Cross-Cultural Confidence: A Program Design for Accessible Intercultural Competence on Campus

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CROSS-CULTURAL CONFIDENCE: A PROGRAM DESIGN FOR ACCESSIBLE INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE ON CAMPUS

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PIM 74

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

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ABSTRACT

Internationalization is currently one of the greatest issues facing higher education today. Colleges and universities have sought to produce graduates who are globally ready and capable of effectively navigating intercultural situations due to increasing diversity in the workplace and globalization; however, it has become apparent that efforts towards this end have not paid off as well as it was assumed they would. Now that US universities are admitting greater numbers of international students, intercultural competence and programs which build connections across cultural groups have become increasingly important on campus.

This capstone seeks to fashion an accessible, effective, on-campus program for the State University of New York at Plattsburgh, which can provide a model for direct development of intercultural competence for university students. This Cross-Cultural Confidence program takes into consideration the particular needs of international and domestic students regarding intercultural contact through institutional support. Participants will learn intercultural competencies that will allow them to feel more confident when interacting with people of different cultural backgrounds and gain awareness of their own cultural point of view. This six-part, semester-length series will utilize workshops and participation in pre-existing cultural activities and events. Workshops will cover content which follows the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) as a guide for learning goals and objectives, and to help students understand and progress in their intercultural sensitivity. Workshops will also make use of experiential learning techniques to encourage reflection on the learning taking place. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), an assessment tool based off of the DMIS, will be used to measure participant learning and the effectiveness of the program.
Introduction

The State University of New York (SUNY) at Plattsburgh is a public, comprehensive university in the northeast corner of New York State with 5,377 students. A majority of the student population are from the upstate New York area and Long Island. SUNY Plattsburgh boasts a population of 339 international students with 65 countries represented (SUNY Plattsburgh, 2016b). This makes it one of the most international schools in the SUNY system, which contains 64 institutions. SUNY Plattsburgh emphasizes career training, internships, study abroad opportunities, and experiential learning (SUNY Plattsburgh, 2016a). Of the majors on campus, the most popular are in business and economics, marketing, education, nursing, and sciences.

The Global Education Office, known as GEO, was recently created by combining international admissions, international students and scholars services, and study abroad all together in one office. The result is a team that is easily able to communicate, collaborate, and share resources. I spent my practicum year as a graduate intern here, and originally I was involved in immigration matters. After the first semester, my duties were shifted towards engagement programming, since it suited my strengths and interests.

Regardless of which area I worked in, I had contact with many of the international students at the school and had the opportunity to talk with them about what their experience at Plattsburgh was like. Most of them reported a positive opinion of the school and of our office, but many also expressed frustration at interactions with domestic students and the difficulty of making friends with them. This made me begin to ask questions about this problem. How do domestic students gain practice at interacting with people unlike themselves? How are they encouraged to increase their intercultural communication skills and to what extent? How do we
encourage these oftentimes very separate camps of international and domestic students to interact with each other more? How could we provide space and programming for social integration? Are both domestic and international students informed about how intercultural competence and communication skills will help them in their future careers?

In response, I have designed an on-campus, semester-long, certificate program which intends to increase the intercultural competence of its participants. This program will entail teaching and learning objectives based on five stages of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, consisting of events and workshops. It is designed based on scholarly literature, needs assessment, and examples of other successful programs.

**Literature Review**

**Rationale**

As globalization increases, internationalization efforts strive to meet its challenges, develop globally ready graduates, and provide financial benefits from the export of higher education to students from other countries. “International students bring information (social, political, or economic) about their home countries and thus widen the instructor’s and the [domestic] students’ perspectives on the world” (Ladd & Ruby, 1999, p. 363). This is mere theory, however, considering that while these students bring their cultural identities and experiences to their institution, their presence alone is insufficient to widen the perspectives of their peers and instructors. According to Brydon and Liddel (2012), “a truly internationalized curriculum seeks to develop the intercultural competence of students to perform socially and professionally in a multicultural environment and seeks to develop the students’ understanding of their own and other cultural perspectives” (p. 998). Efforts to meet this challenge take on many forms: peer mentoring or buddy programs, community service, international perspectives and topics in the curriculum, extracurricular events, forums, recruitment, study abroad, etc.
However, the need to develop graduates who emerge from higher education prepared to be globally-oriented individuals has not been met. An intercultural environment abroad or with international students on campus may exist, but without a structured learning processes connected to these conditions, intercultural competence generally cannot be expected as an outcome (Bennett, 2010, p. 419; Knight, 2011, p. 14). International topics in the classroom which are purely informational and do not explore affective as well as cognitive learning fail to engage students in intercultural empathy (Mahoney and Shamber, 2004). While study abroad is a popular means to increase intercultural competence, only a small percentage of students will have access to this programming, and its ability to significantly increase intercultural competence is still under debate (Bennett, 2010, p. 419; Root and Ngampornchai, 2013; Salisbury, An, and Pascarella, 2013). It is also conceivable that many colleges and universities simply do not have the resources to create or experiment with a comprehensive, intensive intercultural competency program. Without providing more accessible, effective opportunities to cultivate intercultural competence, integration will be an extremely difficult, if not impossible, goal to reach.

This is not to say that all internationalization efforts which fall under these categories fail at building intercultural competence, but rather that all program concepts have weaknesses. It is through the failings and problems of some of these efforts that it can be seen more clearly what is necessary for creating a truly effective program with the goal of intercultural competence.

The keys to reaching this goal are manifold, but at the heart of the issue is the need for international and domestic students to interact with each other more regularly and effectively. The answer lies in understanding the needs and circumstances of these two factions and how they perceive one another. For example, if it is understood that students feel anxiety about their
interaction with different cultural groups, their need to feel more supported by the institution becomes a central part of creating an effective event or program centered on social integration (Dunne, 2009, p. 230). Students’ attitudes towards one another are cited by Deardorff (2009) as being important for the acquisition of intercultural skills and knowledge (p. 212). There is a great diversity of factors involved in these needs and circumstances which must be understood in order for an institution to successfully set up intercultural programming which brings domestic and international students together (Dunne, 2009, p. 234).

