations (Spencer & Tuma, 2007). The accommodations section of the orientation is where the orientation leader goes into more details about the specific housing arrangements that have been made. The type of instruction the students receive varies depending on the type of accommodations, whether they live in homestays, residence halls, or off-campus apartments. Students get a walkthrough of the rooms and receive clear instruction about using the appliances, the differences in power and electricity voltage, and making phone calls from the residence. The final part of the orientation is the academic portion and it covers the classes the students take, the attendance policies, how to register for or drop classes, and ways for the students to get involved on campus. Together these four parts make up the onsite orientation, and the quality of this program sets the tone for the remainder of the students' time overseas.

Curriculum Design and Academic Plan Analysis

Since the onsite orientation has so much influence over the students' overseas experiences, it is important the information dispersed within the orientation is presented in such a

way as to maximize the students' learning. G.J. Posner (1995) outlined five perspectives of curricula in his book, *Analyzing the Curriculum*; they are 1) traditional, 2) experiential, 3) structure of the disciplines, 4) behavioral, and 5) constructivist.

The *traditional* perspective believes that the most important aspects of the cultural heritage should be preserved. Schools need to return to the basics, to knowing rudimentary terminology and facts that every educated person should know. One example of the traditional perspective is William Torrey Harris's idea about using the teacher lecture-recitation method, where the teacher lectures and the students recite what they know.

The *experiential* perspective believes experiences shape the individual. This perspective is based on the idea that all experiences have an influence on a person's life, and no one person learns or experiences things in the same way. This means the curriculum needs to be designed with those differences in mind.

The *disciplines* perspective believes the gap is too big between the subject matter taught in schools and the scholarly disciplines they originate from. Educators need to reduce the gap by getting students of all ages engaged in genuine inquiry using the essential ideas of the disciplines. This allows students to develop confidence in their own intellectual capabilities (Posner, 1995).

The *behavioral* perspective deals more with what participants should be able to do following the end of the curriculum. One decides in measurable terms what the students should be able to do, analyze those behaviors to identify pre-requisite skills, provide opportunities to practice those skills, give enough feedback to the point of mastering the skills, and then evaluate their performances.

The final perspective, *constructivist*, involves people learning to think more creatively and productively, while also learning to make sense of the world. It involves the belief that there needs to be more emphasis on thinking and understanding, and less on rote-learning. The curriculum needs to allow students to develop their own knowledge in activities that require judgments, decision-making, and problem solving.

According to Stark and Lowther as referenced in Stark and Lattuca (2002) the majority of definitions for curriculum tend to include at least one (and usually more than one) of the following elements: “1) a college’s or program’s mission, purpose, or collective expression of what is important for students to learn; 2) a set of experiences that some authorities believe all students should have; 3) the set courses offered to a student; 4) the set courses students actually elect from those available; 5) the content of a specific discipline; and 6) the time and credit frame in which the college provides education” (p. 323). Stark and Lattuca (2002) have suggested curriculum be defined as an “academic plan” because plans imply both “intensions and rational choices among alternatives to achieve the intensions” (p. 325). Viewing the curriculum as an academic plan suggests there is a purposeful planning process which focuses all the attention on important educational considerations such as student body, instructor, and institutional goals, among others. The academic plans should consist of eight parts:

- 1) “Purpose – the general goals that guide knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be learned
- 2) Content – the subject matter within which the learning experiences are embedded
- 3) Sequence – an arrangement of the subject matter intended to lead to specific outcomes for the learners
- 4) Learners – information about the learners for who the plan is devised

- 5) Instructional Processes – the instructional activities by which learning may be achieved
- 6) Instructional Resources – the materials and settings to be used in the learning process
- 7) Evaluation – the strategies used to determine if skills, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors change as a result of the learning process
- 8) Adjustment – changes in the plan to increase learning, based on experience and evaluation” (Stark & Lattuca, 2002, p. 326)

Each of the steps is an important piece of the curriculum design and they are intertwined throughout the entire academic plan. Those creating academic plans need to be aware of factors that can have an impact on the design. Such influences consist of external (society, government, marketplaces, sponsors, alumni); organizational (governance, program resources, and program relationships); and internal (faculty, students, program mission). In order to create the best academic plan, one needs to realize it is not the product of one person’s totally context-free and rational ideas, but is in fact a product of a complicated process that is both multifaceted and unpredictable.

Experiential Learning

There has been a definite shift away from a content approach to a practice approach when it comes to designing curriculum (Hovland et al, 2009). Several of the aforementioned perspectives have discussed experiential learning as being a component to both orientations and academic plans. Kolb’s model of experiential learning is a cycle of learning which has four learning modes: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation (Brooks-Harris & Stock-Ward, 1999) (Appendix C). The learning cycle begins with concrete experiences which then provide a basis for observations and reflections.

They are then assimilated and turned into abstract concepts thereby producing new implications for action. These new implications are then actively tested, which creates new experiences (Chapman, 2012). Kolb used the four modes to suggest there are two primary dimensions within the iterative learning process. They are 1) concrete experiences at one end and abstract conceptualizations at the other end of the spectrum; and 2) active experimentation on one side and reflective observation at the other end.

Each of the four modes reflects a different type of learner. Divergers observe primarily through concrete experience and then process through reflective observation (feel and watch). They tend to learn through personal connection. The second type of learner includes Assimilators who perceive through reflective observation, and process through abstract conceptualization (think and watch). They learn best through reflecting on materials before acting upon something. Convergers experience through abstract conceptualization and process through active experimentation (think and do). They learn best by analyzing models and connections between the things they are learning. The final learner group is the Accommodators. They observe through active experimentation and process through concrete experimentation (feel and do), and learn best by trying things out (Brockinton, Hoffa, & Martin, 2005; Chapman, 2012). These learning styles can be reflected in the types of activities and events that are scheduled in orientation materials.

Learning Partnerships Model

Baxter Magolda (2001) explained the student and educator relationship using a tandem bicycle metaphor. She suggested the student take the front of the bicycle, or the captain's seat, and the educator take the back seat. This arrangement allows the educator to provide support

and guidance to the student, while the learner is allowed to direct their own journey. Educators support the students by helping them develop their inner authority through validating the learner's capacity to know, situating the learning from the student's experiences, and defining learning as a joint process. They do these things by respecting their thoughts and ideas, using the experiences of the learner as a basis for subsequent learning and growth, and collaborating with the students to analyze and address problems, among other ways. This support system helps the students bring their voices to the table and allows them to gain confidence in expressing their thoughts in conversations with others (Baxter Magolda, 2001 as cited in 2004b and 2009).

In addition to the support, educators are there to challenge the students to work on developing their internal authority. Educators depict knowledge as being socially constructed and complicated; they stress the self as being central to constructing knowledge, and encourage the learners to share authority and knowledge of skills. There are a number of ways they challenge the students including encouraging learners to pay attention to the complexity of life and work decisions, and discouraging students from forming simplistic solutions, encouraging learners to listen to their own voices when making decisions, and by working with others to solve mutual problems (Baxter Magolda, 2001 as cited in 2004b and 2009).

Educators who choose to use the Learner Partnership Model need to consider their roles when promoting learning since they may be dealing with strategies that are unfamiliar to them. They need to think about the factors that drive the decision-making process and think about how to create a link between challenging and supporting the learner (Baxter Magolda, 2001). After a student realizes their early learning outcomes and their fundamental developmental goals, the student is ready for the next level where they work towards achieving those more advanced outcomes and goals. As the learner shifts the way they think and act to tackle the changing

goals, the educator will also need to adapt and shift the levels of support and challenge that they offer the student.

Needs Assessment

After hearing the concerns of students, parents, and advisors, and reading negative reviews from students about a lack of organization and support on the ground, it was apparent something needed change in regards to the onsite orientation program included in the five CISabroad Australia semester programs. Australia is the biggest sending location for CISabroad, with locations in Bendigo, the Gold Coast, Melbourne, Newcastle, and Sydney. If those returned students are not happy and do not feel the programs are of high quality, then their poor reviews and lack of student referrals could lead to future participants choosing to enroll in a competitor organization's program to Australia, and advisors unwilling to send students to CISabroad. These negative reviews led to a further investigation into the downfalls of the Globalinks orientation and sparked interest in finding ways to make the new orientation program alleviate the concerns of students, parents, and advisors, and align more accurately with the guarantee and mission of CISabroad.

Many of the past students loved spending time in the Great Barrier Reef for the Globalinks orientation; however the location has its drawbacks. The orientation added approximately 1,000 dollars to the students' program fees, a portion of which was the additional airfare. Currently the majority of CISabroad students (if not all of them) fly into Sydney and take a connecting flight to their host university destination. With this orientation program, the students paid for the flight from home to Sydney, Sydney to Cairns, and then Cairns to one of the five host school cities (none of which are Cairns). Students purchased two additional flights rather than just the one extra flight, which was a fee they did not need, especially students who

were studying in Sydney. Students also paid for a snorkeling and scuba diving trip on the reef, visits to national parks, an excursion to interact with the local Cairns community, and a free day spent either on their own or they could pay for other excursions. The higher cost of the Globalinks orientation did not align with the “value” component of the CISabroad guarantee, which works to ensure overall costs for students are kept low.

Another problem with the Globalinks orientation was the orientation leader was a Globalinks staff member who knew nothing about the CISabroad students. This person was not as dedicated to making their experiences as worthwhile as the Globalinks students’ experiences. The former Australia Programs Advisor, Ashley Parent, mentioned in a conversation the CISabroad students often felt like outsiders in the group because they were not part of the Globalinks student group and they did not understand why no one from CISabroad was present at the orientation or around after they moved on to the host destination (personal communication, April 27, 2012).

In addition, students reported no one was at the airport to pick them up, which was something the Globalinks staff member was supposed to do, and in fact did do for those Globalinks students. This has been reiterated in student reviews posted on Abroad101.com. Maddie H. wrote “I was upset when I first got here because I felt a lot of things were very unorganized. My pick up from the airport was cancelled and I was not notified until I was in the airport and that made me annoyed” (H.M., 2011). Rose B. posted that “there wasn’t anyone from CIS to answer my questions” (B.R., 2011) and Vincente C. left this piece of advice: “do not outsource to other programs; half the time I was with groups from other study abroad programs and no one knew about us” (C.V., 2011). Like the added price, this lack of support for students did not align with the CISabroad guarantee. CISabroad ensures students have access to any help

they need, whether through questions or physical assistance, and without an onsite staff person to rely on in times of need during the Globalinks orientation, it was clear this was an aspect which needed to change.

A third challenging aspect of the Globalinks orientation was there was no way to measure how much students were learning about the history of Australia and no way to ensure they were engaging in the activities. The full Globalinks orientation program was not shared with CISabroad staff beyond a minimal description of the activities; therefore staff members at CISabroad were unsure what exactly was being taught or spoken about during the orientation and what activities the students were actually doing or what the goals of those particular activities were. The new orientation program addresses the failings of the Globalinks orientation by promising a more affordable value for students, more on the ground support of students by a CISabroad staff member, and enables the staff to control what the students experience and learn about the host location and culture, all of which combine to raise the program up to a standard that is in line with the CISabroad guarantee.

Program Rationale

I have designed a CISabroad-run orientation program for students going to Australia because of the negative evaluations received. The program is organized using four of the six approaches mentioned in the theoretical foundations section. Once students arrive at the hostel, the site director will present general facts about the local culture (*fact-oriented*). The activities designed for the orientation will enable students to begin thinking about and analyzing the differences between their home culture and culture of Australia (*cultural awareness*), for example, the scavenger hunt allows students to see what life is like in a country that uses the metric system for road signs and directions. Students will not only look at the differences

between the two cultures, but will have the chance to learn about Australian history and culture in greater detail. The activities will offer students chances to learn from interacting with the local Australians (*interactional learning*) and learn through experience (*experiential learning*). Through the activities, students speak with the locals (for example, learning directly from Aboriginal Australians on the tribal cruise) and will learn to use the public transportation system and navigate the city, how to prepare an Australian meal, and learn about Australian and Aboriginal history through guided tours. Learning through experience will give students the chance to make mistakes and then learn from those mistakes; for example, if they get on the wrong bus to return to the hostel, the next time they will know which bus to avoid.

In addition to the approaches, the orientation academic plan focuses on the behavioral perspective and what students should be able to do by the end of the four-day orientation: use the public transportation system, interact with locals, be more independent, and be more aware of the history of Australia, Sydney, and the Aboriginal people. The walking tours, scavenger hunt, and market visit will enable students to explore the streets of Sydney and public transportation system. By purchasing meals and ingredients on their own, the students will become familiar with Australian bills and coins. The tribal cruise will teach students about the history of the Aboriginal people and their customs. Students will have the chance to interact with locals in all aspects of the activities, life in the hostel, and while they explore Sydney. The students' knowledge of the area and public transportation system, confidence, and independence will continue to grow after completing each activity in smaller groups and by then reflecting on the activity. At the end of the orientation, students will have the foundation for all four of those areas, and their knowledge and skills will continue to develop throughout the remainder of the program.

All of the activities have been designed with the local culture in mind to make sure students are not disrespecting the locals. Each interactive activity is geared towards students learning more about the country and people. There are activities for each of the four learning styles. Divergers will enjoy the group events and being personally involved within each activity and lesson. Assimilators like solving problems so looking for answers in the scavenger hunt and learning to successfully navigate the city will appeal to those learners. One type of activity Convergers prefer is those involving trial and error. Making mistakes along the way to successfully figuring out the public transportation system will align with Convergers' interests. Accommodators like working in groups and partaking in group discussions. Each activity ends with a period of discussion where the group reflects on what they did and what they learned, making this part of the academic plan a perfect match for this style of learner.

Out of all of the semester programs currently offered, the Australia programs are the only ones with an orientation not planned by the organization, although the country is not the only one where there are multiple semester programs taking place. Italy has four programs; two in Rome, one in Florence, and one in Perugia. The orientation takes place in Rome, where students get to know the site director Romina, the area, and students from the other Italy programs. After their time in Rome, the students continue on to their host location and undergo an orientation organized by the host university. Romina remains in Rome, but is on hand for additional activities throughout the semester for all of the programs and is prepared to visit the other locations in case of an emergency. The orientation in Rome allows for the students to become acquainted with each other; the hope is these students will bond and make friendships which last throughout the orientation and semester. The success of the multi-program orientation in Italy

demonstrates a multi-program onsite orientation can be successfully implemented within Australia.

For six weeks during the summer I worked with two groups of students in Edinburgh, Scotland. None of the students had been there before. I planned and ran both of the onsite orientations and implemented various activities loosely modeled on the La Vida Local curriculum. The first group from Minnesota did a scavenger hunt around Edinburgh, went on a ghost tour, and participated in a photo contest and virtual suitcase activity (writing down a memory or something they would want to bring home on a postcard which is later mailed home). The second group from Texas only participated in the ghost tour and virtual suitcase activity. Of the activities used, I created the scavenger hunt clues, and adapted the photo contest (made it specific to Edinburgh) and the virtual suitcase activities (changed it to a postcard which was mailed home). For the ghost tours, I researched the companies and read reviews to find the best options for students based on package price and where the tours went. I had planned to do all activities with both groups however the Texas faculty member did not see the value in the scavenger hunt or photo contest.

I noticed differences between the groups by the end of their time in Scotland: Minnesota students could navigate with ease around the city without getting lost, while the Texas students were constantly arriving late to destinations, getting lost, and calling me for directions. I would attribute a large portion of the inability to navigate to not having participated in the activity and needing to find their way. The ghost tours were popular with both groups; most of the students remarked how they learned more about Edinburgh than they would have by reading history books. Both groups were happy with the postcards as well, and I have spoken with students who said it brightened their day to receive the postcard weeks after returning home. Watching the

students go through my activities and seeing and hearing their reactions to them had a direct influence in the type of activities I wanted to use in my orientation program in Sydney.

During college I spent a semester studying abroad in Auckland, New Zealand. As a direct enroll student, I did not have a site director or support person on the ground in New Zealand. I did not know any of the orientation, academic, or housing details before I arrived, and I was disappointed to find my advisor and the emergency contact person were on vacation the week I arrived in Auckland meaning I had no one to answer my questions. Not having any support really affected my experience and I can still remember the feeling of abandonment by my school. This experience showed me the value in having a support person on the ground who is always available for guidance and answering questions.

Unlike my experience in Auckland, there will be a site director for students studying in Australia. The site director will lead the orientation while acting as a support person for the participants. He will take Baxter Magolda's metaphorical backseat on the tandem bicycle by supporting students from the guidelines as they participate in the activities, learn about Australian culture, and explore Sydney. The site director will meet students at the airport and will stay with them throughout the orientation and the remainder of the semester. The only students participating in this program are CISabroad students, meaning they will have sole access to the site director and will get to know other CISabroad students rather than being lost in the crowd in the Globalinks orientation. Following each custom-designed activity, the site director will facilitate a question and answer session intended to get students reflecting on their experiences and what they have learned so far. This support system allows students to build their confidence in voicing their opinions and reflections within a new group.