Student Population

International and domestic students are equal partners in the internationalization effort on campus. Both of these groups gain benefits from meaningful interaction and friendship-formation, both groups are necessary for deep and diverse intercultural experiences, and both groups ought to be equally important in the eyes of the institution. Without equal consideration of their needs and circumstances in regards to intercultural contact, it is much more difficult to understand how to help them come together. These next two sections, therefore, will discuss some of the factors which concern and affect international and domestic students’ interaction with each other.

International Student Needs

The transition to college is often a difficult process even for the domestic student, but for the international student, this transition is fraught with acculturative stress. This type of stress, associated particularly with living in a new culture, includes “lowered mental health status (especially confusion, anxiety, depression), feelings of marginality and alienation, heightened psychosomatic symptoms, and identity confusion” (Kashubeck-West and Sullivan, 2015, pp. 1-
2). Because of these factors, international students are particularly at risk for physical and mental illness during their time at university.

A study by Kashubeck-West and Sullivan (2015) found a direct correlation between the amount of acculturative stress and the amount of broad-based social support an international student has: the more social support, the less acculturative stress (p. 6). To meet this need, many schools have created resources and programs catering to international students specifically, such as orientation for international students, buddy programs, freshman courses for international students, ESL programs and services, and community service programs to name a few.

Despite these endeavors, however, international and domestic students simply do not mix very often. This is not to say that international students always fail at building relationships with domestic people in the United States. There are individual successes, but studies have shown evidence that this problem is widespread, with around 40% of international students nationwide reporting that they have no American friends (Gareis, 2012). This indicates not only a failure to generally increase intercultural competence on campus, but also a failure to provide a socially supportive environment for international students among their domestic peers. Compounding the problem are the increasing numbers of racist events occurring against international students and other minority groups on campus (Redden, 2012) as well as the tendency for faculty to view the presence of international students in their class as negative based on their perceived English language skills (Brydon and Liddel, 2012, p. 998).

*Domestic Students*

While there is a great deal of research on the perspective of international students on their experience at domestic schools, there is far less regarding the attitudes of domestic students, their perceptions of intercultural contact, and why it so often fails to happen. A study
by Dunne (2009) found that domestic students at a university in Ireland experienced four issues related to cross-cultural interaction: anxiety, effort, language, and compromising identity. Of these issues, anxiety was the most powerful. Domestic students feared being judged, feeling guilt from causing offense, and being ridiculed in cross-cultural situations (Dunne, 2009, p. 232).

Domestic students also perceived that intercultural contact was too demanding (due to the other three issues listed) and did not provide enough rewards for the contact to continue (p. 233). Adopting a different communication style also contributed to discouraging interactions, since domestic students felt that this did not provide an authentic social experience and required them to compromise their identity (pp. 233-234). Dunne (2009) refers to the latter as “host students altering what they talk about, the way they talk about it, and how openly and honestly they talk about it, during an intercultural encounter” (p. 234). It is pointed out that this way of communicating creates obstacles for self-disclosure, which is a crucial part of relationship building (Dunne, 2009, p. 230; Pettigrew, 1998, p. 76).

If these obstacles are overcome, there are great benefits to be gained on the side of domestic students as well as international. Studies have found that greater intercultural engagement on the part of domestic students had a positive effect on students’ interaction with people of other nationalities, on their intercultural competence, and on their educational and career decisions (Jon, 2013). The interactions occur at a deeper level and their behaviors and attitudes are more open, self-aware, curious, and cooperative (Parsons, 2010).

Other Initiatives

There are a few examples of successful intercultural programs with goals including social integration of international and domestic students and intercultural competency-building.
I-House (The College of New Jersey)

This student residence is a living-learning community (LLC) whose aim is to engage “a community of domestic and international students in a variety of leadership and learning opportunities, including field trips, special events and house discussions that will help individuals learn more about other cultures as well as their own. Additionally, domestic students will pair up with international students to help them learn about the campus community and campus traditions.” (The College of New Jersey, 2016)

Students who have successfully applied to this program take a required course, host and plan cultural events, learn about intercultural communication and cultural self-awareness, and must sign a learning contract (The College of New Jersey, 2016).

The ongoing nature of this program, the close living proximity of its participants, and the emphasis on cultural self-awareness and intercultural communication are all factors that give this program a strong foundation, as the theories presented in this paper will argue. The addition of a course related to the goals of the LLC provides facilitation of the learning experience while living, working, and communicating with people from different cultural backgrounds every day, which theoretically could lead to deeper and more meaningful learning. Its main limitation is that the house can provide living space for a very limited number of students.

Boiler Out (Purdue University)

This program at Purdue University is a community service volunteer program which provides opportunities for international and domestic students to work together and get to know the local community. The program consists of an orientation session, volunteer events, and guest speakers. Volunteers must participate in at least one service activity per month and attend at least one guest speaker per semester (Purdue, 2016).

While the program provides a space for international and domestic students to interact, there are some limitations in regards to intercultural competence development. The program
relies on spontaneous interaction between students with no facilitation to help students understand or reflect upon their cross-cultural experiences. Just as study abroad programs often have re-entry programs to help students reflect upon and solidify learning from their experience, the Boiler Out program could also use these tactics to anchor learning for students in this program. As will be argued later through the theoretical foundation of this paper, casual conversations about cultural differences may have some effect towards building intercultural competence, but they lack the ability to bring about deeper learning as regards intercultural perspective-shifting and empathy.

*Global Citizenship Certificate Program (Florida State University)*

“Students who enroll in the Certificate take two required and two elective academic courses and participate in international and/or cross-cultural experiences and events on campus. Such active learning and reflection, together with cross-cultural interaction and dialogue, help provide the invaluable cross-cultural skills and competencies needed to be a global-ready graduate” (Florida State University, 2016).

This multi-faceted program makes use of several styles of learning, making it accessible to different types of learners. In addition to the requirements above, participants must engage in a sustained cross-cultural experience, such as study abroad or volunteer work. They must also participate in eight cultural events on campus of different categories: social, cultural, experiential, and educational. Its focus is clearly and directly set towards developing intercultural competence in its participants.

The intensity of this program is a strength as well as a drawback. There may be many students who cannot or will not make the time commitment necessary to complete this program; however, this is offset by an advisor who helps the students plan out their path. Fulfillment of the requirements can be spread throughout the time the student is enrolled at the university. The
nature of the program allows great flexibility in the number of participants, who do not need to apply, but enroll.

**What is intercultural competence?**

The term “intercultural competence” is difficult to define. This is due in part to the lack of agreement on a definition by scholars (Deardorff, 2006, p. 242) and the use of many similar terms utilized in various fields of study when referring to a set of skills which increase the ability to communicate and interact with someone from a different culture. These include multiculturalism, global competence, cultural intelligence, intercultural sensitivity, and cross-cultural adaptation, to name a few (Deardorff, 2011, pp. 65-66). For the purposes of this paper, the term “intercultural competence” will be used. Deardorff (2011) defines this term as “effective and appropriate behavior and communication in intercultural situations” (p. 66), which seems most effective for use in this paper considering that it refers to any intercultural situation and does not situate the interaction with any reference to geography. Intercultural competence can be just as useful in one’s own community as on the other side of the globe.

**Theoretical Foundation**

There are three main theories which provide the foundation for an on-campus, non-academic intercultural competency program.

**Allport’s Contact Theory**

Gordon Allport (1954) posited an intergroup contact theory which states that positive effects of intergroup contact occur when four conditions are present. These conditions are: equal status within the situation, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and the support of authorities, law, or custom (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 66). Before discussing these conditions, it is important to understand that any situation involving intergroup contact involves ingroups and outgroups. As
terms used in psychology and social identity theory, “ingroup” refers to a group we feel we belong to, and “outgroup” refers to a group we feel we don’t belong to. In short, “us” and “them” (McLeod, 2008).

For both ingroups and outgroups to experience positive effects while interacting, they must be equals within the situation or context in which they are interacting. This could be a classroom, a workplace, or any social setting. Regardless of the various levels of status they have in the outside world, within the environment in which positive interaction is hoped for, they must all be treated equally. While “equal status” can mean many things, what is most important is how both ingroups and outgroups perceive their status within the situation (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 66).

The next condition for positive intergroup contact is for both groups to share a common goal. In teams actively relying upon all members for success, for example, positive interaction and feelings about the other group tend to increase (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 66). This condition goes along with the next: intergroup cooperation. Intergroup competition has been shown to have a negative effect and interdependency to have the reverse effect (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 67). The support of authorities, law, or custom provides the necessary social support for the previous three conditions to be effective. Authority provides rules, norms, and expectations and has the ability to reinforce equality within the situation and encourage intergroup cooperation (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 67).

Allport’s four conditions have held up under research, but they are not always able to explain intergroup behaviors. Therefore, Pettigrew (1998) suggests that there are also four processes which must accompany the four conditions in order to explain and/or create situations with positive intergroup interaction and behavioral, attitudinal change. These processes are:
learning about the outgroup, changing behavior, generating affective ties, and ingroup reappraisal (p. 70).

It follows as logical that learning about groups outside of one’s own would help to increase a positive or at least more open attitude about them. In fact, many universities rely perhaps too much on “fast fact” cultural events, or courses centered on information or ethnography on other cultural groups. A study by Mahoney and Schamber (2004) showed that this style of cultural learning is inadequate for creating the kind of empathy needed to significantly increase positive intergroup interaction which is the aim of many of these events or courses. The point Pettigrew makes is that, by itself, this process is insufficient. It requires the four conditions and other three processes in order to be effective (1998, p. 71).

Changing behavior starts with a new situation, and therefore new expectations. With these expectations reinforced by authority support, behavior must adjust accordingly. Pettigrew (1998) states, “If these expectations include acceptance of outgroup members, this behavior has the potential to produce attitude change. We can resolve our dissonance between old prejudices and new behavior by revising our attitudes.” He further stipulates that repetitive contact over time is the key to increasing positive, comfortable interaction between groups (p. 71).

The process of generating affective ties refers specifically to emotion. Positive or negative intergroup contact comes with emotions, and anxiety or fear often plays a role in initial contact. This can, in turn, spark further negative emotions which are then related to interaction with the other group. Repeated positive interactions, however, have the reverse effect, and have the potential to increase empathy between groups (Pettigrew, 1998, p.71). Friendship with an outgroup member can increase positive feelings not just for the individual, but for the whole
outgroup (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 72). In other words, generating affective ties means building relationships and bonds with outgroup members.

Ingroup reappraisal is essentially self-awareness and awareness of the norms or behaviors of one’s ingroup with new perspective from knowledge concerning the outgroup and their point of view. Pettigrew refers to this as “deprovincialization.” (1998, p. 72) He includes in this process increased contact with outgroups and less contact with one’s ingroup (p. 73). The power of intergroup friendship as a means to reduce prejudice is one that is emphasized over and over in this theory. Pettigrew even posits a fifth condition to place alongside of Allport’s four:

“The contact situation must provide the participants with the opportunity to become friends. Such opportunity implies close interaction that would make self-disclosure and other friendship-developing mechanisms possible. It also implies the potential for extensive and repeated contact in a variety of social contexts.” (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 76)

While this theory has been generally supported by research, questions have arisen regarding how much individual and social differences shape the effects of the conditions and processes specified by Allport (1954) and Pettigrew (1998). Under controlled and ideal circumstances, the theory is extremely effective at changing attitudes and developing positive relationships between groups (Pettigrew, 1998, p. 79). Yet intergroup conflict and social norms can have a large influence on whether or not conditions for positive interaction have the desired effect. High levels of intergroup anxiety, hatred, and other negative emotions experienced by individuals also can render the presence of the conditions and processes moot. Conversely, societies and individuals have the power to make different choices regarding their policy towards outgroups and create space for the conditions and processes to take place (Pettigrew, 1998, pp. 77-79).