My favorite class in Auckland was called Kapa Haka, which taught students the history of the Maori people, their traditions, stories, dances, parts of the language, and explained the importance of family. Each week the Maori professors taught us a new facet of the culture, how to pronounce more Maori words, and towards the middle of the semester we began learning the songs, movements to an action dance, the words to a haka (like those performed by the All Blacks national rugby team), and constructed our own poi balls and learned a choreographed routine using them. We performed at the end of the class for family and friends and demonstrated how much we learned in a final exam. This is one of my most prized memories of my entire experience because I knew nothing of the Maori people before going to New Zealand and enrolling in this class. I was able to understand much more about the culture and made the effort to learn more about the Maori culture outside the class. My experience with the professors showed me the importance of learning directly from the source (indigenous people). Even if the lesson is short, I believe more can be gained from the cultural experience if the teacher is part of the culture. This experience inspired me to find a traditional aboriginal excursion for students in *Exploring Sydney*.

Once in Auckland, I knew I wanted to visit Sydney and considered visiting Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef as well. After finding out how much plane tickets and hostel rooms cost for a three-day visit (about 600 dollars in the spring of 2009 not including food or excursions), I decided to stay in Sydney at the Sydney Central youth hostel (about 200 dollars for a five-day stay with food), and explore the city on my own. I went to the various areas of the city, saw popular sites like the Opera House, and learned about Australian history and culture through visits to the museums and the tours. The knowledge I gained in Sydney during my visit years ago sparked my interest in creating a new orientation program there. I drew on my experiences in

Sydney and in Edinburgh to create a brand new orientation program which allows students to learn about Australian history through guided tours and a scavenger hunt, to learn about the Aboriginal people through a tribal cruise, to have the chance to see Australian wildlife up close, and to have fun exploring Sydney through the activities and on their own, all while supported by the site director.

Sydney is a prime location for the Australia orientation because most of the students will fly into Sydney and then travel on to their next location, which will keep the value and overall cost low. Since Sydney is the oldest city in Australia, established in 1788 (Sydney, 2012), it will give students one of the best chances to learn about the history of the country and its inhabitants, which ties in learning about the local culture. As an historical hub of Australia, Sydney offers visitors the chance to see buildings that date back from all periods in Australian history, such as the Rocks with its nineteenth-century warehouses or Sydney's Darling Harbour which was re-invented in the late twentieth century. Students can walk around the various neighborhoods in Sydney and see remnants of and hear stories of what life was like through the ages from the guides. In addition, they can learn about the Aboriginal people through museums, like the Australian Museum, and cultural shows like on the tribal cruise.

I know Sydney is only one part of the country and may not accurately reflect the whole population of Australia; it is my opinion the city offers students the best chance to get an overview of the whole history of the country. This opinion was formed based on my experiences in the city and my research into the areas and tours of Sydney. Knowing Sydney is a travel hub for visitors heading to other parts of the country makes it a great choice too. While the entire group will not remain together for the semester, the new orientation program enables students to make connections with other participants and the site director, meaning they will have friends to

visit and places to stay should they wish to take a vacation from their host location. Students will be supported throughout the four days by the CISabroad site director who will lead the dinners and guided tours, and will put the custom-designed activities into motion. By the end of the program, students will save a sizable amount of money from the change in location, will learn about the history of Australia and the people through the activities and excursions, and will connect and build trust with the site director and other students which will last throughout the remainder of the program.

Goals and Objectives

Program Goals:

- To implement a new onsite orientation in Sydney, Australia for CISabroad students spending the semester studying in Australia
- To promote understanding of Australian culture
- To prepare students for life in a different culture from the one they are used to
- To encourage students to learn more about Aboriginal history, traditions, and the people
- To build trust between the site director and the students

Program Objectives:

- To provide opportunities for students to reflect on their experiences
- To provide experiential learning opportunities for students to learn more about Australian culture and history
- To give students the opportunity to bond with the site director and other students through structured activities

Participant Goals:

- To complete all of the orientation activities

- To gain a deeper understanding of Australian and Aboriginal culture
- To build confidence in using the public transportation system
- To explore the popular sites in Sydney
- To meet and become familiar with other program participants and the site director

Participant Objectives:

- To participate in an authentic Aboriginal event
- To complete a custom-designed scavenger hunt
- To learn about the city through guided walking tours
- To go through the orientation activities with all program participants

Program Description

Program Scope

The Sydney, Australia-based onsite orientation is an orientation program for students participating in any of the five Australia semester programs currently offered by CISabroad. This program is designed for undergraduate level students who are spending either the semester or a full year abroad in Australia away from their home school in the United States or Canada. The students are usually between the ages 18 and 22 although some may be non-traditional students. The student population varies across geographical areas, religious affiliation, socioeconomic statuses, and racial and ethnic backgrounds. The undergraduate home institutions range in size, whether it is a public or private school, religiously affiliated, based in the city or rural areas. All of the students will fly into Sydney from their homes, spend four days going through the orientation program, and then travel on to the town where their host school of choice is located, either by plane or train. The orientation location is merely a stepping stone for the students who study at La Trobe University in Bendigo or Melbourne, Bond University in the

Gold Coast, or the University of Newcastle in Newcastle, while giving those students remaining to study at Macquarie University in Sydney an extended welcome to their host location.

Students will stay in rooms at the Sydney Central YHA (Youth Hostel Associations). The orientation activities take place both at the YHA and throughout the city, and students will have free time to explore on their own.

Timeline

Designing and implementing the orientation began in July 2012 and will be put in place in time for the spring 2013 semester students going to Australia. The Australia site director who will run the program was hired in the summer of 2012, lives in Newcastle, Australia, and knows the area well, allowing for easy implementation of the pre-designed activities. Following the orientation, the site director will fill out an evaluation for the program and record which activities worked and which did not, if the location and housing were suitable, and what he would like to change for the future. The students will assess the orientation during their evaluation at the end of the program. After receiving the evaluations from the site director and the students, the Australia Program Coordinator at CISabroad will read the comments and criticisms and make adjustments accordingly.

Academic Plan

Globalinks versus Exploring Sydney

The six-day Globalinks Australia orientation included a day trip to the Great Barrier Reef for snorkeling and scuba diving, a visit to a nature park for a rainforest tour, a traditional Aussie barbecue, an introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, a chance to see

Australian wildlife up close, an excursion to interact with the local Cairns community, and free time to explore Cairns on their own. There was no student support from the Globalinks site director who was concerned more with his own students than with the CISabroad students. Overall, this orientation program added on an approximate 1,000 dollars to the price tag for students, which was from airfare, food, and additional excursions. Some of this 1,000 dollars was rolled into the cost of the overall cost of the program fee (such as the housing and excursions) while the additional airfare costs came directly out of the students' pockets.

Exploring Sydney is a four-day orientation set in Sydney, one of the country's major transportation hubs unlike Cairns. This program will offer students a city walking tour, a ghost tour, and a scavenger hunt to teach them about the history of the country and of Sydney, and will also acquaint students with Sydney's roads. Instead of simply eating a traditional Aussie barbecue, students will sample traditional Aussie cuisine at the welcome dinner and will later prepare, cook, and eat several Australian dishes. Rather than only receive an introduction to Aboriginal culture, the group will learn from Aboriginal guides about six different Aboriginal groups of people, the Aboriginal names and meanings of significant landmarks in Sydney, traditional food gathering and fishing techniques, and they will visit Clark Island, which is part of the Sydney Harbor National Park, and are treated to an authentic Aboriginal cultural performance. For those students who want to see Australian wildlife, there is a trip to Taronga Zoo where visitors are able to walk amongst the animals and birds, and the site director will arrange a close encounter with one of the animals. Students will have free time to explore the city on their own. Activities will happen all four days of the orientation culminating in a farewell group dinner in the Sydney Tower restaurant which provides students with a delicious

meal as well as stunning views of the city skyline to have as a memento after they leave. (For a full comparison chart between the two programs see Appendix D).

Day 1

The beginning of the orientation will start with pick-up at the airport. All of the students will be told what day to arrive in Sydney and a timeframe within which to arrive. The site director will meet the students at the airport and bring them back to the Sydney Central YHA via a chartered bus. Once there, the group will check in, move their luggage into their rooms, and take a brief tour around the facilities. After checking in and the tour, the group will convene in one of the meeting rooms for the “arrival and survival” section of the orientation where the site director will hand out maps with areas like the hostel, train and bus stations, and supermarkets marked on them. The site director will stress the importance of remembering Australians drive and walk on the opposite side of the road of those in North America. Students will see this by either walking around the city or through the public transportation system. For some of the students, this may be their first experience using public buses, trains, or ferries. Learning how to use and becoming comfortable with this system will give students valuable knowledge and confidence to use any of the other public transportation systems in Australia, back home, or around the world. Lunch will be provided for the students at the start of the session.

The accommodation and general orientation sessions will go over the material the students learned in the online pre-departure orientation and will present new information. The site director will go over: the rules of conduct in both the program and the housing, highlighting respect for the property, the site director, and other participants; electricity and power voltage, and which plug adapters and converters are used for which items; banking (how ATMs work,

show what the currency looks like); where to buy phones and how to dial within Australia and how to call home; how to use the internet in the hostel; where to buy clothes and other supplies that may be needed; methods of public transportation, where to find bus and train stops, and reminding them to look both ways as Australians drive on the opposite side of the road; health and safety (do not walk alone, take taxis at night, “if you drink, be smart,” watch out for pickpocketing, try not to act like a tourist); and emergency and crisis management (where the embassy is, make sure everyone has the emergency contact cards and insurance cards, where to go in the event of a fire or other emergency). This session will give the students relevant information they need to understand their new location and to function on a basic level as they explore Sydney.

This information is not only pertinent to the four days students will spend in Sydney; the students will take the information learned here and will apply it to the rest of their semester living in Australia. Banking, electricity, public transportation, and health and safety tips will be just as helpful in any of the other four locations in Australia as they are in Sydney. The last of the four sessions which should be included is the academics orientation. The site director will briefly talk about academics, but the real academic orientation will come when students partake in the host university’s orientation.

One other piece covered in the general information session will be the photo contest, which is designed to give students a chance to see Australia in a different light while possibly winning a cultural prize at the end chosen by the site director. There are four categories: best photo showing Australian culture, best group photo, best landscape photo, and best overall. The first three will be determined by the site director and the best overall photo will be chosen by the group (Appendix E). The photo contest is a way to inspire the students to explore different

aspects of Sydney while bonding with other participants through taking and sharing of the photos.

Following the information session, the site director will go over the program itinerary for the next four days, stressing the times of the mandatory events, the importance of being there on time, as well as showing up to and completing all of the events. Each of the students will receive a copy of the itinerary (Appendix F). The site director will post any changes on a notice board in the accommodations. Then the group will go to a phone store for those who want to buy phones or purchase SIM cards for their phones.

After the visit to the phone store, they will begin a walking tour which covers important areas of Sydney. In the guided walking tour, students will walk the route of Sydney's earliest settlers, convicts, sailors, soldiers, and whalers, learn about the ancient maritime and industrial histories, and explore industrial parts of the city which are now the Spanish Quarter and Chinatown. The tour will also include visits to sites around the city where women and girls lived and worked, held activist meetings, published journals, and worked towards expanding the possibilities available to women in Sydney. The tour will allow students to begin becoming familiar with the new location. The knowledge of the city formed through the walking tour will provide the foundation for the knowledge they will develop with each of the additional activities. The walking tour will end at a local restaurant where the students will have the chance to sample some traditional Australian cuisine, such as kangaroo or crocodile.

Day 2

The second day of orientation will begin with an all-day scavenger hunt. The hunt will bring students around Sydney in groups and will require them to write down answers to the

questions and take photographs of themselves in front of certain landmarks and popular sites (Appendix G). Scavenger hunt clues will bring students to popular museums like the Justice and Police museum which details Sydney's legal history and the Australian Museum, home of the largest gold nugget found in Australia. Students interested in knowing more about religion in Australia will enjoy visiting St. Andrew's Cathedral where visitors can see relics from the sixteenth century and stones from sites across London. History can be found in other sites such as the Harbor Bridge, which provided 14,000 jobs to workers during the depression, and Cadman's Cottage, which is the oldest surviving residence in Sydney and was the home of Elizabeth Cadman who is believed to be the first woman in New South Wales to vote. This activity will allow the students to become familiar with the public transportation system on their own and with asking the Australian people for directions or assistance. The students will have been introduced to the area the day before on the walking tour with the site director and now they can build upon that knowledge by adding their own experiences to the mix.

The students will have the added responsibility of making it to the Eastern Pontoon ferry dock in Circular Quay by 12:30pm for an Authentic Aboriginal Cruise from 1-3pm (Appendix H). This cruise will give students the opportunity to hear the stories on the Cadigal, Eora, Gammaraigal, Guringai, Wallumedegal, and Wangai people of Australia, in addition to learning the Aboriginal names and the meanings of several significant Sydney landmarks which gives insight into understanding some of the native language. The cruise is a journey from pre-white settlements through to the coastal lifestyle of the Aboriginal people, complete with traditional fishing methods and techniques for gathering food. The students will learn all of these directly from the aboriginal people that host the cruise, while having the opportunity to witness an authentic cultural performance. During the cruise, the students will also visit Clark Island, part

of Sydney Harbor National Park which was once a vegetable garden but now offers visitors relaxing picnic spots and walkways through the natural bush. Having an activity geared towards learning about and understanding the native people may inspire students to learn more about the people on their own following the orientation. After the cruise, the students will continue to work on finding the answers to the scavenger hunt. The group with the most points from correct answers and photos from the scavenger hunt will win a cultural prize chosen by the site director.

After dinner on their own, the group will head to a ghost tour of The Rocks. The group will follow the Ghost Host around the area and listen to stories of suicide, murder, hangings, ghosts, and hauntings while exploring “the hidden areas of the birthplace of Australia” (The Rocks Ghost Tours, 2012). This experience will be a fun and exciting way for students to increase their knowledge of the area and the history of Sydney, however those students who prefer not to partake in the experience can pass.

Day 3

Students will spend the morning and early afternoon at the Taronga Zoo, a 12 minute ferry ride from Sydney city center. Students will explore the zoo in one group (30 students per semester on average), making sure the group see the animals they are interested in. At the zoo, as well as the usual animals such as elephants, tigers, lions, and penguins, students can also view Australian birds like the Kookaburra, as well as kangaroos, meerkats, platypus, red pandas, tapirs, Tasmanian devils, koalas, and wombats, among others. The site director will book animal encounters for the group, which involves getting up close and personal to a reptile, owl, giraffe, or koala (whichever is the first choice). Taronga Zoo requires these encounters be booked upon arrival, which means the animal the students view will depend upon other zoo patron interest.

Being at the zoo, reading the signs and seeing the animals will allow students to learn about animals native to Australia and those from around the world. The students will have the chance to learn koalas are not sleepy but are actually drunk on eucalyptus or that platypuses are poisonous.

The second activity of the day will be a market visit and cooking class. The students will be split into groups and handed a list of several ingredients to famous Australian dishes. The goal is to go out, find the ingredients, purchase them (with money from the site director), and find their way back to the hostel with the ingredients. After returning with all of the ingredients, the students will work together to prepare and cook the food and then sit down to eat it together. The site director will provide a salad while the students make an Australian Meat Pie and Anzac Biscuits (Appendices I and J). Food allergies and preferences will be taken into consideration when assigning recipes; vegetarian students may prefer an Asian Vegetable Stir-Fry dish or a Barbecued Sweet Potato, Corn, and Haloumi Salad for example (Appendices K and L). Other allergies or preferences will be looked at on a case-by-case basis.

Trying Australian dishes will give students insight into food culture in Sydney. They will prepare their own meals which, for some students, may be the first time they have ever cooked anything, giving them valuable life skills they will need for the remainder of the semester and throughout life. This exercise will build on the students' prior knowledge of the city and markets, while teaching the students how to prepare an Australian dish. The practice of tasting Australian food for the first time becomes an experiential learning experience as the students buy the ingredients, make the food, and try it together as a group. Each student will learn about the process together and will have this memory and experience for the rest of their time. Students

can bring their new knowledge and skills on to their next location and can bring it home to family and friends who were not able to directly share in the students' experiences abroad.

Day 4

The last full day of the orientation will include free time in the morning, with suggested activities like a trip to one of the many beaches such as Bondi or Manly Beach, or a trip to the Australian Museum. The site director will give the students directions and guidance for getting to those suggested sites. During the afternoon there will be a trip to the Sydney Tower which gives students a great view of the city from its observation deck and offers visitors a virtual 4D experience. The 4D Cinema Experience will increase the students' knowledge of Sydney's history by showing footage of the harbor, the coastline, famous landmarks, and other major events integral to Sydney's history, while incorporating physical effects into the event as well. The farewell dinner will follow the exploration of the tower and will take place in the revolving restaurant in the tower, which gives the students spectacular 360 degree views of the city.