Allport’s contact theory and Pettigrew’s updated version both strive to create circumstances for attitudinal change between groups and, to a certain extent, to capture the
development process that takes place. For the latter purpose, however, tracking progress of individuals gets messy, as Pettigrew himself states that the processes often overlap each other (1998, p. 75).

**Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)**

This model, created by Milton Bennett in 1993, comprises of a developmental continuum of six stages from the extreme end of ethnocentrism to the opposite end of ethnorelativism. The benefits of this model, unlike that of Allport and Pettigrew’s contact theory, are that it is functional across cultures. In other words, regardless of what society a person is a part of, the DMIS remains an accurate way to gauge their intercultural competence (Hammer, 2011).

The first stage is Denial, in which individuals are unable to recognize and experience cultural differences due to isolation and/or living in homogenous environments. One’s own culture is the only “real” one. It is characterized by disinterest in difference and even aggressive tactics to avoid encountering it (Bennett, 2004, p. 63). They may categorize those culturally different from them in broad stokes with terms such as “foreigner” or “immigrant” and lack the ability to see the distinction between different nationalities. People in the denial stage may ask unsophisticated questions of people from other cultures (ex. “Do you have cell phones in India?”) and may also make shallow statements of tolerance (ex. “As long as they speak English, there will be no problems.”) However, “Denial is not a refusal to ‘confront the facts.’ It is instead an inability to make the perceptual distinctions that allow cultural facts
to be recognized” (Bennett, 2004, p. 64). People in this extreme end of ethnocentrism need to learn to recognize cultural differences and begin to reconcile stability and change in order to move to the next stage, “Defense” (Bennett, rev. 2011, pp. 1-2).

In the Defense stage, the individual has become more aware of cultural differences, but is yet unable to understand the cultural “other” at a fully human, complex level. They also still perceive their own culture as the superior, “civilized” culture in the world. Instead of experiencing interest in the cultural differences they see, they instead interpret them as threats to their own culture and organize their world into “us” and “them.” While this stage’s behaviors are most commonly associated with dominant cultural groups, they can also be attributed to non-dominant ethnicities, who develop these tendencies as “discovering and solidifying a separate cultural identity in contrast to the dominant group” due to pressure to conform to the dominant culture (Bennett, 2004, p. 65).

Within this stage is Reversal, which is essentially a case in which a person changes sides in the “us” versus “them” mentality, and forms negative, stereotypical views on their own cultural group and positive, stereotypical views of another. This should not be confused with an ethnorelative understanding, as people in this category have not yet acquired a complex, fully human comprehension of either group (Bennett, 2004, p. 66).

In order to progress to the next stage, people in Defense or Reversal need to begin to see the common humanity in all people regardless of ethnicity or nationality, and to learn about differences which exist within their own group, or in the case of Reversal, differences within the outgroup which they have adopted (Bennett, rev. 2011, p. 4).

The next stage, Minimization, takes the idea of common humanity across cultures and assumes a more positive view of difference, but has not reached a sophisticated
experience of it. The outward appearance of this stage is that of the individual having acquired cultural sensitivity, when in fact, this stage struggles to acknowledge difference deeper than the superficial. This allows the individual to neutralize the threat experienced in Defense by generalizing people across cultures into familiar categories and assumptions (ex. Universal human biology, needs, motivation, values, emotions, etc.) (Bennett, 2004, p. 66).

Those in this stage assume that their own cultural worldview is universal and fail to recognize that this is an ethnocentric point of view. Because they cannot yet acknowledge the depth of cultural difference, they expect similarity in values and perspectives which may not exist (Bennett, 2004, pp. 67-68). The development of cultural self-awareness, learning about dominant culture privilege, and reconciliation of unity and diversity are necessary for moving ahead to ethnorelativism (Bennett, rev. 2011, p. 5-6).

The first stage of ethnorelativism is Acceptance, in which the individual becomes capable of seeing their own culture as merely one of many complex worldviews. Bennett (2004) stresses that the term “acceptance” in this case should not be equated with agreement - one may have a liking for a particular culture without recognizing that it possesses its own distinct reality (pp. 68-69). Because those at this stage are able to view behaviors within their cultural context, they can understand the subjectivity of what is “good” or “bad” according to different value systems. Their own personal values and perspective may become awash with ideas from other cultures and they may be hesitant to apply ethics to cross-cultural scenarios. Therefore, to move on to the next stage, they must reconcile this relativity with a commitment to their own values and sense of self, as well as cultivate their analysis of cultural contrasts (Bennett, rev. 2011, pp. 7-8).
From there, one moves to the Adaptation stage, in which one is now able to shift from one cultural perspective to another, alter their behavior accordingly, and potentially experience intercultural empathy (Bennett, rev. 2011, p. 9). Adaptation involves the addition of behaviors and values, which differentiates it from assimilation, in which one’s previous sense of cultural self is replaced by conforming to one of another culture. In Bennett’s terms:

“…You might be to some extent German critical, Japanese indirect, Italian ironic and African American personal, in addition to your primary European American male explicit style. Insofar as each of these behaviors emerged from a feeling for the various cultures, they would all be authentically you…” (2004, p. 71)

Progressing from this stage, Bennett stipulates, does not necessarily increase intercultural competence, but has more to do with shifting one’s own cultural identity (2004, p. 72). For this, one must increase cognitive and intuitive empathy, and expand one’s repertoire of authentic behaviors (Bennett, rev. 2011, p. 10).

The last stage of the DMIS is Integration, which most often expresses itself as bi- or multi-culturalism. People at this stage tend to consider themselves marginal, belonging to no culture in particular. This can either manifest itself as alienating and isolating, or as a way to participate easily with many different cultures. Those who have lived as expats in several different countries or who have adapted to living among another dominant culture tend to have this experience of cultural difference. Development for this stage, in contrast to the others, involves boundary-setting and identity construction and support (Bennett, rev. 2011, p. 11-12).

The DMIS provides a path that a program can follow, suggests the kind of ideas that each stage needs to be exposed to in order to progress to the next level, as well as ways to support and challenge learners at each stage of development. Unlike internationalization
efforts which rely on learning facts and information about specific cultures, using Bennett’s model allows for the development of a universally valid, cross-cultural mentality. It also provides the basis for the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), an assessment tool for measuring the intercultural competence of individuals, which can be used to determine the intercultural competence levels of participants in a program centered on this subject.