After the dinner, the students will return to the hostel and meet in one of the conference rooms. There the site director will announce the winners of the first three categories of the photo contest (from Day 1), and will show the options for Best Photo. The students will vote on the winner and the site director will hand out the prizes. The photo contest is a way to tie in one of the stages of experiential learning; taking the photos and sharing them amongst the students is reflective observation (Brockinton, Hoffa, & Martin, 2005).

The last activity of the orientation will be the "virtual suitcase." The site director will purchase a postcard for all of the students and will give them out after the photo contest. On the postcards, the students will write down one of two things: something they would want to take

back with them (like a siesta from Spain for example), or something they want to remember about their experience in Sydney. The site director will hold on to those postcards and will mail them to the students following the end of the semester program, giving them a nice surprise and reminder of their time abroad in Sydney. The site director will then go over departure details with the students for the following day, which includes returning their linen and keys, and the times everyone is leaving for the airport or train station. The students will be on their own in terms of organizing their mode of transportation to the next location, but the site director will be available for questions throughout the four days of the orientation.

Staffing Plan

Students have access to a large number of staff while in Sydney. Their main point of support and connection onsite is the Australian site director. The site director will live in the same hostel with the group and will work with the students during the entire orientation. He will be responsible for providing students with information about the host culture, health and safety, and housing. His duties will also include coordinating all of the pre-designed activities to be completed during the orientation. Following the orientation, the site director will return to his home in Newcastle where he will remain on call for any emergencies which may arise in any of the five locations, and will answer any questions or address any possible issues the students may have. Unlike the Globalinks orientation, students will have on the ground support throughout the entire orientation. Students will also have access to the Australia Program Coordinator in Northampton, MA and their own advisor at their home institution.

Program Marketing

The onsite orientation will have several forms of marketing materials. A new catalog is published every year, with pages devoted to each of the organization's semester and summer abroad programs and internships. Each page lists cost, what's included in that cost, housing options, and highlights about that location, including the onsite orientation. Previously the catalogs marketed the Globalinks program as the orientation program. With the creation of the new Sydney-based orientation, the Australia pages will be updated to reflect the change.

The second piece of marketing is the CISabroad website, which is listed on all of the business cards carried by staff members, on the front of the catalogs, and is at the bottom of all print materials. Each page within the catalog lists the program-specific website address on the bottom of the page (for example, www.cisabroad.com/sydneysemester for the Semester in Sydney program). The Australia program webpages will have specific details of *Exploring Sydney*, including excursions and housing. The website can be found through other sites like facebook.com, goabroad.com, ratemystudyabroad.com, abroad101.com, on a number of the study abroad sites of the schools CISabroad works with, on the twitter page, on the Pinterest page, and the CISabroad blog. The social media sites will help promote the orientation through posts by program administrators. In addition to the print and online materials, the website can be found on the company's pens, boxes of mints, magnets, and carabiners.

CISabroad contributes to other websites in addition to the home site. These websites are devoted to study abroad and to helping students choose the best program for them through reviews; these include abroad101.com and goabroad.com among others. Questions will prompt students to write about their experiences on the orientation program and these responses will be shared in the online reviews.

The last piece of marketing will be an *Exploring Sydney* promotional flyer. Each University Relations Representative will post the flyer on their table during fairs and visits and will speak about the program with advisors and students. The flyer will offer details about the program, including examples of excursions and activities and photos of the city (Appendix M).

Student Recruitment and Admissions

The student recruitment process is for the whole semester program, not just the *Exploring Sydney* orientation. The process begins with the marketing materials that are displayed on campuses throughout the United States and Canada. A number of print materials, including catalogs, are sent to international programs offices and are displayed throughout the campuses. When students interested in Australia meet with study abroad advisors, they are able to talk about the programs and the Sydney orientation, and can answer student questions.

As for direct student recruitment, CISabroad utilizes two methods: campus representatives and university relations (UR) representatives. Campus representatives are program alumni who have enjoyed their time abroad and want to speak about it with other interested students and assist with study abroad events. Future campus representatives who studied in Australia will be able to speak about the Sydney orientation and can answer student questions. The other method is the UR representatives who each have a region of states and a number of schools they work with to promote study abroad. They will speak directly with students and advisors at the school and will recruit students to participate in Australia semester programs.

Representatives at the schools will have sign-up sheets for interested students who want more information. The names will be scanned and sent to a team in the Philippines who will enter the names into the database. Student advisors will call or email every student who enters

into the system. Those students who have questions about Australia programs will be able to ask the advisor any questions; the advisor will answer their questions and speak about the orientation program in Sydney. The advisor will know explicit details of the information covered in the orientation sessions, the activities, the excursions, housing, and the site director, thereby alleviating any concerns expressed by the students. Once Australia students feel they are ready, they will be encouraged to apply to one of the programs.

After submitting the application, the advisor will transfer the student over to the Australia Program Coordinator who will answer any additional program-specific questions the student may have. Their role is to support the student during the admissions process, while working to ensure the student remains in the program rather than withdraw. Once the student is accepted, the Coordinator will connect the student to the site director, who will welcome the student to the program and give them further details about life in Australia and the orientation. These four areas work together to recruit and accept students into the program. They will all have extensive knowledge of the orientation program and will speak with interested students about its activities and opportunities.

Logistics

There are a number of logistics to consider when designing the Australia onsite orientation. These include pre-arrival information, transportation, housing, disability access, phones and internet access, food and clothing, and insurance. In addition to the pre-departure orientation, the students will have access to their MyCISabroad.net account which is a place where they can find additional information, chat with other students, and ask questions. Students will be given their ID and password information after being accepted into the program and can use the account before departure and while in the host country.

Pre-Departure Orientation

Each of the students will go through a pre-departure orientation prior to departing for Australia. Since students come from all over the United States and Canada, it will be necessary to provide an online orientation which consists of both general and country-specific information in a mixture of audio and video clips. There are three modules students will need to complete. Each module will present information to the students, has a quiz where the student needs to score 80 percent or higher to move on, and then has a mandatory web form the student will need to fill out. The information material will cover topics such as who the site director is, housing options, visa and passport information, health and safety information, what to pack, electricity currents, plug adaptors and converters, banking and money, exchange rates, ways to stay connected with family and friends back home, how to register with the state department, emergency contact information, airport pick-up details, and pre-arrival instructions. In addition, the online pre-departure orientation will give students information regarding culture shock, what it is, and advice on how to manage it, and reverse culture shock when returning home.

Transportation (International, In-Country)

Students will be responsible for booking their own flights into the Sydney International Airport from their home location, and will be told when and where to arrive and will have the contact information for STA Travel, a discount travel agency. Students will be able to book flights either through the CISabroad representative at STA Travel or on their own. Once in Sydney, students will use a combination of buses and ferries to travel around the city. These passes will be included in the program cost. Following the orientation, students will need to

secure their own transportation to their next destination, whether it is flying to Bendigo, Melbourne, or the Gold Coast, or taking a train up to Newcastle.

Housing

Once students arrive in Sydney, they will stay at the Sydney Central YHA, which is a 5-star Backpacker Hostel opposite Central Station (YHA Australia, 2012). The students will live in shared rooms with shared bathrooms. Sydney Central YHA offers groups the use of meeting and conference facilities, lockers in all of the rooms, key cards for security, TV lounges, barbecue areas, a games area, laundry facilities, a cinema room, a roof top balcony, and free luggage storage. Rooms will come with all bedding (sheets and pillows) and towels are provided for one Australian dollar. The hostel is located close to a bus terminal, a train station, and is six miles from the nearest airport. Students will be able to explore the city as the hostel is a short walk from Darling Harbour and is close to swimming sites, shopping galleries, and museums.

Disability Access

There are a number of resources available for students with physical disabilities. The Sydney Central YHA offers accommodations for those students, which will be reserved if needed. The Central Business District (CBD) also offers access for people with disabilities. If a participant has a physical disability, the site director will provide the student with information regarding accessible transportation, Sydney CBD access maps, and additional sources of information (Appendix N).

Students will be asked to fill out a medical form prior to arriving in the host country. This form asks students if they have any health concerns, but if the student chooses not to

disclose that information, the site director and program staff are not aware of their situation. If a student mentions they have a disability, the site director will find available resources for the student.

Phones/Internet

Students will be given several options for phone plans during the online pre-departure module two. The first is ordering a free PicCell international phone prior to departure. This is an option for which CISabroad makes arrangements for, however it is not intended for regular use to call friends and family back home as it can be very expensive. Students will be responsible for getting the phone and paying for the calls themselves. A second option for students will be to use their own phone but purchase an international SIM card after arriving in the host country. For this option, students will need to check with their phone providers to see if this option is possible. The third option will be to purchase a cell phone in Australia and “top-up” (add minutes or credit to the account) when needed. If students choose options two or three, there are providers, such as Vodafone, located throughout the country who will assist students with finding the best option for the entire semester, not just the orientation. Students will have internet access at the Sydney Central YHA.

Food/Clothing/Supplies

The students will need to purchase some of their own meals throughout the program. The YHA offers guests a continental breakfast for the group, and the site director will arrange a welcome dinner, a farewell dinner, and a dinner the students will prepare and eat together. The hostel has a café located within the building, a bar in the basement, and a mini supermarket next

to the hostel for those students that want to try the local cuisine or need a snack. Students will find a number of cafés, restaurants, and bars located within the Sydney CBD. If students need to buy clothes or other supplies, there are numerous stores and pharmacies located within a short distance from the hostel.

Insurance

Students will receive a comprehensive medical insurance package as part of the total program fee. The plan is administered by Cultural Insurance Services International (CISI) and includes medical and accident insurance. The students will need to pay for services up front for doctor's visits and minor fees, and then submit a claim to be reimbursed with the receipts from the visit. If a student were to break a bone or have more serious medical concerns, they will contact the site director who will contact the insurance provider on the student's behalf and work with them on making payments and getting medical attention. The students will receive information on coverage and submitting claims instructions in their program acceptance packet.

Health and Safety Plan

The health and safety of the students participating in *Exploring Sydney* is very important to program organizers, and carries throughout the orientation as well as the whole semester program. Safety precautions will begin with the online pre-departure orientation. Information regarding passports, visas, and general health and safety information will be given in module one. Students will also be given the Center for Disease Control website, details on what items to bring with them (like prescriptions), and reminders to not walk or take the bus alone, watch out for pickpockets, keep your passport safe, independent travel is at their own risk, and problems

stemming from excessive alcohol use is not condoned and problems with alcohol may be grounds for being sent home.

Module two will present students with information regarding the comprehensive CISI medical and accident insurance package that is included within their program fee (this has been discussed in the Logistics section). The students will be required to fill out the online health form, which asks students seven “yes” or “no” questions and leaves space for explaining why a student selected “yes” (Appendix O). The program advisors will look at the students’ health forms and follow up with students when necessary.

Module three will give students emergency contact details for the site director, host school specific staff (members of the international student office, security staff), CISabroad staff in the Northampton, Massachusetts office, and the phone number and address of the United States Embassy. Students will be given details about how to register with the state department prior to departure. Module three will also cover culture shock; it defines what culture shock is, lists the five stages, gives strategies for dealing with it, and also introduces the concept of reverse culture shock and how to deal with it when returning home.

Once students are in Sydney, the site director will hold a session where he will go over the information students learned during the pre-departure, while supplementing that with new knowledge specifically about the location. The site director will reiterate the importance of being vigilant, not walking alone, remembering that drivers drive on the opposite side of the road in Australia. The site director will be on hand throughout the four days to assist with any problems the students have, including medical queries, emergencies, and health issues. If students have problems post-orientation, they will be encouraged to speak with the staff at the host school, but will also contact the site director to keep him aware of the situation.

Crisis Management Plan

CISabroad has a crisis management team that is set up to handle any crises which emerge. This team is made up of the Executive Director, the Program Manager, and the Director of University Relations. The current crisis management plan has three sections: major crises (natural disasters, terrorism, war, and political emergencies); individual crises (life threatening accidents or illnesses, arrest of a student, death of a student, missing student, and crimes against a student like rape, assault, or mugging); and crises within the United States (events happening within the United States that do not have a direct physical threat to the students).

If a major crisis occurs, there is a protocol for both the in-country response from the site director and for the CISabroad Northampton-based crisis management team. Regardless of where the emergency begins, the “control center” is in Northampton, where the team determines the next steps in dealing with the crisis, whether it is continuing the program, suspending the program, canceling the program all together or evacuating students from the location. After the crisis, the team follows up with the students (referring them to a psychologist if necessary), follows up with the home university to explain the situation, and writes a report about what happened.

Each of the sections listed under individual crises has their own protocol to complete, which involves some combination of taking care of the student, conversing with necessary local officials, notifying the CISabroad office, speaking with the home university, talking to the student’s emergency contacts, and filing a report. As for crises within the United States, there are two categories: major and individual. In the event of a major crisis, the site director notifies all of the participants after consulting with the United States Embassy, the Northampton office consults with affected emergency contacts if necessary, and counseling is set up if needed. If an

individual crisis happens in the United States or Canada, CISabroad attempts to contact the student as soon as possible, work with the student if they feel they need to return home, or provide counseling and ensuring communication remains open should the student decide to remain in the host country. Regardless of the type of crisis, every step of the process is documented and kept on record. This crisis management plan is used during the Australia onsite orientation but also applies to the remainder of the program abroad.

Budget

EXPENSES	Fixed Costs		Variable Costs				Totals
	Costs	Units	Cost	Units	Quantity	Total	
ACCOMMODATIONS & MEALS							
Sydney Central YHA (4 Nights)			\$28.50	Per Student	30	\$855.00	\$3,420.00
Sydney Central YHA (4 Nights)	\$90.00	1					\$360.00
Conference Room	\$80.00	1					\$80.00
Welcome Dinner			\$20.00	Per Person	31	\$620.00	\$620.00
Breakfast (4 Days)			\$5.00	Per Person	31	\$155.00	\$620.00
Farewell Dinner			\$90.00	Per Person	31	\$2,790.00	\$2,790.00
SUBTOTAL							\$7,890.00
EXCURSIONS							
Aboriginal Cruise (Concession)			\$45.00	Per Student	30	\$1,350.00	\$1,350.00
Aboriginal Cruise (Adult Price)	\$60.00	1					\$60.00
The Rocks Ghost Tour			\$45.00	Per Person	31	\$1,395.00	\$1,395.00
Taronga Zoo Entry Fee (Concession)			\$31.50	Per Student	30	\$945.00	\$945.00
Taronga Zoo Entry Fee (Adult Price)	\$44.00	1					\$44.00
Taronga Zoo Close Encounters Fee			\$24.95	Per Person	31	\$773.45	\$773.45
Market/Cooking Supplies	\$250.00	1					\$250.00
Sydney Tower			\$17.50	Per Person	31	\$542.50	\$542.50
SUBTOTAL							\$5,359.95
TRANSPORTATION							
Airport Bus	\$10.00	1					\$10.00
3 Days Bus/Ferry Passes (Concession)			\$10.50	Per Student	30	\$315.00	\$945.00
3 Days Bus/Ferry Passes (Adult Price)	\$21.00	1					\$63
SUBTOTAL							\$1,018
TOTAL EXPENSES							\$14,267.95
							\$475.60

ASSUMPTIONS	
Participants	30
Staff Members	1
Nights	4
Days	4

The *Exploring Sydney* onsite orientation cost is included within the total program cost for each Australia semester program. The orientation budget includes four nights of housing, breakfast for four days, three group dinners, six excursions, and bus and ferry transportation costs for both the students and the site director. The total cost for the orientation is 14,268 dollars which results in a charge of 476 dollars per student added into the semester program fee. This price does not include the flight for students going to Bendigo, Melbourne, or the Gold Coast from Sydney (around 90 dollars through Qantas.com as of October 8, 2012). Newcastle students will be able to take a seven dollar train ride up the coast from Sydney. In addition to the transportation, the students will need to buy three lunches and one dinner on their own (estimated cost is 15 dollars per meal). The approximate out of pocket cost for students on *Exploring Sydney* will be 150 dollars for students going to Bendigo, the Gold Coast, or Melbourne; 70 dollars for students going to Newcastle; and 60 dollars for students staying in Sydney.

The Globalinks orientation added approximately 1,000 dollars to the total program cost for students. The price charged for the orientation did not include any meals, did not include the two additional flights, and had students spend two more days and nights in Cairns than they would with *Exploring Sydney*. The housing and excursions were built into the program fee; however students paid out of pocket for their meals, airfare, and any additional excursions they wanted. If students had three meals a day for all six days, they spent an average of 270 dollars on food (estimate 15 dollars per meal). The average cost of a plane ticket from Sydney to Cairns is 245 dollars. Average plane tickets from Cairns to the Gold Coast cost 170 dollars and from Cairns to Melbourne, Sydney, Bendigo, and Newcastle cost 300 dollars (as of October 8, 2012 on Qantas.com). The students on the Globalinks orientation paid a total of 685 to 815 dollars out

of their own pockets, with financial aid or their home school paying the price of the orientation program.