**Kolb’s Model of Experiential Learning**

While the previous two theories will help determine the content and structure of the program, Kolb’s model provides the structure of the facilitation style and learning processes within the program. Experiential learning is a processes in which a learner looks back at an experience with critical analysis in order to gain insight and change their perspective and/or behaviors (White, 2006).

Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle contains four learning modes: “concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation…learning occurs
most effectively when all four modes in this cycle of learning are completed” (Brooks-Harris & Stock-Ward, 1999, p.9). In other words, learners must first have a concrete experience, such as an activity, event, etc. They then must reflect on this experience and express their thoughts and ideas with others. Through analyzing the group’s responses, patterns and commonalities can be discovered (White, 2006, p.1).

In the next stage, “abstract conceptualization”, participants hypothesize about what the groups’ insights mean in terms of their world or milieu. They consolidate what they’ve learned. In the final phase, “active experimentation”, the participants speculate on how this learning can be used in their lives and how their behavior could change (White, 2006, p. 1).

Needs Assessment

SUNY Plattsburgh, as said in the introduction, currently has over 330 international students – a high number for a school of 5,377 students and compared to most other SUNY schools. There is no statistic for the current overall population of domestic students of color, but the incoming freshman class of fall 2015 included 29.6% students of color. The population of the school is mainly from New York State, with only 58 American students coming from out of state (McDonald, 2015). These proportions combined with the somewhat isolated, predominantly white local population present a need to provide support for minority groups on campus. This need has been recognized with the creation of the Center for Diversity, Pluralism, and Inclusion (CDPI), which develops diversity-oriented engagement programming, but generally does not include international students’ concerns in their offerings. These are considered the role of the Global Education Office.

The Global Education Office deals directly with the needs of international students. It has a strong International Student and Scholars Services department which is concerned with
immigration support and engagement programming for international students. Despite its myriad programs, this department’s repertoire is lacking in programming which focuses directly on increasing intercultural competence. Another of its difficulties is that their programs are generally for international students only and there are no initiatives which focus on bringing international and domestic students together. There seems to be a kind of segregation that occurs even when domestic students are invited to an event, in that students tend to assume that all events which have something to do with international students are not intended for domestic students. It seems this might be a common dilemma, as the Boiler Out program at Purdue has suffered from the same stigma (Purdue University, 2016).

No formal survey was taken of students regarding the issue of domestic and international students’ intercultural competence and lack of interaction; however, based on the research discussed in the literature review of this paper, it is reasonable to assume that all higher education institutions in the United States suffer from the same difficulties with regards to encouraging social integration and developing interculturally competent graduates. The context of SUNY Plattsburgh’s campus culture also reveals no major efforts to directly tackle these issues.

The SUNY system at large has a strategic plan set to be completed for 2018 which includes several goals. One of these is to “increase global experiences and multicultural competencies” in which the necessity of intercultural competence for student success is recognized. Two of the objectives listed for the accomplishment of this goal are “continue to build the variety of multicultural and global experiences for all students; and encourage more curriculum development that emphasizes diversity, global issues and multicultural competencies” (SUNY Plattsburgh, 2016c). If SUNY Plattsburgh wishes to increase global
experiences of its students and multicultural competencies, it must explore new methods in regards to its internationalization efforts.

Despite the circumstances of the campus and SUNY Plattsburgh’s goals, there must be a more formal needs assessment based in students’ perceptions and attitudes in regards to interaction with people from other cultural backgrounds and to a possible program to facilitate such interactions. Before resources can be allocated to a new endeavor, it must be ascertained whether there is a perceived need for it. Therefore, a needs assessment survey was created for this purpose (see Appendix A). The survey will also help to see patterns within the responses and point out other relevant factors which relate to intercultural interaction, such as comfort level speaking English, student engagement, or anxiety surrounding cross-cultural situations.

**Program Description**

The Cross-Cultural Confidence (CCC) program is an accessible, on-campus program which aims to increase the intercultural competence of undergraduate students at SUNY Plattsburgh. An on-campus program would largely solve the problem of access to significant intercultural experience and would enable its coordinators to structure the learning process throughout the program. The program will take place in designated classroom space at SUNY Plattsburgh and in its first implementation will accommodate ten students. It will be coordinated by the school’s Student Engagement Specialist or Cross-Cultural Coordinator, who work from the Global Education Office.

This six-part program will occur every other week over the course of a semester. Each part will entail teaching and learning objectives, activities, and reflection based on the first five stages of the DMIS and Kolb’s Model of Experiential Learning. Each part will consist of either an event or workshop which focuses on a specific stage or stages of the DMIS. It will not be credited like an academic course, but will be a personal or career development certificate
program so that students receive proof of and recognition for its completion. Successful completion will be determined by observed participation, demonstrated learning during workshop discussions, and an increased score of intercultural competence through the IDI. Student assessments will be given before and after the program using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to inform the coordinator(s) of the intercultural competency levels of each student and to measure their progress at the end of the program. A program evaluation will be done post-program to assess whether objectives were met.

**Program Goals and Objectives**

**Program Goals**

- Increase intercultural competence of participants
- Increase participants’ confidence in interacting with people of different cultural backgrounds
- Increase social integration of domestic and international students
- Create safe environment in which participants can self-disclose

**Program Objectives**

- Expose participants to different cultural areas of student life and activities
- Guide participants through reflection and experiential learning processes
- Engage participants in activities which require them to interact with different cultural perspectives
- Use the DMIS and IDI to foster self-awareness in participants’ intercultural competence

**Participant Goals**

- Increase one’s personal level of intercultural competence
- Gain insight into one’s own cultural self
- Understand the stages of intercultural development according to the DMIS
Experience shifting from one cultural perspective to another

**Participant Objectives**

By the end of the program, participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate awareness of own intercultural competence and cultural identities
- Explain basic concepts of the DMIS
- Demonstrate insight into another cultural perspective (intercultural empathy)
- Test at one level higher in the IDI than pre-program test

**Curriculum**

Before the program begins, the participants will be required to take the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) test, the results of which will show what level of intercultural sensitivity the students already possess. (More about the IDI will be covered in the Evaluation section of this paper.) This will be used as a tool for students to understand their progress at the end of the program as well as a means of participant and program assessment.