The total approximate program cost of *Exploring Sydney* is 536 to 626 dollars, depending on the eventual program destination. With the *Exploring Sydney* program, a majority of the orientation cost (476 dollars) is included within the total program fee and will be covered by financial aid payments or payments made by the home school. Students will need to pay between 60 and 150 dollars out of their own pockets for food and transportation. With Globalinks, a small part of the cost was rolled into the total program cost, with students needing to pay 685 to 815 dollars on their own. The exact cost of the Globalinks orientation included within the program fee is unknown. By looking at only approximate out of pocket costs of the two orientations, the students will save anywhere from 535 to 750 dollars with *Exploring Sydney*, making it a more affordable option for students and a better fit with the CISabroad guarantee.

Evaluation Plan

CISabroad has an evaluation plan put in place for the students, one that will take into account the new Australia orientation. Once they complete the program, students will be required to fill out and submit an evaluation on the Rate My Study Abroad website. Rate My Study Abroad is a site where students can rate and review their study abroad programs and it is one of the biggest sources of peer-reviewed study abroad programs. The evaluation will ask students to rate a number of program sections including: academics, program administration, living situation, cultural immersion, safety, food, social life, and health service. Each of those sections will ask students to provide further comments on why the students gave that rating or any advice for future students regarding that section.

Right now, there is no section specifically for onsite orientation. With the new Australia orientation, a section titled “onsite orientation” will be included and will ask students to elaborate on the orientation housing, the activities, the level of cultural immersion and how much they learned about the host culture, the site director, and anything they liked and what they would like to change. Since the students will be required to participate in all of the activities (except for the ghost tour if students are scared), this will be a great way to monitor what works and what does not work based on student thoughts, while ensuring the program remains fresh, fun, and a worthy educational experience.

The second form of evaluation will come from the site director. Following the end of the onsite orientation, the site director will submit an evaluation similar to what the students are asked to do. Rather than being an online form on a third-party website, the Assistant Program Director at CISabroad will send the Australia site director a link to an online Wufoo form, which is an internet application that assists users with creating online forms. This Wufoo form will have questions about housing, the planned activities, and ease of communication between the site director and staff at CISabroad, as well as a place for them to write down additional comments and concerns. The site director will complete an evaluation at the end of every onsite orientation period to ensure the best orientation programming continues to be developed and put into place.

A third possible form of evaluation will come from any site visits CISabroad staff members choose to do in the future. If a staff member is selected to travel to Australia, hopefully the site visit will coincide with one of the two semester onsite orientations and the visitor will have the chance to observe and assist with implementing the orientation activities. After completing the site visit, the staff member will fill out an evaluation with questions similar to the site director’s evaluation. For all of these evaluation sources, staff at CISabroad will constantly

monitor the program's progress, make sure students are having a great time, and work towards keeping the program a success.

Conclusion and Implications

A challenge to running the onsite orientation program in Sydney is the city might not be the best representation of Australian culture because it is only one area of the country. People who do not live in Sydney may behave differently than those who do live in the city and only showing students one side of Australian culture does not allow them to form their own opinions about what being Aussie means. The other areas of Australia have their own histories and stories that differ from what you would find in Sydney. That being said, the activities for the orientation program allow students to learn about the culture of Sydney and they will receive a general overview of Australian history through the tours and scavenger hunt. Students are interacting with Sydney's local population and with traditional Aboriginal people throughout their four days and will have the chance to meet people from outside Australia as well. The knowledge learned in Sydney and the students' experiences within the city will establish the foundation for students to increase their knowledge of Australian culture on their own in the host school locations.

A second challenge of the program is it assumes all students will be physically fit and able to participate in the activities. All of the activities involve moving from one place to another, some of which are timed events like the scavenger hunt. The timing will change if there is a student with a disability or one who cannot move fast or be on their feet for long periods of time. Sydney is equipped to offer people with physical disabilities ways to get around the city, which is another reason the city is a better orientation location than smaller cities or rural towns which may be less equipped to accommodate someone with a physical disability. Activities and excursions will be tweaked to accommodate students' requests when needed.

A third limit to the program is there may not be enough time to fit everything in during the four days. The program timeline has everything scheduled down to the minute, but if there is a student with disabilities or something happens to shut down the public transportation system or cause a commotion within the city, the schedule will need to be readapted to fit the circumstances. The site director will follow the local news before the students arrive and while they are there to ensure he is aware of any problems that may arise. If something happens the day of the activity, the site director will analyze the situation and act accordingly.

Exploring Sydney is a better fit for CISabroad students than the Globalinks orientation in three ways: value, support, and culture. Students will keep over 500 dollars in their pockets with the Sydney program when compared with the out of pocket costs tacked on by Globalinks (value). Students will find 24 hour support in the Australian site director during the four days they are in Sydney (support). This support holds through the remainder of their time in Australia. The culturally-rich activities designed for the orientation will better allow staff members to monitor what students are learning about the history of the country, the Australian and Aboriginal cultures, and valuable knowledge and life skills which deal with surviving and acclimating to life in Australia (culture). This knowledge includes information such as banking, electricity, and the public transportation system within Australia.

This program could be a model for future CISabroad programs. The number of programs offered keeps increasing each year, and nothing rules out the idea of establishing connections with additional universities within countries where the company currently has programs. If that were to happen, this successful multi-program orientation may be an inspiration or model for creating new multi-program orientations. In addition to new programs, some of the CISabroad site directors are new to creating onsite orientations that align with the CISabroad mission and

guarantee. This program offers site directors examples of activities to adapt to fit their own location. La Vida Local offers some good guidelines and ideas, but it may be more useful to see examples of activities which were actually implemented rather than mere descriptions.

This program could be valuable to any person interested in creating their own onsite orientation, whether they are sending students overseas or bringing international students into the country. It would be very easy to adapt the activities to fit cities within the United States, like Boston, Massachusetts. A scavenger hunt could be created to bring students to various places on the freedom trail, or a market visit and cooking class to make New England clam chowder, or a trip to the Aquarium to see the penguins and harbor seals. If someone has been given the task of creating an itinerary with an affordable cost, high level of support, or culturally-enriching activities, they could look at the academic plan offered in *Exploring Sydney* and draw inspiration from the program.

The most important thing I learned in this process is how much can be gained by reflecting on your own experiences and how much those experiences can influence the things you do in the future. I loved my time in New Zealand and thought of Sydney only as a great vacation spot. After realizing the Australia orientation needed to change, my immediate thought was to move it to Sydney because of the lower cost and knowing students really just want to see the Opera House when they go to Australia (not only my opinion but also what I hear directly from the students). Kapa Haka allowed me to explore another culture within the confines of a classroom but inspired me to learn about the Maori people outside of class on my own time, hopefully something students in Sydney will experience as well. My time in Edinburgh showed me how valuable activities like the scavenger hunt could be. I thought it was only going to be a fun activity to take up a Sunday afternoon, but I received positive feedback from one of the

groups, and saw the benefits of it after watching the second group struggle with navigating the city. The frustration I had while dealing with the group who constantly got lost reminded me of my own struggles without support in Auckland, which at the time was really trying but in the end gave me the experience I needed to know the type of support I wanted to include in my program. All of my experiences have combined to result in a program I am proud of, and will use in the future as a model of what comes with practice and hard work.

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Appendices

Appendix A: La Vida Local



La Vida Local

Site Director Delivered Curriculum

Instructions and Reference Guide
for On-Site Delivery

Last Updated July 29, 2011

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Welcome to La Vida Local!

Introduction

As CIS abroad continues to grow and develop as a successful study abroad organization, our program model has evolved to include, you, the site director to participate in the delivery of our unique curriculum. This custom designed curriculum, called the “La Vida Local” program, is an exciting addition to CIS abroad program delivery. We trust that you, the site director, will use the tools provided to help engage the study abroad student with the local culture and help enhance their experience abroad.

What is La Vida Local and why is it important to CIS abroad?

We at CIS abroad recognize the importance of engaging students with their local host country’s culture as a major component of the study abroad experience. In order to effectively facilitate this, CIS abroad has created its own cultural programming aimed at enhancing the cross-cultural experience of the student and the learning that accompanies it.

This document will serve as your most helpful resource as you deliver this curriculum at the program site. It contains details for all activities, including guidelines, suggestions, purpose, goals, objectives, materials needed and timelines for how and when activities should occur. As useful a resource as it is, we at CIS abroad recognize that in certain instances, activities and program delivery will need to be modified to accommodate various situations, for example, lower enrollments. We give site directors the flexibility to modify activities as needed and also encourage feedback on the most effective ways to engage students. The first round of implementation of La Vida Local will occur in the Fall 2011 semester and will serve as the pilot version of program delivery. It is with helpful feedback from you and other site directors that we anticipate a full launch of La Vida Local at all 18 of our study abroad locations in the Spring of 2012.

We hope you embrace this opportunity to engage with CIS abroad students and enjoy getting to know them and their experiences through this curriculum.

Should you have specific questions about La Vida Local delivery, they may be directed to Joe Debiec, Programs Manager, at jdebiec@cisabroad.com.

Site Director Letter to Students

The purpose of the letter to students is to introduce yourself, the site director, to the students prior to their arrival on the program. As students prepare for their departure, the site director letter will serve as a bridge between the student and their new home abroad. An important aspect of this letter is to provide some details about preparations students need to make in order to participate in La Vida Local. Also, it will be useful to the student for you to offer yourself as a resource as they make final arrangements for their departure. Please include your contact information and encourage the student to contact you if they have any questions. This letter should be emailed to students 2 weeks prior to orientation. If at that time you have not received a complete list of enrolled students, please contact the programs team for a list of students and their email addresses. The letter below can serve as a sample.

Sample Letter of Introduction

Hello Jane,

Welcome to Semester at University of Westminster Fall 2011! You are days away from your arrival in London and CIS abroad is making final arrangements on your behalf to ensure a smooth transition to your home away from home. As you prepare to depart for your program, I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself, your Semester at University of Westminster site director. My name is Jane Smith and I am looking forward to meeting you when you arrive. Just to give you a little background about me, I am a native of _____ and I have been living in _____ for _____. I have a degree in _____ and have been living in/lived in _____ for _____ years. During this time I have gotten to know life in London very well and have lots of great tips on where to go and what to do during your time abroad. I have organized some very exciting and unique opportunities and cultural activities for you when you arrive in London. These activities are part of a custom-designed curriculum developed by CIS abroad called La Vida Local that involves immersing yourself in all the best of what London has to offer to get the most out of your study abroad experience. One of the most exciting aspects of the La Vida Local curriculum is called the CIS Cultural Credit Card. This is an opportunity for you to participate in activities and collect points that you can redeem at the end of your program for fun prizes. The more you participate, the more you earn (and learn)! I will be explaining in more detail about the Cultural Credit Card and all of our exciting program options for your time abroad during orientation, which is right around the corner! I hope you are as excited as I am!

In the attached document I have included some additional details about the La Vida Local curriculum, including preparations you will need to make in order

to participate in this unique and exciting program. Please review the details and please email me should you have any questions about these requirements. I will be facilitating your orientation and program operations in London and would be happy to answer any questions you might have about your program. Please feel free to send me a message on mycisabroad.net. This is a great resource for you to connect with me, and other CIS students attending your program. Again, I look forward to meeting you in a few days in London! Safe Travels!

Cheers,

Jane

Sample Instructions for Students

The following is an example of what additional information should be included in the site director letter of introduction. The purpose is to provide the student with the necessary information to prepare themselves to participate fully in orientation activities and the La Vida Local curriculum throughout the semester.

So, how can you prepare yourself to get the most out of your study abroad experience?

CIS abroad has prepared an exciting program of activities for you for when you arrive in London. In order to participate fully, there are just a few things you need to be aware of before you depart for your program. IF you have questions about any of the following instructions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

The La Vida Local Cultural Credit Card

The Cultural Credit Card is a way for you to collect points while participating in activities that engage you with the local culture. These points will be redeemable for prizes at the end of your study abroad experience. You will receive Cultural Credit Card points for all activities, including those in orientation. This way, you already have a balance in your CCC account as you set forth on your program and have a head start towards redeeming your points for prizes!

I will provide more details about the La Vida Local curriculum upon your arrival and you will have the opportunity to ask questions and clarify details regarding the program.

The Cultural Gift

Think about your culture and things you identify with about your home. We ask that you think carefully about something unique or special to where you come from that will not be available in the host country. Please purchase or bring that item with you and be prepared to gift it as part of a La Vida Local activity. This should NOT be an irreplaceable item, but rather something you would be proud to give someone from your host country that reflects a bit about WHO you are and WHERE you come from. Be prepared to articulate why you chose this item. Be creative and thoughtful because those who bring the best and most original items will receive additional Cultural Credit Card points!

Local News

On your mycisabroad.net subgroup there is a link for a local newspaper under the heading 'Important Links'. Please take some time to read through this online newspaper before you depart for London. Please jot down some thoughts about the current events featured in the paper and think about some

possible differences between this paper and your own local paper at home. You will be engaged in an activity that will explore cultural differences through local news and media, so keep this in mind as you go through. It might be helpful to take notes about things that stand out to you.

The Video Project

Although entirely optional, many students studying abroad bring a digital camera. An exciting activity that will earn you some substantial Cultural Credit Card points is the option to participate in a video project about your study abroad experience. Not only will you earn points toward an awesome reward, and some serious bragging rights, your video will be featured on the CIS abroad website and on the CIS abroad Youtube channel! If you are looking for some inspiration, please check out the videos featured in your subgroup on mycisabroad.net to help set the stage for your own personal video production featuring you, the star! You may bring any type of video recording equipment that you like, however, a digital camera with recording capabilities will do the job just fine!

Letter to Self

As part of laying the foundation for your study abroad experience, it is important to recognize what YOU would like to get out of the experience and how you will approach your time abroad. In order to do this, please write a letter to yourself addressing the following questions:

(insert questions here)

The letters need not be in any particular format, however, you should address all the points as effectively as possible. Have fun with it! Think about what brought you to this point and what you want to get out of your experience abroad.

Please email your letters to me at XXXXXX@cisabroad.com by August 30, 2011. We will have an orientation activity using the content of these letters, so please take your time writing them and use the opportunity as a way to set the foundation for your study abroad experience. I look forward to reading your letter. Good luck!

You will be receiving correspondence via mycisabroad.net regarding orientation and preparations you should be making for your arrival in London. Stay tuned for updates and announcements from me! Please also use it as a resource for connecting with other students and checking out the information we have compiled to make your transition a smooth one.

Cultural Credit Card (CCC)

The concept of the Cultural Credit Card was created to provide incentives for students to participate in La Vida Local activities. Your role as the site director is not only to facilitate the activities and serve as an informational resource to students, but also to keep track of individual points accrued. At the end of the program, students will redeem their points for rewards based on participation. Listed below is an outline for activities and their suggested point values and estimated budgets, if applicable.

Mandatory Activities:

Letter to Self, 10 pts (5 pts orientation, 5 pts pre-departure)

Cultural Object, 10 pts (5 pts orientation, 5 pts pre-departure)

Local News, 10 pts

Optional Activities:

Out n' About, 15 pts

Maximum budget: \$7.00 per student

Site Visit(s), 5 pts per site

Cultural Events, Books, Films, 5 pts each

Market Visit/Cooking Class, 15 pts

Maximum budget: \$10-12 per student, not to exceed \$300

Guided Blog Postings, 30 pts or 2 pts per entry

Service Learning, 30 pts or 3 pts per hour completed

Maximum budget: \$7.00 per student

Video Project 30 pts

70 pts	Tickets to local event, local cookbook or travel inspired book <i>Maximum budget: \$20 per student</i>
110 pts	Restaurant gift certificate <i>Maximum budget: \$30 per student</i>
140+ pts	Both prizes, day trip adventure or equivalent <i>Maximum budget: \$50 per student</i>

The cost of prizes per semester should not exceed \$100 per student.

mycisabroad.net

CIS abroad has integrated an interactive platform into their online presence. This platform can be useful for communication with students, specifically with regard to the delivery of the La Vida Local curriculum. In order to navigate effectively around this site, you will need to create a username and password and create a profile for yourself as the site director. Individual subgroups exist for all study abroad locations and semesters. You can use the site to post discussions, create events and send messages to students.

Orientation Icebreakers

We have included below a list of icebreakers as a resource for you as you plan your orientation. It is a suggested list that you can draw from if you choose.

Name Games

Going on a Picnic: Everyone sits in a circle and the facilitator explains everyone is going on a picnic. One person starts by saying “My name is Sasha, and I am going to bring Salami.” The next person in the circle has to say their own name with a food that starts with the same letter as their name, all the names and foods said before their own.