The program will contain three workshops, two to three hours in length, and two external cultural events or activities. At each workshop, participants will receive handouts with information regarding the relevant stage(s) of the DMIS and any other vocabulary or terminology the facilitator deems useful for the workshop topics. They will also be provided with written assignments for reflection at the end of the first two workshops.

The role of either the Cross-Cultural Coordinator or the Student Engagement Specialist will be referred to in the subsequent workshops as the “facilitator.” (For a complete outline of the subsequent workshops, please see Appendix D.)
Workshop 1

The first workshop will concern itself with helping students get to know one another and set norms in order to create a safe space. “A sense of safety is required to overcome the tension-filled moments involved in thinking, discussing, and listening to others during conflict-laden topics” such as multiculturalism when participants will vary in their intercultural sensitivity (Gayle, Cortez, and Preiss, 2013, p. 2). While the safe space is important for the participants’ self-disclosure and for discouraging judgment, it should be acknowledged that a certain amount of discomfort should be allowed. To foster the critical thinking desired in transformative learning, conflict in the learning environment ought to be managed, but not prohibited (Gayle, Cortez, and Preiss, 2013, p. 6). Rules and norms will also serve to provide authority support and equality within the situation.

The workshop goals are to prepare participants for intercultural learning, and increase participants’ awareness of difference and common humanity. By the end of this workshop students will be able to explain basic elements of the first two stages of the DMIS, and recognize general characteristics of denial and defense stages. To begin the experiential learning cycle, the facilitator will show media clips which focus on common humanity across cultures. This, according to Bennett (rev. 2011), is a necessary concept for participants to consider in order to progress beyond the Denial and Defense stages of the DMIS. This will lead into a brainstorming and discussion portion centering on questions which guide the participants through the remaining phases of the experiential learning cycle.

At the end of the workshop, the facilitator will explain the assignment for the next phase of the program. Participants must attend a cultural event on campus regarding a cultural group that is not their own. A list of options will be made available for them to choose from, but students may also suggest events which are not on the list for approval from the facilitator. While
there, they need to take a selfie with someone from another cultural group that they spoke to at the event. They must write a one page reflection entry based on assigned questions to share with the group at the next meeting in 2 weeks’ time.

**Workshop 2**

The goals of this workshop are to increase the participants’ awareness of own cultural identity and familiarize them with the Minimization stage. By the end of this workshop participants will be able to demonstrate cultural self-awareness and explain basic elements of the Minimization stage.

Participants will share their experiences from the event or activity they chose to participate in, referencing their reflection assignment. The facilitator will ask questions about their experiences to connect them with learning from the first workshop. They will then engage in an activity which focuses on cultural self-awareness, in which participants must consider their various social identities. They then share these with others and answer questions about their identities in order to more deeply think about their own cultural identity and gain insight into the complexity of others. Cultural self-awareness and awareness of the complexity of others are ways Bennett (rev. 2011) prescribes for progressing to the next stage of the DMIS. A group discussion will ensue to help students connect their insights with learning about the Minimization stage and how they might use this learning in the future.

Another reflection assignment will be given concerning the second activity or event which the participants must attend. The second event must be one in which there is discussion, debate, or a forum regarding a cultural topic. While there, they need to take a selfie with someone outside of their own cultural group who they talked to at the event. Once again, a list of
appropriate options for this part of the program will be provided and alternatives presented by students will be considered at the discretion of the facilitator.

**Workshop 3**

The goals of the third workshop are to familiarize participants with Acceptance and Adaptation stages of the DMIS, and to help participants resolve personal values and cultural relativity. By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to explain general characteristics of Acceptance and Adaptation stages and explain the basic concept of cultural relativity.

Participants share their experiences from the activity or event they attended, using observations from their reflection assignment and answering general questions about the insights and dilemmas they experienced. From this, there will be a group discussion lead by questions from the facilitator in order to connect observations with the behaviors and attitudes of the Acceptance and Adaptation stages, or other previously covered stages. These questions will also be concerned with learning about cultural perspectives and intercultural empathy.

There will then be an activity centered on the Adaptation stage, in which students will separate into two groups. Each group will be given contrasting behavioral and attitudinal instructions to play out. The groups will then have to attempt to interact with each other effectively. When the activity is finished, a discussion will follow, focusing on observations, reactions, and attempts at adaptation. The facilitator will guide participants to consider how the activity relates to real life, how it is connected to concepts from the Adaptation stage, and how they might use insights from this activity in the future.

The facilitator will then introduce a simplified version of Edward Hall’s Model of High and Low Context Cultures and Hofstede’s Dimensions (see Appendix I) in order to provide participants with a deeper understanding of cultural differences. Participants will have the chance
to think about these models and reflect upon them with guidance from questions provided by the facilitator.

The participants then proceed to an ethical dilemma exercise for which they receive a description of a controversial, intercultural dilemma. In groups, they will discuss what would be the best way to handle the situation. After sharing the group’s ideas with the rest of the participants, the facilitator will guide a subsequent discussion. The participants will be asked to connect their insights from the activity to the Acceptance and Adaptation stages of the DMIS, and how they can continue to understand and empathize with the differences of others while still maintaining a personal value system. At the end of this discussion, the participants will take their second IDI test to compare results with the first, pre-program test.

The last portion of the program will deal directly with the results of both the first and last IDI test. These results will help the participants clearly see how they have progressed through the program. The facilitator will ask the students to share their reactions to the results and what they will take away from their experience in the program. At the end, they will be given a program assessment survey to fill out and return to the facilitator. Those who successfully complete the program and show adequate progress will be awarded a certificate as proof of their accomplishment. They will also receive a special cord to wear at graduation.