Best Meal Ever: Tell us your name and describe the most delicious meal you have ever eaten. Use as much detail as possible, textures, smells, tastes, location and why the meal was so special.

Name and Action Circle: Say your name and act out an action that represents you. Similar to the “Going on a Picnic” name game, each person must recite all names and actions before them.

Icebreakers

Mr. and Mrs. Jones: Everyone gets a note card. On the other side, each person spends two minutes drawing a picture that describes them in any creative way, physicality, hobbies, jobs, interests, family, personal stories, etc. Collect all the cards. One volunteer picks a card and has one minute to describe the card owner in as much detail as possible by interpreting the sketch. They will phrase it “This person is someone who likes art and music and is a very committed student....” The group then guesses whose card it is based on the description given. Then the person comes forward and explains their drawing and why it represents them. That person picks the next card and the game continues until all cards are introduced.

Time: 30 minutes

Objectives: interpreting visual representations, communicating in non-traditional ways, overcoming miscommunication, learning about each other.

Human Knot: Everyone stands in a close circle and randomly grabs hands with two hands across from them. Then they try to untie the knot.

Time: 15 minutes

Objectives: To overcome physical boundaries, working together, patience, creativity, a physical representation of problem solving skills and communication.

Chivalrous Couples: One person stands on a chair and clearly calls out random pairs as everyone else walks quickly around the space. People have to quickly partner up and get in whatever pair is called, keeping size in mind when picking people up. The last pair to get in place, according to the announcer, is out.

Knight and Queen, knight gets on one knee and queen sits on knee

Prince and Princess, princess jumps into prince's arms

Horse and Rider, horse stands with rider in a piggy-back

Time: 5-10 minutes

Objectives: To energize and have fun, to process multiple levels of information at once, to overcome physical boundaries, and think on your feet.

Birthday Line Up: Everyone in a group has to line up in chronological order according to their birthdays, taking month, day and year into account. No speaking or sound is allowed. Gestures are ok. When everyone is in place, go through the line and see how close you were.

Time: 15 minutes

Objectives: To work as a team and overcome communication barriers, to facilitate creativity, patience, initiative and flexibility.

Uses for an Item: Each team gets an item, anything from a coffee mug to a comb. They have three minutes to come up with as many uses for the item as possible. At the end, the teams share by acting out each use, and the team with the most wins.

Time: 15 minutes

Objectives: To think creatively, work as a team, to have fun and be outgoing

Silent Interviews: Divide the group into pairs. Each pair introduces themselves to each other. After the introduction, no talking is allowed. No whispering, mouthing words, or making sounds. The first person must tell their partner three things about themselves, kind of like charades. Physical characteristics don't count. The second person goes next. Give groups 5-8 minutes to complete the activity, then everyone gathers in a circle. Each person introduces their partner to the group, and the three things they learned.

Time: 30 minutes

Objectives: To test non-verbal communication, team work, and help get to know people.

Second Language: Divide the group into pairs. Ask one to describe the town they grew up in to the other person. When they are about to start, say that they have to insert a different color after every seventh word of their story. Switch storytellers after two minutes.

Group discussion: How did you feel as the speaker? Listener? What did you do as the speaker? Listener? How effective were you? What did you learn? How can you use this awareness to interact with people speaking a second or third language?

Time: 20 minutes

Objectives: To appreciate the effort of trying to speak a second or third language, focus while communicating in a new “language”, to increase patience and compassion

Letter to Self

Part A: Orientation, 5 CCC points

Estimated time: Time to share on-site as a group will vary depending on size of orientation group, total group time estimated 30 minutes, allow more or less time depending on size of group, activity as part of an intro session

Materials: SD will need access to a printer, or if not possible, have the students print out their own letters

Ideal Setting: Students will be asked to write letters prior to arrival in host country and email them to the site director. Content of letters will be shared during a social or mealtime during orientation.

Purpose: For the student to acknowledge the SA experience as an important step in their learning and personal growth

Goals: For the student to record their initial thoughts, ideas and expectations about their experience

Objectives: To get the students to write letters to themselves, to have them share their thoughts with each other and to get to know one another

Description: Use the list of questions below to select which questions you would like the students to focus on in their letters. This is a suggested list of questions, and you have flexibility to use your own themes. In the site director introduction letter, students will be asked to write a letter to themselves addressing some of the following questions regarding their SA experience. Choose which questions resonate most with you, OR make up your own that you feel will help the student critically think about their SA experience.

1. How do you feel as you are preparing to depart for your program?
2. Do you think you will change during your study abroad experience?
3. What do you hope to happen?
4. What are your fears about studying abroad?

5. Why are you here, why did you choose this location, and what does the study abroad experience mean to you?
6. What do you want to bring home from this program?
7. What in your life experience do you think has helped you to prepare for this program?
8. How would you rate yourself as an international person open to diverse cultural experiences?
9. What are you going to need to do to get the most out of this experience?
10. What things might prohibit your learning?
11. Complete this sentence, "My study abroad experience will be a success if...."

Instructions: During dinner on the first day of orientation the site director will bring a copy of each student's letter, (or the student will bring their own letter) and facilitate a sharing activity about the content of the letter. If this is not possible, ask the students to print out their letters and bring them with them to the orientation welcome dinner. Give them a minute or two to review their content then ask them to share the overall content of their letters with a partner. Each person will spend 3 minutes sharing with their partner, then switch. Once they have completed this, invite the students to add a handwritten paragraph to their letters (on the back) about some initial host country impressions. Then you may follow up by asking for volunteers to share some of the content of their letter OR some initial impressions of the host country. You may use some of the unused facilitation questions for discussion prompts if you choose. The site director will keep the letters for the duration of the program and return the individual letters for the follow-up activity at the end of the program. Ideally, the activity would serve as an icebreaker but also a way for the students to inspire, motivate, and get to know each other.

Example: Students arriving for a semester in Australia are attending orientation facilitated by a local site director. The students have written the letters prior to arrival and sent them via email or mycisabroad.net to their site director. The site director brings a copy of each student's letter to the session. They then share their letters with a partner, share with the group (if desired) add a paragraph about their initial impressions and give the letters back to the site director, once the discussion closes.

Follow-up Questions: See above

Revisit Letter to Self

Part B: Pre-departure from host country, 5 CCC points

Estimated Time: 3-5 minutes per student to share their thoughts, depending on size of group

Materials: Letters students have written to themselves at beginning of program

Ideal Setting: Group dinner setting during the last few days of program

Purpose: To revisit students letters that they wrote to themselves at the beginning of the program

Goals: To have the students reflect on their initial thoughts as they were experiencing a new culture in the first few days of orientation

Objectives: For the students to acknowledge personal growth or change during their SA experience.

Description: Students will have written a letter to themselves before the program using the guiding questions provided. This is a repetition of the first activity where the students wrote the letters initially and shared some of their content with the group. This portion of the activity will provide an opportunity to reflect on the content of the letters and for students to share their reflections with the group.

Example: Students studying in Australia for a semester meet for dinner on the last night of their program. They each open their individual letters and read them to themselves (or out loud if they choose) and then each respond to some of the follow-up questions listed below.

Instructions: Site directors will facilitate this group activity on a night very close to the end of the program. The SD will hand out the sealed envelopes/folded letters to each individual student. The students will read the letters to themselves and then take turns sharing thoughts about the content and their hindsight reflections using the prompting questions below.

Follow-up Questions:

1. Did you accomplish what you set out to do on your SA program?
2. How do you feel about going home?
3. Do you feel that you have changed? If yes, in what way?
4. What advice would you give to yourself at the beginning of the program knowing what you know now?
5. Was your study abroad experience a success? In what ways?

The Cultural Gift

Part A: Orientation, 5 CCC points

Estimated Time: 2-3 minute description per student, total time is dependent on # of participants, 10 minutes for follow-up questions, total estimated time 30 min

Materials: None

Ideal Setting: Group time on the 1st day of orientation, dinner or lunch

Purpose: To share a piece of home with others

Goals: For students to think about their own cultural identity and how it relates to their new environment

Objectives: To serve as an icebreaker and for students and site director to get to know each other while recognizing the uniqueness and identification of the students' American culture. To provide a context for students to share a little bit of their culture / themselves with their fellow students and their hosts.

Description: Students are required bring a unique gift for host families or a new friend, i.e. a uniquely American food or souvenir or something special that they identify with from their hometown that may not be found in the host country. During the orientation session, students pair up (with different partners) explain to one another what this item is, why they brought this item to give to their host families (or new friend), and why it is a special or unique item. Encourage creativity (and sharing with the group after partner sharing) by telling students that additional CCC points will be awarded for most creative or thoughtful item brought and/or best/funniest/most animated etc.... description/anecdote of a personal connection to item given. In the site director letter of introduction to the student prior to departure, it will tell the student that that they will be required to bring an item for their homestay family or for a new friend.

Example 1: Student A receives their site director letter of introduction with instructions on the activity. Student A is from New England and is staying with a homestay family in Spain. Student A decides to bring maple syrup to the host family in Spain because it is a unique New England item that may not be available in Spain. Upon arrival in host country during orientation, Student A brings the maple syrup to dinner and explains to the group that he/she is from New England and grew up eating maple syrup etc.....After the activity, the student presents their host family with the gift and explains what it is, how it is used, etc...

Example 2: Student B is from Oregon and is staying in student housing in Thailand. Student B decides to bring a t-shirt from their favorite hometown restaurant/sports team/tourist attraction etc... to give to a friend. Student B gets to know a Thai student across the hall and one day decides to give them this special item to them, and tells them the story of where it came from and what it means.

Instructions: Site director instructs students to bring their item to dinner with them during orientation. They are told in advance in the site director introduction letter that they will need to provide an explanation of why they chose their item. The site director facilitates the students taking turns explaining their item and why they think it is a unique item representing them in some way. After the partner exchange, the site director will invite those who would like to share with the group to do so. The site director will use discretion in selecting the 'best' description and award additional CCC points. This activity can be done in combination with other orientation events. Use the follow-up questions below for facilitating a discussion.

Follow-up Questions / themes:

1. What are some other examples of unique cultural items from the US?
2. Is there anything where you come from that cannot be found anywhere else in the world?
3. Talk about regional differences at home and in the host context, such as food, crafts, products, accents, slang, climate, etc.....

The Cultural Gift

Part B: Pre-departure from host country, 5 CCC points

Estimated Time: 2-3 minute description per student, total time is dependent on # of participants, 10 minutes for follow-up questions, total estimated time 30 minutes

Materials: Students need to bring their items with them

Ideal Setting: Group time on the last day of program, dinner or lunch

Purpose: To compliment the initial activity when students brought their own cultural objects from home

Goals: To give students an opportunity to share their cultural connections, identifications, and experience with the group

Objectives: Revisiting cultural connections students made during their experience, and to encourage students to identify with something special that they would like to bring back home with them

Description: This activity would ideally take place during the last day, during a social time, such as dinner. The students are required to bring something to show that they are bringing back to the US with them from their host country. Each student shows the object and explains why they are bringing the item back to the US and the cultural and personal significance and connection to the item. Additional CCC points awarded for the best/most creative item and description.

Example: The students studying abroad in Spain and Thailand show their respective groups a special item that they are bringing home with them. Each student takes a turn and gives an explanation of the connection to the item and why they chose their item.

Instructions: Site directors have built this activity into the itinerary as a follow up to the first time it was done. They can follow the same format as the first time.

Follow-up Questions:

1. How did you first learn about your object?
2. Why do you think your object is something unique to X country?
3. What are the most interesting or notable regional differences you have encountered?
4. Do you think regional differences in the host country are different than at home? Similar? How so?

Local News

Orientation, 10 CCC points

Estimated Time: 30 minute discussion facilitated by site director, students can be recommended to spend 30-45 minutes reading host country newspaper prior to arrival or activity

Materials: Students need internet access to read newspaper, site director can bring several copies of local newspaper with them to help facilitate activity

Ideal Setting: Group time on the 1st or 2nd day of orientation, meal or social time

Purpose: To help students gain insight into local culture before their arrival on location

Goals: To increase awareness of local current events and news in program area

Objectives: For students to make cultural comparisons through common forms of media and to become more familiar with local host country current events

Description: Each student will have access to their subgroup on mycisabroad.net which will have a link for a local and/or national newspaper for their host country. Prior to arrival in country, students will be asked to read a section of interest or scan for headlines or particular interest and jot down notes about the content. The site director will facilitate a discussion on the first or second day of orientation about current events in the host country. The site director will have copies of a the local paper that will help facilitate the activity. Students will pair up and be given a specific amount of time to find articles of interest to report back to the group.

Example: Student A is spending a semester in Prague. Prior to departure, Student A receives a packet via email with instructions on how to access the local newspaper link in their subgroup on mycisabroad.net. Everyone attending this semester program in Prague will have access to the same link. The students will be asked to read the newspaper on a particular date and take notes on articles of interest regarding current events. When the student arrives in Prague for orientation, they will have familiarity with some current events and will be able to discuss them as facilitated by the site director.

Instructions: The site director will have some flexibility to design and carry out this activity. Site directors may modify this activity to suit group size or focus. In the introduction letter students will be given guidelines for reading the local newspaper prior to arrival. During orientation, the site director will bring copies of the paper for the activity and facilitate a discussion about cultural differences in the media/news using the questions below.

Follow-up/Facilitation Questions:

1. What was your impression of your host country when reading the newspaper while still at home?
2. How did the headlines/articles/events differ from those in newspapers in the US?
3. What cultural differences can you draw out of these comparisons?
4. What was the most interesting thing you came across in looking at your host country's newspaper?
5. How might the media in your host country differ from that in the US?
6. What are some of the major events in the news? Is there an international focus, or a local focus?

Out n' About

Orientation, 15 CCC points

Estimated Time: 2-3 hours, depending on location and number of sites

Materials: Students will be instructed to bring pen and paper

Budget: If students need to use public transport, SD will allocate fare money to students, not to exceed \$7.00 per student

Ideal Setting: a safe and walkable area where the activity can be done, if this is not possible, local transport to an area where several sites can be visited in a reasonable amount of time

Purpose: To help add depth to students' new environment in a fun, social, and educational way

Goals: To help students build confidence and learn how to navigate their new environment

Objectives: To help the students get to know one another in small groups, engage with community members, observe new surroundings and report back to groups

Description: This activity would be most appropriate for groups larger than 4 students. The SD will pair the students or put them into small groups for this activity. The site director will customize this activity for each location. The primary purpose of the activity is to provide an opportunity during orientation where the students can gain somewhat 'guided' confidence building while getting to know/work with other students to complete tasks. The SD will explain to the group that they have a mission. Student teams are given a list of three places to walk to and each team is to visit the sites in a different order so no team is in the same place at the same time. **Option 1:** Teams are required to sit in a place for 10 minutes and observe and record sights, smells, sounds, activities, and people. When teams reconvene at the end, teams compare what observations they all have and how similar/different they are depending on personal observations, group observations and timing of observations.

Option 2: Teams are required to go to specific locations and gather information about the area by interacting with locals, vendors, etc...Teams are prompted with a set of questions at each location, i.e., what is the historical significance of the area? What landmarks can you identify? What makes this area special or unique? Teams meet back up and compare notes. Teams can be sent to different areas so everyone learns about a new area in the location.

Option 3: Any combination of these approaches at different sites

Example: 8 students are participating in the Semester in Florence program. The site director randomly assigns the students to pairs and are given a briefing of the activity and a list of places to go (Duomo, Ponte Vecchio, and Dante's House). They have 1 ½ hours to visit three sites and record observations or answer questions about each site and return to a communal meeting place. The site director then facilitates a discussion about the activity through a series of questions.

Instructions: Site directors will be required to develop this activity to suit individual locations. There will be a great deal of flexibility in choosing appropriate sites and locations to send students and making this activity meet its objective, which is a fun way to build confidence among students in navigating their new environment and encouraging students to engage with the local community.

Follow-up Questions:

1. How does public transport in host country differ from that in the US (if applicable)?
2. Do you think that navigating yourself in a new country is more difficult than doing so in a different area back in the US? If so, why?
3. What stood out to you about your experience today?
4. Why do you think I chose these particular locations for this activity?
5. Who did you see at the different locations?
6. Do you know how locals feel about the places you visited?
7. Do you think that your senses are more alert now that you are abroad? Why or why not?

Site Visit

Throughout semester, 5 CCC points per site visit

Estimated Time: 1 hour per location, student will visit sites on their own time

Materials: Digital camera

Ideal Setting: Historical site or local place of interest

Purpose: To encourage students to visit local cultural heritage sites as part of their SA experience

Goals: To provide incentives for increasing students' cultural awareness

Objectives: To have students visit as many of these local sites as possible

Description: Students will be awarded points for attending specific sites and demonstrating proof of visit, i.e. entrance ticket or photo.