Staffing Plan

The staffing requirements for this program are minimal, as it will be run from the Global Education Office at SUNY Plattsburgh, which already has its own support staff and resources. This includes the Student Engagement Specialist (SES), who operates under the International Students and Scholars Services section of that office. This position is responsible for coordinating engagement programming primarily concerned with the needs of international
students. Part of this position’s responsibilities include managing the Partners in Cross-Cultural Learning Program (PICL), which aims to connect international students with members of the local community (SUNY Plattsburgh, 2016d). The SES plans and runs events related to this program in order to facilitate interaction and relationship-building between its members. The Cross-Cultural Confidence (CCC) program would fit in well with this position’s responsibilities.

The SES, however, may already be burdened with too many duties and may not be willing or able to take on the addition of this program. In this case, other programming that is found to be ineffective or unresponsive to the needs of the student body could be eliminated to make room for the CCC program. If this is not possible, another hire could be made to handle the program specifically.

The new position would be known as the Cross-Cultural Coordinator. This position’s duties would include planning, assessment and evaluation, recruitment, marketing, and facilitating the CCC program. The position would also coordinate and liaise with other offices and departments which may help promote and support the program. These offices would include the Center for Diversity, Pluralism, and Inclusion, the Career Center, the Educational Opportunity Program, and internationally focused majors, such as Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Management, Marketing, and International Business.

Marketing Plan

Marketing for this program will rely greatly on the relationships the Cross-Cultural Coordinator and the Global Education Office build with other departments. If these other offices understand the value of the program and how it relates to their own goals, the promotion of the program is able to become more powerful than posters and social media. The support of a wide array of authorities who are in a position to suggest the program as a way of boosting a resume,
or increasing one’s marketability in a particular field would help to create interest in the program and add value to the certificate award offered to successful participants. There are many career fields and majors which may benefit particularly from intercultural competence training. Offices and departments that could be engaged in this effort include the Career Center, the Center for Diversity, Pluralism and Inclusion, the Educational Opportunity Program, Student Activities, and academic departments who concern themselves with international topics. By engaging with these other areas, the program can be promoted in a more tailored, personalized way to students through their advisors, career counselors, and other faculty or staff.

There is a portion of the paperwork for housing sent to accepted students which asks whether students would be interested in having an international roommate. With cooperation from the Housing and Residence Life Office, a list of students who checked this option could be compiled. The Cross-Cultural Coordinator would then use this list to reach out to students who would be more likely to have interest in the CCC program.

Marketing efforts will also include promotional materials, such as a brochure and posters. It will also have a social media presence through the Global Education Office profiles on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram. International students will receive the brochure as part of their orientation materials. Once the first run of the program finishes, photos and accounts from participating students will be also be used for promotion.

Materials will emphasize the value of intercultural competence training for personal and career development, as well as the benefits of access to this learning without having to pay for study abroad programs or leave campus. It will also underscore the award of a certificate and recognition at graduation with a special cord.
Student Admissions and Recruitment

The participants of the program must be full-time students with a minimum GPA of 2.5, the minimum for many study abroad programs. The participation of ten students would be a practical number for the first, experimental implementation of the program. Any students wishing to participate will be required to sign up and fill out an application online which will collect basic information from the students (ex. contact information, a short essay on why they are interested in the program, major field of study, etc.). This information will make the Cross-Cultural Coordinator aware of any possible red flags and also collect data on which students are applying for the program. Red flags might include significantly negative attitudes or a lack of commitment.

Application, acceptance, and assessment of the students would be completed the semester before the start of the program. Assessment would take place in the form of the IDI test so that the Cross-Cultural Coordinator could take into account the intercultural sensitivity levels of the participants. An email with information about dates, times, and locations will be sent to the participants at the very beginning of the next semester.

Logistics

The CCC program will utilize classroom space on campus and will require a large space with eleven chairs and some table space. Desks already provided in the classrooms could simply be moved and arranged in an informal manner, such as a circle, to encourage a feeling of equality. All classrooms on campus are equipped with a computer, projector, speakers, and wireless internet. The scheduling for the class might be strategically placed in the evening or on a Friday afternoon, when most students tend to be free from other classes.
Health and Safety

All SUNY Plattsburgh students are required to abide by the Student Conduct Manual (SUNY Plattsburgh, 2016e), which lays down all the rules of attending and residing at SUNY Plattsburgh. These include rules for student safety and information concerning resources such as the Student Health Center and University Police. These rules, utilization of campus services, and the health and safety policies already established by SUNY Plattsburgh will serve this program and its participants since most, if not all, activities associated with it will take place on campus.

Budget and Budget Notes

Depending on whether old programs will be eliminated, the Global Education Office may have to invest in a new hire for the Cross-Cultural Coordinator position. Candidates for this position must have education and experience in using experiential learning techniques and facilitation styles, knowledge of intercultural communication theories, and practical experience with intercultural communication. Experience or education regarding social justice and diversity issues would also be desirable, though not required. Many schools may find that existing employees do not possess the appropriate skill set, in which case a new hire will have to be made.

The SES at SUNY Plattsburgh does have the skills and background to accomplish the tasks necessary for the CCC program. Considering the amount of time needed to complete all necessary duties, however, it would be unreasonable to ask the SES to add these activities onto her current list of responsibilities. It would be advisable for the office director to consult with her to determine whether she would be interested in the extra work if she were to receive a pay raise. This paper, however, will assume that current circumstances will remain in place, in which case, a new hire is necessary. Other expenses for the CCC program are already paid for by SUNY Plattsburgh, with the exception of the IDI testing.
Cross-Cultural Confidence

<table>
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<th>Expenses</th>
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<tr>
<td>Cross-Cultural Coordinator</td>
<td>$33,000 to $40,000</td>
<td>Year</td>
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<td>IDI Testing</td>
<td>$360</td>
<td>Semester</td>
<td>$720</td>
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Evaluation Plan

The IDI is an intercultural competence assessment tool able to measure accurately across cultures. Based on the DMIS, it is a 50-item questionnaire which can be competed online and evaluated by the providing company, which often will give an individual profile for each participant to explain their results. The IDI test is also often customizable for educational organizations and different age groups. This assessment tool will be used as part of the evaluation plan to determine whether the participants’ intercultural competence improved, which is both a participant and program goal.