Example: Students on a program in London are given points for attending particular art museums or historical sites. These points are added to their Cultural Credit Card and will accumulate over the course of the program and be redeemable for prizes.

Instructions: Site directors are responsible for explaining the CCC concept to students during orientation and keeping track of student CCC point accumulation. Students will be given a list of sites where they can go to gain points or the information can be posted on mycisabroad.net. Proof of attendance will need to be shown to site director in order for points to be awarded. This can take the form of a photo, entrance ticket or journal entry about the site. Students can be given a set of questions to answer about the site. Each site will be worth 5 CCC points.

Follow-up Questions:

1. What was the most interesting thing you learned about the site you visited?
2. What is the cultural significance of the site?
3. Would you recommend visiting this site to a friend? Why or why not?

Cultural Events/Films/Books

Throughout semester, 5 CCC points

Estimated Time: Students will complete on their own time

Materials: Students will source what they need on an individual basis

Ideal Setting: Will vary

Purpose: To provide incentives for students to participate in culturally enriching activities

Goals: To enhance and supplement the students cultural learning

Objectives: To encourage further cultural awareness, deeply immerse the student in the local culture, and help the student explore some academically and historically significant aspects of local culture

Description: Site directors will compile a list of resources for students to distribute during orientation and/or post on mycisabroad.net This list will contain books, films and local events that the student can read, watch or attend in order to gain CCC points.

Example: Students arriving in Mexico are given a list of resources by the site director. Upon their completion of attendance, reading or watching items on the list, they must provide a synopsis (in their own words) to the site director to receive points.

Instructions: Site directors will need to spend some time thinking through the resources they would like to pull together for the list. Ideally, the list should include a few books, several films and some local (or easily accessible) cultural events. It would be great if the students could access the books and films through an academic library or online. It is up to the discretion of the site director to award CCC points, we have suggested 5 points for each item. Organized group events can be eligible for CCC points as well.

Follow-up Questions:

1. What is the historical significance of the book/film/event?
2. Is there anything comparable in terms of American cultural equivalency?

3. Would you recommend this to a friend? Why or why not?

Market Visit/Cooking Class

Orientation or mid-experience, 15 CCC points

Estimated Time: Approx. 3 hours, times will vary depending on activity

Materials: Local cook/guide, ingredients, and kitchen/dining location large enough for the group to participate in activity.

Budget: Allow \$10-12 per student for food and transportation costs (if applicable). Securing a suitable guide/cook and location for activity will require additional funds. Cost for entire activity not to exceed \$300

Ideal Setting: a safe local market, and a location where a cooking class can take place to accommodate the entire group

Purpose: To expose students to the host country's food and market culture in a fun and engaging way

Goals: To teach students how to shop for and prepare local specialties

Objectives: To learn about how to prepare local dishes in a social setting, for students to become more familiar with local cuisine, and to encourage students to step out of their comfort zones and try new foods

Description: This activity will vary very much from one location to another. SDs will use their discretion and local networks and connections in facilitating this activity. Students will gather at a specific time in the afternoon that does not interfere with class time, or during the weekend.

Example: Option 1: Students are paired up and are given a list of ingredients to purchase at a local market. Students are then given walking directions or public transport directions and a map to get to the market where they will purchase the ingredients. They will also be given sufficient money to purchase the required ingredients and use transportation, if necessary. Students are given materials and a time to report back to the meeting location. Students return with ingredients and are introduced to the chef/cook who will be giving the cooking lesson. **Option 2:** Students congregate and meet their guide/cook. They walk, or if necessary, take transport together to a market where they will buy the ingredients. The guide introduces the market and talks about the ingredients they are looking for. Students are exposed to the market culture in a less overwhelming manner. After the market visit the group returns to the location where they will prepare the food. **Option 3:** Students on a program in Australia gather to learn about how to host and prepare a proper 'Aussie' BBQ. This type of modification would be useful in locations where market visits may not offer a unique 'cultural' experience. Another example of this might be an introduction to English Fish n' Chips or proper 'tea time', how to make a Scotch pie or oatcakes in Scotland, Irish stew/Irish breakfast in Ireland and so on.

Instructions: The site director has some flexibility with organizing this activity to suit the context. They should utilize their local connections to secure a local experienced cook and adequate facilities. An important component of this activity is for the site director to facilitate this activity as a learning experience and use follow-up questions for discussion.

The ingredients and specifics of the activity can be modified according to seasonal availability of ingredients and local vs. national specialties. SDs networking with local culinary schools/students may be helpful in facilitating a lower-cost activity.

Follow-up Questions:

1. How do local markets in country X differ from those in the US?
2. How are food and culture linked?
3. How is American food culture different than that of country X?
4. How is it similar, if at all?
5. What types of food can you find locally? Is it all produced locally? Who is selling it and are they also producing it?
6. Do you feel more adventurous with new food when you are abroad?

Guided Blog Postings

Ongoing, 30 CCC points OR 2pts per response

Estimated Time: 10 minutes per week for students to write responses

Materials: Students and site director need to have access to a computer with an internet connection

Ideal Setting: online, mycisabroad.net

Purpose: To encourage students to write about their SA experience

Goals: To provide an online forum where students can share their experiences

Objectives: To facilitate students thinking about their SA experience and cultural identity during their time abroad

Description:

The site director will tweet or post questions/topics to blog about each week. Students will be asked to post their responses in a group forum on mycisabroad.net in order to gain CCC points. These postings may or may not be public, depending on format used. Students can be required to post responses to the SD's questions or topics and respond to others' posts, which would make it more interactive. Below is a suggested guideline/timeline for blog topics.

Prior to Departure

Week 1: What are you looking forward to most about study abroad? What are you happy to leave behind?

During Program

Week 2: What are some of the most significant cultural differences you have noted in your first week abroad? What, if any, strategies have you developed to cope with these differences? What have you found confusing, frustrating or uncomfortable? Have you been surprised with how easily it has been to adjust to certain differences? If yes, give an example.

Week 3: Comment on something that surprised you and something you expected about the following: 1) Living situation 2) Classes 3) Host city/town 4) Classmates

Week 4: Describe your typical daily routine. Have you made any local friends? What is your communication like with these people? Do you feel that you are adapting to your environment well? Why or why not?

Week 5: Watch Youtube video [Stereotypes of American Students on Study Abroad](#). Respond to the following questions:

Do you think these stereotypes exist in your study abroad location?

Are there any stereotypes other than the ones in the video that you have encountered? Do you think the students in the video made good recommendations? Why or why not? Why might Americans be viewed negatively abroad? What do you think is your responsibility as an American student studying abroad?

Week 6: Describe your classes. How are they different/similar to classes at your home university? Did you find it difficult to adjust to the new academic culture at your host university? What aspects of this academic culture do you prefer/not prefer to your home academic culture? Which is your favorite class and why?

Week 7: What is your favorite part of studying abroad so far? What is your favorite aspect of your host country's culture? What aspects of the host country culture do you identify with most?

Week 8: Read about the [The Cultural Iceberg](#) and identify aspects of your host country's culture that belong under the specific categories named (i.e. gestures, eating habits, style of dress, etc). How does the cultural iceberg appear to you in your host country's culture? Give specific examples of cultural manifestations. Are there any aspects of culture in your host country are similar to American culture? What aspects are different?

Week 9: Describe something unexpected that you learned about your host society. How did you learn this? Is there anything that you could have done prior to departure that might have prepared you for this?

Week 10: At this point in your study abroad experience you have made significant contact with local people. Describe two or three interactions that you have had in which "American culture" was discussed. What did these people say about Americans? What did you say/how did you react? Did you agree or disagree with their opinions?

Week 11: Do you feel that your speech patterns have changed at all? If yes, how so? Do you feel you have a 'strong' American accent? Why or why not? If in a non-native English speaking country, have your language skills improved? Are you finding communicating in a foreign language exciting, exhausting, both or neither? Explain.

Week 12: A friend back home is considering studying abroad and they are consulting you for advice. What would you tell them?

Week 13: How important do you think language studies are in school curriculum? Do you feel it is important for American students to learn a new language? Why or why not?

Week 14: What do you think you will miss the most about your study abroad experience once you return home? Which places would you like to visit next? Why?

Week 15: As your study abroad experience comes to a close, reflect on some of the ways you might have changed during your time abroad. Do you feel you are different? In what way? How have you remained the same?

Example: A group of students have just arrived in Peru for a semester program. During orientation, the site director explains to the students the instructions and format for the blogging assignments. He/she explains that the weekly topic question will be posted by Monday and the students will be asked to respond by Sunday or the following Monday. Students participating in this activity will need to respond to each topic in order to receive full CCC points. The rules outlining how/when the students will respond to the site director's post may be determined at the individual site director's discretion.

Instructions: Site directors are given a list of questions that need to be posted at specific times during the program duration. They will be responsible for checking in with the students and reading their responses to the posts and addressing questions that may arise from the assignments.

Follow-up Questions: See above

Service Learning

Throughout, 30 CCC points

Estimated Time: Students have the option of participating in service learning projects during their program. Hours can be accumulated as part of CCC program

Materials: Time to devote to service projects

Ideal Setting: A safe and ideally relatively organized environment where the student can participate in a service learning project and work with a community organization

Purpose: To encourage students to be active and engage with the local community

Goals: To expose students to local culture outside of university life

Objectives: For the student to have exposure to local community organization and/or gain a unique perspective on local life in host country

Description: These opportunities will vary very much from one location to another. The site director will research, network and connect with legitimate organizations that would welcome student volunteers. At each location, there should be at least two different types of available opportunities, one with a social emphasis and the other environmental. The host university may have established connections in the local community. The site director will be responsible for organizing service learning opportunities for students. Site directors will need to take the initiative to plan outings for the group that would meet the criteria as stated above. Students have the option of participating in service learning projects and earn CCC points. The first participation with service learning should be done as a group, then students can volunteer individually to accumulate additional CCC points.

Example: Students arrive in South Africa for a semester abroad program. The site director explains that for each hour of service learning completed during their SA experience, the student earns 3 CCC points. The site director will have made connections with local organizations that will welcome student volunteers. There may be some existing connections through the local university that might be useful channels to explore for student opportunities. The site director facilitates a group service learning activity with one of the organizations. Students meet organization coordinators to arrange logistics, times, hours etc.... Students can pick organizations that correspond with their interests, social or environmental, etc.... Supervisors will be required to sign off on student hours completed in order for students to gain CCC points. Reflection paper/presentation given about experience can be completed for additional CCC points.

Instructions: Site directors will work to organize opportunities for service learning for CIS students prior to their arrival. The site director will need to explain the logistics of volunteering locally which will vary from location to location. They should check in with the students mid-way through their service learning experience and see how things are going.

Follow-up Questions:

1. What is the mission of the organization?
2. What service does the organization provide to the community? Why is this necessary?
3. Why might service learning be something that CIS encourages for study abroad students?

4. What perspectives have you gained about local culture?

The Video Project

Throughout experience, 30 CCC points

Estimated Time: Student will complete in their own time

Materials: Students will need a digital camera and possibly editing software on a computer

Ideal Setting: Everywhere

Purpose: To provide an incentive for students to record their experiences while abroad

Goals: To draw out student creativity and originality and to help students think about and record the best parts of their SA experience.

Objectives: To capture pieces of the SA experience through media and for the student to produce something that they can show friends and family when they return

Description: Students will be given the opportunity to create a unique CIS video blog for their experience abroad. The video should not be longer than 5 minutes. They document their study abroad experience through video clips on their digital camera and compile them to create a video. They submit their video to the site director towards the end of their SA experience for 30 CCC points and their video will be displayed in their subgroup and/or elsewhere on the CIS website.

Example: A student studying in Costa Rica creates a video about their SA experience. He/she edits the footage, puts it to music, and submits it the last week they are in Costa Rica. The student is credited 30 CCC points and the video is posted in the subgroup forums and/or on the regular CIS website.

Instructions: Site directors will tell students about the competition during orientation. They can show an example of a video from Youtube that might help frame the idea, there are several good examples on mycisabroad.net. Remind students several times about the deadline for submission of their entries.

Follow-up Questions:

None

Appendix B: Globalinks Orientation Program



The **6-day Great Barrier Reef Culture and Adventure Program in Cairns, Queensland, Australia***, is our on-site orientation designed for study abroad students going to Australia. You will arrive in Cairns and participate in this exciting six-day orientation program. The Culture and Adventure Program includes sessions focused on providing you with information relating to the country and culture in which you will be living as well as the opportunity to explore some specific aspects of Australia through excursions and a service learning day where you'll volunteer in the local community.

Our unique Culture and Adventure Program will offer you the opportunity to not only meet other students going to the same university, but it will also prepare you for the cultural changes that you may encounter and give you a chance to experience the Great Barrier Reef up close. Our aim is to provide you with a sound introduction to Australia while enjoying some of Australia's main attractions.

Session Topics

- Australian Culture – differences and similarities.
- Health and Safety Abroad – specific information related to Australian laws and infrastructure.
- Australian Education System – gain insight on the expectations of Australian professors and institutions.
- Cultural Adjustment – what to expect from yourself in your new environment.
- Travel destinations and organized trip options.

Excursions

Excursions can vary and can change at any time; however, the following activities are typically included in each Culture and Adventure Program:

- Exciting day trip to the Great Barrier Reef where you will have the opportunity to snorkel and/or scuba dive and take a closer look at the impact of tourism on the reef.
- Visit to a Nature Park for a tour of the surrounding tropical rainforest, a traditional Aussie barbeque, an introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, and a chance to see unique Australian wildlife up close.
- Community Day Program - a one day excursion to interact with the local Cairns community.
- Free day in Cairns to explore on your own or attend one of a number of pre-arranged excursions.

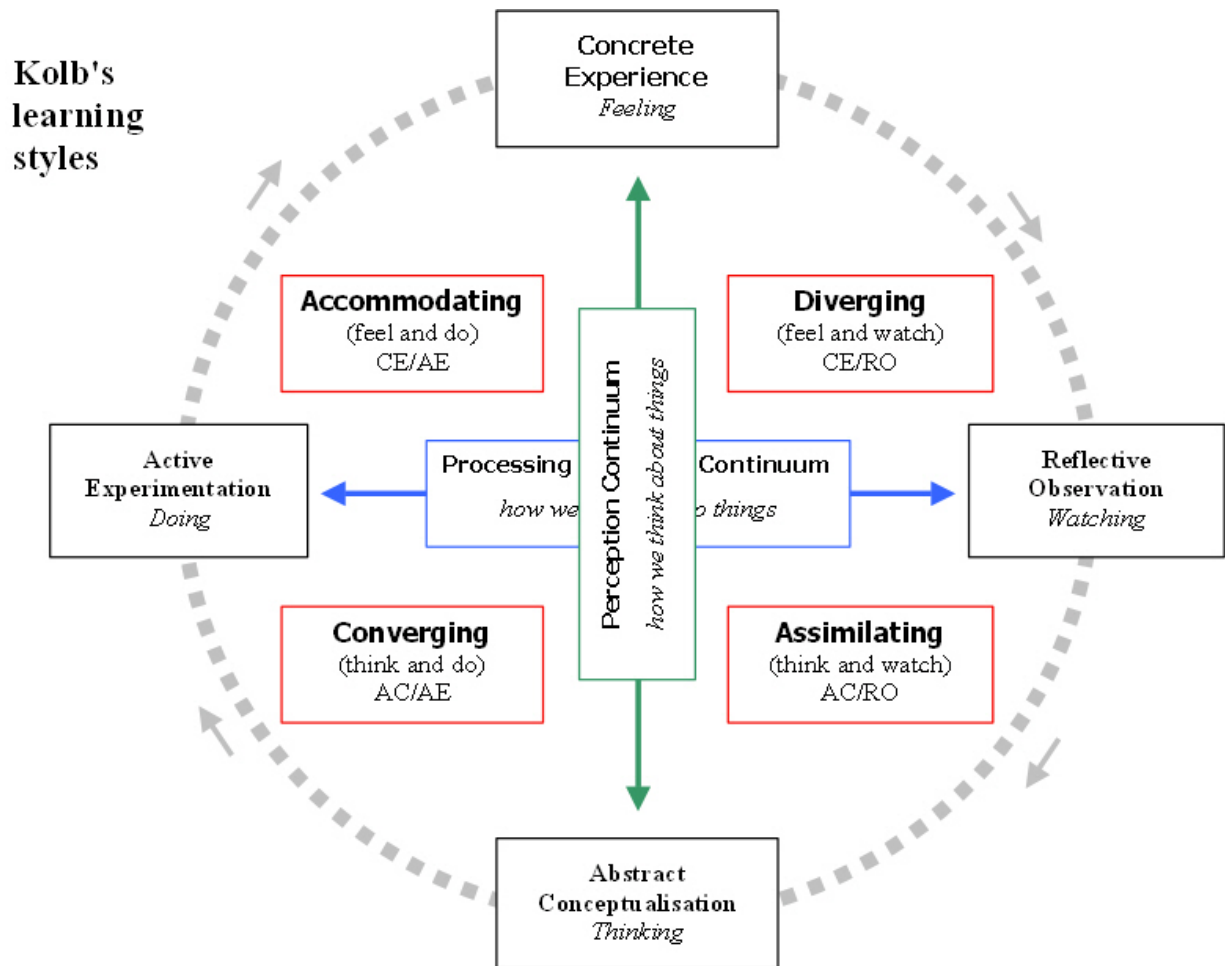


Other Highlights

You'll also enjoy social time with other students who will be attending the same university – a great chance to really get to know other students prior to arriving at the university. Plus, you will gain exposure to a unique region of Australia and even have some free time to explore the fabulous city of Cairns.

(Retrieved from CISabroad internal database)

Appendix C: Kolb's Experiential Learning Model



© concept david kolb, adaptation and design alan chapman 2005-06, based on Kolb's learning styles, 1984
Not to be sold or published. More free online training resources are at www.businessballs.com. Sole risk with user.

(Image received from <http://www.businessballs.com/kolblearningstyles.htm>)

Appendix D: Program Comparison Chart

Exploring Sydney	Globalinks
City walking tour, ghost tour, scavenger hunt, dinner in the Sydney Tower revolving restaurant	Day trip to Great Barrier Reef to snorkel and/or scuba dive
Visit to Taronga Zoo to walk amongst the animals and birds rather than seeing them only in cages	Visit to Nature Park for tour of the tropical rainforest
Students cook Australian meals and can sample traditional Australian cuisine at the welcome dinner restaurant	Traditional Aussie barbecue
Authentic Aboriginal Cruise with cultural performance	An introduction to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture
Taronga Zoo Close Encounter with one of the four animals	Chance to see Australian wildlife up close
Free time to explore Sydney on their own	Free day to explore Cairns on their own
Site director has tips for interacting with the local communities in the students' host school cities.	Community Day Program – excursion to interact with local Cairns community
Full support from the site director and Northampton CISabroad staff members throughout the orientation and after	Relatively no support from the Globalinks orientation leader throughout the orientation and no one available after the end of the orientation

Appendix E: Photo Contest

CISabroad in Sydney, Australia Photo Contest

You're in a new country and your fingers are itching to get to your camera- so we've created a Photo Contest to give you the opportunity to get to know Sydney, start capturing some great shots, and possibly win a fun prize!

Sydney is the home of the Opera House, the Harbor Bridge, and Vegemite, with a heritage that dates back to the 1700s, but there are many other interesting, strange and exciting sights you should be on the lookout for:



Contest Areas:

1. **Cultural Differences:** Capture a scene that you believe truly captures Aussie culture and/or a scene of “culture shock” –something that might be very “Australian” but that you would likely never see or experience back home in the United States.
2. **Group Shot:** Capture a fun and creative group picture of you and your friends while off on an excursion, at a museum, having a quaint lunch in a park, etc. –up to you! See if you can get as much “Australia” in the background as possible!
3. **Landscape/Scenic/Iconic Shot:** We know that Sydney has got nothing on the U.S. when it comes to natural landscape beauty, but there'll be an award for best landscape/scenic/iconic photograph.

We need these photos by **(date to be determined)**, so we can announce the winners at your farewell dinner the next day. E-mail photos to the CISabroad Site Director and send photos for one, two or all three areas and as many photos as you would like to compete. Your leader also has a flash drive just in case you're having e-mail difficulties so there's no reason not to give it your best “shot!”

Site Director Name: Site Director Email

Get excited to show, see and share everyone's pictures, stories and memories:
Good Luck!

Appendix F: Program Itinerary

DAY 1

- 11:00am-1:00pm The site director meets the students at Sydney Airport and the group take the Sydney Central YHA hostel bus back to the hostel.
- 1:00pm-2:00pm Check in at Sydney Central YHA and free time to settle in.
- 2:00pm-3:00pm Meet in the Conference Room at the hostel to go over general information session, health and safety, rules of the hostel, the facilities at the hostel, and the CISabroad Photo Contest
- 3:00pm-4:00pm The site director brings students to a local phone store to purchase phone plans or SIM cards for those students who already have international phones. The site director will make sure the phone plans are able to be used throughout all five of the semester program locations.
- 4:00pm-6:00pm Group embarks on a walking tour created by the site director that introduces the students to the area and popular sites within Sydney such as the Opera House.
- 6:30pm-8:30pm The group eats dinner at a local restaurant that offers Australian dishes for students to sample as well as more traditional dishes such as pasta or pizza.

DAY 2

- 8:00am-9:00am Breakfast at the hostel.
- 9:00am-9:30am The site director meets with the students to discuss the scavenger hunt rules and answer any questions the students may have. The site director splits the group of students into smaller groups for the activity. He makes sure to explain the students are responsible for finding their way to the Eastern Pontoon ferry dock in Circular Quay by 12:30pm for the Authentic Aboriginal Cruise.
- 9:30am-5:00pm The students have ample time to complete the scavenger hunt that takes them to several parts of the city using the public transportation system. The students need to submit their scavenger hunt sheets and show photos to the site director by 5:00pm in order to be considered for the prize. The site director will pick a meeting location and inform the students where he will be during the scavenger hunt meeting at 9:00am.
- 12:30pm-3:00pm The Authentic Aboriginal Cruise departs from the Eastern Pontoon ferry dock in Circular Quay at 1:00pm. The group needs to be there 20 minutes prior to departure. The site director is available for assistance if the students get lost and need help finding their way to the dock.

5:00pm-7:30pm The students have dinner on their own and free time until 7:30pm. They need to meet the site director in the lobby of the hostel at 7:30pm.

7:30pm-10:00pm The site director will lead the group to The Rocks for their ghost tour that begins at 8:00pm and lasts until 10:00pm.

DAY 3

8:00am-9:00am Breakfast at the hostel.

9:30am-3:00pm The group explores the Taronga Zoo with a “close encounter” with one of the animals scheduled within the timeframe. Students buy lunch at the zoo on their own.

3:30pm-5:00pm The students are split into groups by the site director and given a section of ingredients to buy for one of the four recipes. The site director gives each group a pot of money that is sufficient enough to purchase the ingredients.

5:00pm-7:30pm The students return to the hostel with their ingredients and work together to cook the meal. They then eat the meal together as a group.

7:30pm Free time.

DAY 4

8:00am-9:00am Breakfast at the hostel.

9:00am-3:00pm Free time on their own. The site director gives them ideas of things to do and directions and guidance on how to get to those locations.

3:30pm-5:00pm The group meets at the Sydney Tower. They have tickets for the 4D experience and can explore the observation deck.

5:00pm-6:30pm The group has dinner in the revolving restaurant in the Sydney Tower.

7:00pm-8:00pm The group reconvenes at the hostel to reveal the winners of the photo contest and to do the virtual suitcase activity. The site director goes over departure details for the next day.

DAY 5

8:00am-9:00am Breakfast at the hostel.

Students depart the city throughout the day heading for their next location.

Appendix G: Scavenger Hunt

- 1) This museum is home to a replica of the vessel that charted Australia's east coast in 1770 with Captain Cook at the helm.

Answer: The National Maritime Museum

Group Photo: YES NO

- 2) The museum illustrates Sydney's early legal and criminal history. It also includes macabre relics of notorious crimes.

Answer: The Justice and Police Museum

Group Photo: YES NO

- 3) This carved rock seat by Mrs. Macquaries Road was a fruit and vegetable garden up to 1805.

Answer: Mrs. Macquaries Chair

Group Photo: YES NO

- 4) This complex of theatres and halls took 14 years to complete and is a well-known site around the world. There is a theory that the roof design came to the creator while he was peeling an orange.

Answer: Sydney Opera House

Group Photo: YES NO

- 5) This construction project provided approximately 14,000 onsite jobs during the depression. It has been referred to as the "Iron Lung" and the "Coathanger."

Answer: Sydney Harbor Bridge

Group Photo: YES NO

- 6) This sandstone cottage is Sydney's oldest surviving residence and was home to Elizabeth Cadman who is believed to have been the first woman in New South Wales to vote.

Answer: Cadman's Cottage

Group Photo: YES NO

- 7) There are two points of interest in Macquarie Place. Why was the sandstone obelisk erected in 1818 (what does it represent?) What happened on the site of the obelisk in 1826?

Answer 1: Marks the starting point for all roads in the colony

Answer 2: Site of the first street lamps in Sydney

Group Photo: YES NO

- 8) The wishing well in front of this building has a stone from Blarney Castle, a sculpture of Queen Victoria, and a sculpture of her dog Islay. The building was the Sydney produce market up until the end of World War 1.

Answer: The Queen Victoria Building

Group Photo: YES NO

- 9) There is a Royal Clock inside the answer to question 8 that features part of Balmoral Castle in Scotland above a copy of Big Ben. Every hour a fanfare plays with a parade. What does the parade depict?

Answer: parade depicts various English monarchs

Group Photo: YES NO

- 10) Where can you find people playing chess on a giant chessboard?

Answer: Hyde Park

Group Photo: YES NO

- 11) This museum has a cast of the largest gold nugget.

Answer: the Australian Museum

Group Photo: YES NO

- 12) This is the oldest cathedral in Australia, with the foundation stone having been laid in 1819. Inside the cathedral you can find a bible from 1539, rosary beads made from olive seed collected in the Holy Land, and memorials to Sydney pioneers. The southern wall has stones from St. Paul's Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, and the House of Lords in London.

Answer: St. Andrew's Cathedral

Group Photo: YES NO

(Scavenger hunt created from my experiences and information found in Eyewitness Travel, 2010)

Appendix H: Authentic Aboriginal Cruise Flyer



Aboriginal Cultural Cruise

Embark on a journey to discover the stories of the Eora, Gadigal, Guringai, Wangal, Gammeraiagal and Wallumedegal people. Come ashore on an island in Sydney Harbour for an authentic Aboriginal cultural performance. Learn the Aboriginal names and meanings of significant Sydney landmarks and uncover traditional fishing methods and food gathering techniques.

Includes

- Informative and entertaining commentary about significant Sydney landmarks and their Aboriginal names and history
- An Island visit. Clark Island is part of Sydney Harbour National Park
- Authentic Aboriginal cultural performance
- Tea/coffee
- Please note there are no bar facilities onboard

Departures

- **Wednesday – Sunday** from Eastern Pontoon, Circular Quay
- 02 October 2011 – 31 March 2012 3.00pm – 5.00pm
- 01 April 2012 – 30 September 2012 1.00pm – 3.00pm
- 01 October 2012 – 31 March 2013 3.00pm – 5.00pm

Retail Prices valid to 31 March 2013 (Tour Code SAB)

- Adults \$60
- Concession \$45
- Child (5-14yrs) \$40

Cruise duration

2 hours

Boarding

Please arrive at departure point at least 30 minutes prior to departure.

Reservations & Enquiries

- Book Online www.tribalwarrior.org
- Phone (02) 9699 3491
- Email sales@tribalwarrior.org

Ask about our exclusive charters, tailored to your needs with a range of cultural experiences and catering options.

Things to remember

Tribal Warrior Cruise departs in all weather conditions, subject to minimum numbers. Please bring good walking shoes and an umbrella/raincoat for use on the island during wet weather. If your cruise is cancelled you may rebook another Tribal Warrior Cultural Cruise or a credit can be made towards any Tribal Warrior Cultural Cruise (subject to availability). We regret refunds are not available. Concession = Australian Pensioners & Senior Card Holders. Full time students (all nationalities).

Special prices and/or itineraries apply to special events.

Cruise operates subject to minimum numbers. Tribal Warrior reserves the right to change vessels, prices and itineraries without notice.

(Tribal Warrior Association, 2012)

Appendix I: Australian Meat Pie Recipe

The meat pie is considered somewhat of an iconic food in both Australia and New Zealand. And while over the years tastes have evolved, the pie continues to have a firm place in the hearts and mouths of both countries.

Meat Pies are very popular at sporting events and on construction sites. They also make delicious party or picnic food and are simple to make.

Ingredients:

- 1 Tbs of olive oil
- 1 medium brown onion, finely chopped
- 400 grams of ground, lean beef (beef mince)
- 1 Tbsp of cornstarch
- 3/4 cup of beef stock
- 1/8 cup of tomato paste
- 1 Tbsp of Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp vegemite or substitute 1 vegetable stock cube
- 4 sheets frozen, ready-rolled pie pastry, thawed
- 1 egg, beaten
- 4 small pie tins & baking tray
- Tomato sauce (ketchup)



Preparation:

1. Heat the oil in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the onion and fry for 3-4 minutes or until soft and translucent.
2. Add ground beef and cook for 3-4 minutes, stirring and breaking up with a wooden spoon until browned.
3. Combine cornstarch and 1 tablespoon of beef stock and stir well. Set aside.
4. Add remaining beef stock, Worcestershire sauce, tomato paste and Vegemite to beef. Stir well to combine. Add cornflour mixture and stir. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes or until thick. Remove from heat and cool.
5. Preheat oven to 220°C.
6. Place a pie tin on pastry and cut a circle around it. Repeat process to make another 3 circles -- these are the pie tops. Set aside.
7. Place pie tin on pastry again and cut a circle that's slightly larger than tin (about 1/2 inch bigger) -- this is the pie base. Repeat process to make another 3 bases.
8. Press base pastry into pie tins and press up the sides. Fill with meat mixture. Brush rims with water.
9. Place pie tops over meat. Use a fork to press edges to seal. Trim edges if necessary. Brush tops with egg.
10. Place pies on to a baking tray and bake for 20 minutes or until golden. Serve with tomato sauce (ketchup).

(Wongkaew, 2012c)

Appendix J: ANZAC Biscuit Recipe

The ANZACs were WWI soldiers from the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps. The crunchy ANZAC biscuit was made by women on the home front and sent across the sea to their soldiers. Originally named "Soliders' Biscuits" and containing just flour, sugar, milk powder and water, these simple biscuits were made to endure the journey at sea. Now the biscuits are more of a treat with the addition of butter, golden syrup and desiccated coconut. ANZAC Day is a national holiday in Australia and New Zealand celebrated annually on April 25.

Prep Time: 20 minutes

Cook Time: 15 minutes

Total Time: 35 minutes

Ingredients:

- 180 (12.5 Tbsp) grams of butter, melted
- 1 cup of all-purpose flour
- 1 cup of sugar
- 1 cup of unsweetened desiccated coconut
- 1 cup of rolled oats
- 1 Tbsp of golden syrup
- 1 tsp of baking soda
- 1/4 tsp of salt



Preparation:

1. Heat the oven to 350F (180C). Line a baking tray with baking paper. Set aside.
2. In a small saucepan, melt the butter over a medium heat. Add the golden syrup and baking soda to the butter and stir well. Remove from heat and set aside.
3. Mix together the flour, oats, sugar, desiccated coconut and salt in a mixing bowl.
4. Add the melted butter to the dry ingredients and stir with a wooden spoon to combine ingredients.
5. Roll about 1 1/2 tablespoons of dough into small balls and flatten between the palms of your hands. Place dough on baking tray about 4 cm (1.5") apart to allow room for spreading.
6. Bake the biscuits for about 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Remove the biscuits from the oven and let them sit on the baking tray for 5 minutes.
7. Remove the biscuits from the tray and cool on a wire rack.

Yield: 10-15 biscuits

(Wongkaew, 2012a)

Appendix K: Asian Vegetable Stir-Fry Recipe

The last thing I feel like doing when I get home from work is cooking a labor-intensive meal. That's where this Asian Vegetable Stir-fry Recipe comes in handy. This recipe is packed full of nutritious greens such as asparagus, broccolini, zucchini and snow peas. It also includes delicious shitake mushrooms high in iron and protein. For an extra dose of protein, I add a handful of roughly chopped macadamia nuts into the mix.

Ingredients:

- 10 asparagus stalks, chopped into 2 inch pieces
- 2 cups of snow peas
- 2 cup of chopped broccolini or broccoli
- 1 medium zucchini, chopped
- 3 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 6 shitake mushrooms, sliced with stalks removed
- 1/8 cup of soy sauce
- 1 tbs of Thai fish sauce
- 1 tbs of cornstarch dissolved in 1/2 cup of cold water
- 1/2 tsp of dried chili flakes
- 1/4 cup of unsalted macadamia nuts, roughly chopped
- 3 cm piece of ginger, slivered
- 2 tbs of vegetable or canola oil
- 1 1/2 cup of basmati rice
- Scant 3 cups of water



Preparation:

1. Wash and chop all the vegetables. Set aside.
2. To prepare the rice, steam it in a rice cooker. If preparing rice on the stove, add the 1 1/2 cups of rice to a small saucepan with scant 3 cups of water. Bring to the boil and then lower heat and partially cover with a lid. The rice should take about 10 minutes to cook. Remove from heat and set aside.
3. Now for the stir-fry. Heat the oil in a wok over a medium heat. Fry the garlic and chili flakes for 30 seconds. Add the broccolini and fry for about 2 minutes. Add the rest of the vegetables and ginger and fry for 3 minutes.
4. Now add the soy sauce and fish sauce. Stir well to coat the vegetables. Add the 1/2 cup of water with dissolved cornstarch. Stir well to mix together the liquids.
5. Give the vegetables one more stir for 30 seconds. The liquid will start to thicken. Add the macadamia nuts and then serve stir-fry on a bed of rice.

(Wongkaew, 2012b)

Appendix L: Barbecued Sweet Potato, Corn, and Haloumi Salad Recipe

The barbecue isn't only for cooking meat or seafood. Why not try a salad instead with this barbecued sweet potato, corn and haloumi salad topped with a dressing of fresh herbs, garlic and lemon juice.

Haloumi is a semi-hard Cypriot cheese made from either sheep's or goat's milk. It's salty and squeaky and holds its shape very well when cooked, while still remaining soft on the inside. Haloumi can be baked, fried or barbecued but only cook it for about a minute on each side so it doesn't dry out.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium sweet potato, sliced into 1" (2.5cm) rounds
- 1 medium cob of corn
- 1 round of haloumi cheese, cut into 8 slices
- Olive oil for brushing
- Mixed salad greens for 2
- ***DRESSING***
- Juice from 1/2 lemon
- 1 small clove of garlic, finely chopped
- 1 Tbsp of finely chopped fresh mint
- 1 Tbsp of finely chopped fresh basil
- 1/4 tsp of sugar
- 1/2 tsp of sea salt
- 1/8 tsp of dried chili flakes



Preparation:

1. Make the dressing by combining the dressing ingredients in a small bowl. Whisk with a fork to combine. Set aside.
2. Heat up the barbecue.
3. Par-boil the sweet potato slices for 4 minutes. Drain and then pat dry with paper towels. Brush sweet potato and corn with a little olive oil and barbecue for about 4 minutes on each side or until soft. Allow sweet potato and corn to cool.
4. Slice off corn kernels and set aside in a bowl.
5. Assemble salad greens in two serving bowls. Top with corn and sweet potato rounds.
6. Barbecue haloumi for about 1 minute on each side and then add to salad. Drizzle on the dressing and serve.

(Wongkaew, 2012d)

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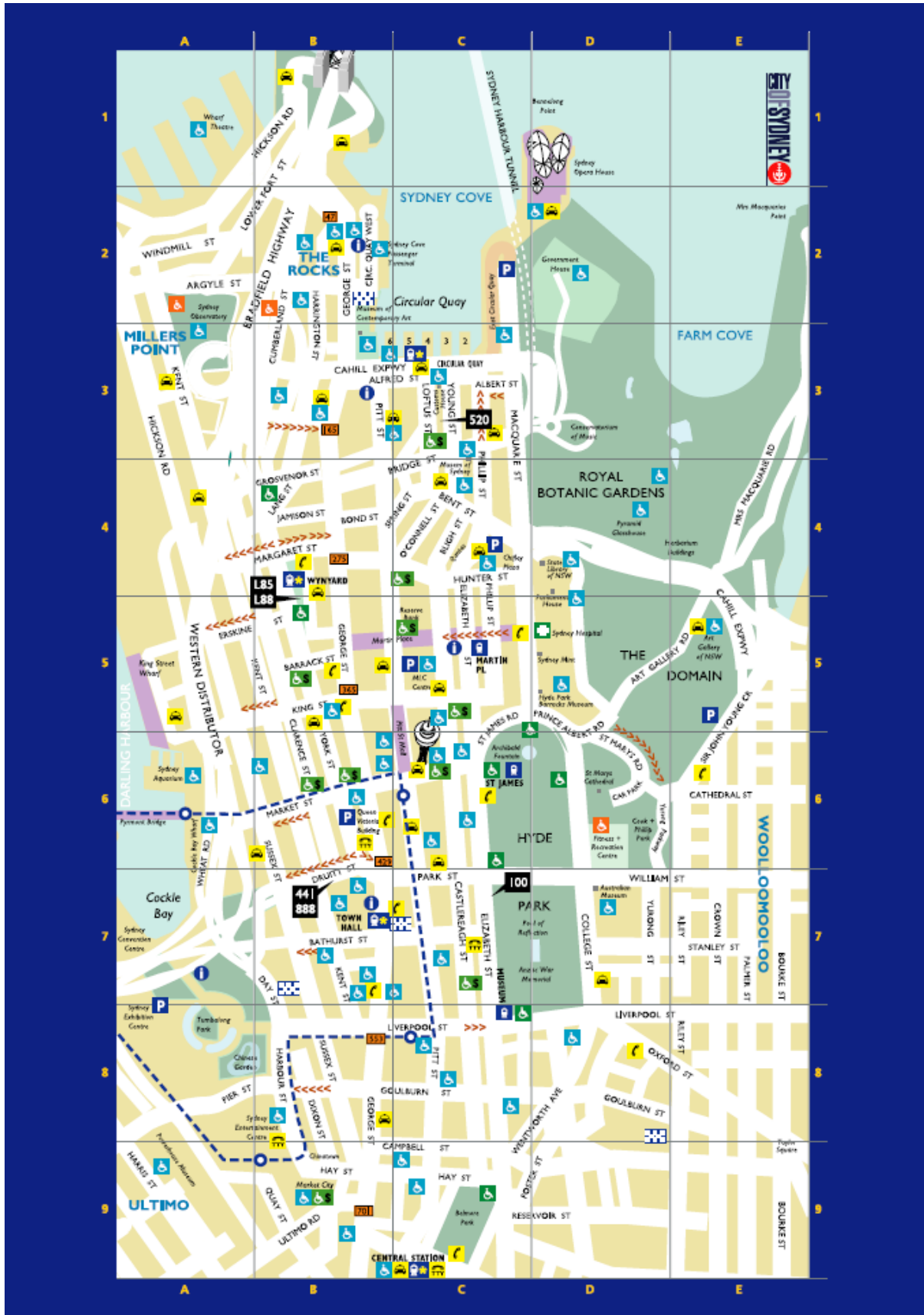


The *Exploring Sydney* 4-day orientation includes:

- ◆ Guided tours to popular sites around the city
- ◆ Ghost tour (optional)
- ◆ Cultural cruise around Sydney Harbor
- ◆ Opportunity to view and interact with Australian wildlife up close
- ◆ Chances to taste traditional Australian food
- ◆ Dinner in the Sydney Tower revolving restaurant.
- ◆ Transportation within the city, housing, most meals, and 24-hour support







Information Point		A7 Darling Harbour B2 The Rocks, Cnr George & Argyle Sts B3 Circular Quay, Cnr Pitt & Alfred Sts B7 Town Hall, George St C5 Martin Place, near Elizabeth St		
Automatic Public Toilets		C6 outside Hyde Park North, Cnr Park & Elizabeth Sts C6 outside St James Station, Elizabeth St C3 Hyde Park North at Junction Macquarie St D6 Hyde Park North, College St, opposite St Marys Cathedral C8 outside Museum Station, Cnr Elizabeth & Liverpool Sts C9 Belmore Park, Hay St B5 outside Wynyard Park, York St, opposite Erskine St B4 York St, Cnr Grosvenor St		
Toilets City Sites and Attractions		D7 Australian Museum, G-8 College St (level 2) C9 Capitol Theatre, 13 Campbell St, Haymarket (ground floor & level 1) C3 Circular Quay, Alfred St A6 Cockle Bay Wharf, Sussex St D2 Government House, Macquarie St (behind Govt. House) C4 Gov, Phillip Tower, cnr Phillip & Bent Sts (level 8) B3 Museum of Contemporary Art, 140 George St, The Rocks (ground floor) C3 Museum of Sydney, cnr Bridge & Phillip Sts (level 1) D2 Opera House (lower concourse) A9 Powerhouse Museum, 500 Harris St, Pyrmont (levels 2 & 3) D4 Royal Botanic Gardens, Mrs Macquaries Rd A6 Sydney Aquarium, the Promenade, via Sussex St B8 Sydney Entertainment Centre, Harbour St, Haymarket (upper & lower levels) A3 Sydney Observatory, Watson Rd, The Rocks A1 Sydney Theatre Company, (Wharf Theatre) Hickson Rd, Walsh Bay B7 Sydney Town Hall, 483 George St (use Drutt St entrance) B7 Sydney Town Hall Library, level 3, Town Hall House, 456 Kent St B2 Sydney Visitor's Centre, 106 George St, The Rocks		
Toilets Recreation and Community Centres		B2 KGV Recreation Centre, Cumberland St, The Rocks D6 Cook + Phillip Park, 4 College St A2 Millers Point Activity Centre, 17 Argyle St, The Rocks		
Train Stations		C6 St James Station C8 Museum Station C5 Martin Place Station		
Easy Access Train Stations*		C3 Circular Quay* Station B4 Wynyard* Station B7 Town Hall* Station C9 Central* Station		
Taxi Ranks Safe City Taxi Rank*		C3 Alfred Street, Circular Quay Station B4 Carrington Street, Four Seasons Premier Menzies Hotel C6 Park Street, McDonalds* D7 College Street, Marriott Hotel B3 George Street, Four Seasons Hotel* C4 Phillip Street, Chifley Towers* B5 York Street, Grace Hotel C6 Market Street, Centrepoint and Pitt Street Mall More symbols on map for additional taxi ranks		
Wheelchair Accessible ATMs		B5 Commonwealth Bank, cnr Barrack & York Sts C7 Commonwealth Bank, 260 Castlereagh St C4 Commonwealth Bank, 68 Pitt St (cnr Hunter St) C3 St George Bank, 20 Loftus St B6 Westpac Bank, 34 Market St (cnr Clarence St) C5 Reserve Bank (Martin Place) C6 ANZ Bank, AMP Tower, Westfield Centrepoint (Food Court) B9 ANZ Bank, Market City, Chinatown (Level 1) C4 ANZ Bank, cnr Pitt & Hunter Sts B6 ANZ Bank, cnr York & Market Sts C5 Westpac Bank, cnr King & Castlereagh Sts		
Parking Stations		B6 Queen Victoria Building, York St A8 Sydney Exhibition Centre, Darling Drive C2 Opera House, Macquarie St, Bennelong Pt E5 The Domain, Sir John Young Cr (entrance St Marys Rd) C5 Theatre Royal, MLC Centre, 120 King St C4 Chifley Tower, 2 Chifley Tower, Hunter St		
Accessible Buses		C7 BUS 100 — City to Airport C3 BUS 520 — City to Parramatta via West Ryde B5 BUS 185 — City to Neutral Bay B5 BUS 188 — City to Northern Beaches B7 BUS 441 — City to Art Gallery B7 BUS 886 — City to Circular Quay		
Police Stations		B7 Day Street, Darling Harbour C7 Cnr Bathurst & George Streets, Sydney D8 Goulburn Street, Surry Hills B2 Cnr George & Argyle Streets, The Rocks		
Hospital		D5 Sydney Hospital, Macquarie St		
				
Bus Shelter Telephone	TTY Telephone	Monorail Station	Gradient	George Street Building Numbers

Map of Circular Quay

>>> Gradients

Gradient warnings are indicated on the map. The arrows indicate the downhill grade. Warnings are provided for streets with an inclination of 1:14 or steeper.

— Kerb Ramps

City of Sydney has collated information on gradients for all kerb ramps in the CBD area. Those in the detailed map of Circular Quay have been plotted. The kerb ramps you see on this map marked in **brown colour** will be difficult to negotiate without assistance. The ramps in blue should be easily negotiated.

i For information contact the City of Sydney on 1300 651 301, or TTY: 9265 9276.

☎ Telephones

The telephones plotted on this map are either TTY phones or those inside bus shelters.

♿ Automatic Public Toilets

These toilets are fully accessible. Audio and visual instructions are provided in the toilets. Usage is limited to 20 minutes and is controlled by an alarm. This alarm is accompanied by a flashing light to let the user know that the door will be opening in a few seconds. These toilets are brightly lit and secure and are open 6am to 12 midnight. The toilet bowl and floor are cleaned, disinfected and dried automatically after use.

♿ \$ Automatic Teller Machines (ATM)

The ATMs plotted on this map have been lowered to enable people with disabilities to access them from a wheelchair. All ATMs have visual text prompts as well as written instructions posted nearby.

🔊 Audio Crossing Signals

Many crossings in the Sydney CBD are fitted with audio cues at traffic lights. The detailed map of the Circular Quay area shows where the audio crossing signals are.

Tactile Street Signage

Additional Tactile Streetname plates are being progressively installed on traffic light poles throughout the CBD. Information on streetname and building numbers is provided in Braille next to the traffic light push-button to assist visually impaired people to navigate to various street destinations.



Transport Information

More information about accessible transport and timetables is available from:

Transport Infoline	131 500
TTY	1800 637 500
Web	www.sydneytransport.net.au
Monorail	9552 2288



Buses

Accessible Sydney buses will display the international wheelchair symbol. Ramps are extended and the suspension is lowered to help you board. Priority seating and spaces are made available. Accessible buses are fitted with brighter handrails and better lighting and have wider doors. There are accessible bells as well as an emergency alarm if you require assistance from the driver or other travellers. Accessible bus stops around the city have been plotted on this map. As all buses are not accessible, intending passengers should contact the Transport Infoline to check which services are accessible.

Monorail

The monorail operates everyday running every 3-5 minutes linking the city to Darling Harbour and providing easy access to other tourist attractions like the Entertainment Centre and Powerhouse Museum. All monorail trains are accessible and carriages are equipped with ample space to accommodate wheelchairs and other mobility aids. Good access to all stations is in place. Tickets can be purchased at all stations and the trains run till late.



Taxis

Taxis can be hailed from the street or engaged at designated taxi ranks. Secure ranks (operating on Friday and Saturday nights) are plotted on this map along with the locations of fixed ranks. Supervision operates Friday night until 5:00am and Saturday night until 2:00am. Under the Taxi Transport subsidy scheme people with a disability can get a subsidy. Taxis are designed for people with fixed wheelchairs. Kerb ramps have been provided at 10 key taxi ranks to assist access into rear loading taxis.



Trains

CityRail is currently developing a network of Easy Access Stations featuring lifts, ramps and hearing loops at booking offices to make communication easier. Those stations featuring all or some of those access facilities are denoted with a special symbol which is a train with a star beside it. The brochure Welcome to CityRail lists the facilities at all stations.

Ferry Services

For further information call 131 500

Further sources of disability information

Disability Organisations

Disability Council of NSW

9211 2866

Fax (02) 9211 2271

FREECALL 1800 044 848

Disability Services Australia

9791 6599

www.dsa.org.au

Physical Disability Council of NSW

9552 1606

Fax (02) 9552 4644

FREECALL 1800 688 831

www.pdcnsw.org.au

Emergency Services

All emergencies 000

TTY emergency calls (then ask for 000) 1800 067 167

Telstra Telephone Assistance

Voice 1800 068 424

TTY 1800 808 981

Further source of access information

Botanical Gardens Information Centre 9231 8125

Darling Harbour Information Centre 9286 0111

Pymont and Ultimo access information –

Sydney Harbour Foreshores Authority

9373 2800

(City of Sydney, n.d.)

Appendix O: The CISabroad Health Form



Overseas Study Program Health Information

The purpose of this form is to help CIS to be of maximum assistance to you should the need arise during your study abroad experience. Mild physical or psychological disorders can sometimes be aggravated under the stresses of life while studying abroad. It is important that CIS be made aware of any medical, psychological, or learning problems, past or current, which might affect you while you are abroad. The information provided will remain confidential and will only be shared with program staff, faculty or appropriate professionals if pertinent to your own well-being.

CIS may not be able to accommodate all individual needs or circumstances. This information does not affect your admission into the program. Please contact your CIS advisor if you have any questions.

Your Name*

First:

Last:

Today's Date:*

MM/DD/YYYY:

1. Are you generally in good physical condition? (if no explain below) *
YES NO

Explanation 1:

2. Have you ever been treated or are you currently being treated for any psychological or emotional problems? (if ye explain below) *
YES NO

Explanation 2:

3. Do you have any allergies? (if yes explain before) *
YES NO

Explanation 3:

4. Are you taking any medications? (if yes explain below) *
YES NO

Explanation 4:

5. Have you ever had any injuries, diseases, ailments or operations in the past five years? (if yes explain below) *
YES NO

Explanation 5:

6. Are you a vegetarian or are you on a restricted diet? (if yes explain below) *
YES NO

Explanation 6:

7. Is there any additional information (concerning medical condition, physical or learning disabilities) that would be helpful for the program staff to be aware of during your study abroad experience? (if yes explain below) *
YES NO

Explanation 7:

By submitting this form, I certify that all responses made on this Health Information form are true and accurate and I agree to notify CIS staff hereafter of ny relevant changes in my health that occur prior to or during the program. *

I Agree _____