Supplementing this will be a program assessment survey filled out by the participants at the end of the program. Participant and program goals will also be evaluated during the final discussion of the program before the survey is taken. General feedback from the participants will also be important for the facilitator and the Global Education Office to consider alterations to the program or the approach of the facilitator during the workshops.

Conclusion

Limitations

One of the greatest limitations of this program is the cost of hiring a new staff member. While a small number of schools create positions especially for engagement and/or cross-cultural programming, many schools place these activities on staff who shoulder other responsibilities and thus may not have time for a program as in-depth and time consuming as this one. Many
schools have several smaller programs and events which aim for cross-cultural interactions, but are unable to reach the depth of consideration needed for the same level of intercultural competence that a program like CCC offers. In many cases, and quite probably for SUNY Plattsburgh, it is simply not within the means of the appropriate office to hire someone only for this purpose. However, if the Global Education Office and other offices of its kind re-evaluate their current programs, they may be able to find ways to cut back on programs that do not ultimately serve the needs of their students to make room in the duties and responsibilities for a position that already exists.

Other limitations include student availability. Despite the bi-weekly nature of the program schedule, asking students to spend two to three hours in the evening or on a Friday can be a tough sell. Many in the sciences have labs in the evenings for a comparable amount of time, preventing participation.

Additionally, the value of the program may not be understood by most students and staff, and may be perceived as yet another cultural activity purposed mainly for international students. This perception could be tackled by an information session at orientation, promotional literature, and more importantly, by promotion from other authorities on campus such as academic departments, the university President, and the Career Center, as outlined in the Marketing Plan section of this paper. The challenge in this effort will be communicating the value of the program to these departments, which may or may not see the value in it themselves or simply may not feel that it relates to their area. Creating conversations on these topics would help open up perceptions about the role of intercultural competence in students’ futures and could have the added benefit of providing insight as to what faculty and department heads need to know about the program before they feel comfortable promoting it.
Closing Statement

Intercultural competence is one of the most emphasized abilities needed to succeed in the 21st century workforce. More and more, organizations are realizing that, despite claims made by universities everywhere regarding the cross-cultural learning they provide, these schools are failing to send out globally-ready graduates. With study abroad providing a costly and debatably worthy experience for some, many others never have the chance to go abroad to gain the competencies they need. Meanwhile, international students on campus represent an often untapped opportunity for intercultural contact which would be of great benefit to both international and domestic students. By providing a comprehensive program on campus which utilizes this diversity, access is provided to many and the extravagant costs of study abroad are taken out of the equation.
References


Appendices

Appendix A

Institution-wide Needs Assessment

Needs Assessment

Please answer all required questions honestly and to the best of your ability. This assessment will help SUNY Plattsburgh improve its efforts to meet student needs. Please be aware that this survey is anonymous and cannot be traced back to you.

* Required

1. How old are you? *

2. Are you a domestic (US citizen or resident) student or an international student (non-US citizen/resident)? *

   Mark only one oval.

   - Domestic
   - International
   - Other:

3. How long have you been at SUNY Plattsburgh? *

   Mark only one oval.

   - 1 semester
   - 1 year
   - 2 years
   - More than 2 years

4. How comfortable do you feel speaking English? *

   Mark only one oval.

   - not comfortable at all
   - somewhat comfortable
   - comfortable
   - very comfortable

5. Do you speak English at home with your family? *

   Mark only one oval.

   - Yes
   - No
6. How did you enter SUNY Plattsburgh? *
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   ☐ Freshman  ☐ Transfer  ☐ Graduate

7. Have you ever interacted with another student who was from a different cultural background than you? *
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   ☐ Yes  ☐ No

8. If yes, how would you describe that experience? *
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   ☐ Positive  ☐ Somewhat positive  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Somewhat negative  ☐ Negative

9. In class, your professor has assigned you a partner for an assignment. Your partner is from another country and you have never spoken with them before. How does this make you feel? *
   
   Mark only one oval.
   
   ☐ Angry  ☐ Curious  ☐ Anxious  ☐ Excited  ☐ Indifferent

10. Optional: please give a short explanation as to why you chose your answer to the question above.

    ..............................................................................................................................
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11. In your opinion, how important is effective interaction with people from different cultural backgrounds to your future career? *

Mark only one oval.

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<td>Very Important</td>
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12. If you wanted to learn how to interact with students from other cultures than yours, how would you prefer to learn? *

Mark only one oval.

- In an extracurricular workshop or program with a teacher or facilitator
- Through casual conversation with students from other cultures
- Through an educational course
- I don’t want to learn this
- Other: _________________________________

13. If you had the option to participate in a non-academic program that would help you learn how to interact effectively with people from other cultures, would you be interested? *

Mark only one oval.

- Yes
- No

14. Please check any of the following programs or services which you have attended or been involved in: *

Check all that apply.

- Internationally-oriented student clubs
- Night of Nations
- PICL
- Courses with an international topic
- Foreign language classes
- Other internationally oriented events on campus
- Center for Diversity, Pluralism & Inclusion (CDPI)
- Diversity Week
- International or diversity-oriented guest speaker events
- None of these
15. People have many different ways of approaching communication with people of cultures different from their own. Please select the statement that matches the most with your own:

* Mark only one oval.

- [ ] "Customs differ, of course, but when you really get to know them they're pretty much like us."
- [ ] "I tend to shift from one cultural perspective to another while having conversations with other cultural groups."
- [ ] "When I speak to people of other cultures, I realize how much better my own culture is."
- [ ] "Sometimes it's confusing, knowing that values are different in various cultures and wanting to be respectful, but still wanting to maintain my own core values."
- [ ] "As long as we all speak the same language, we'll be fine."
- [ ] "I greet people from my culture and people from the host culture somewhat differently to account for cultural differences in the way respect is communicated."
Appendix B

Program Brochure
Outside

"Perhaps travel cannot prevent bigotry, but by demonstrating that all peoples cry, laugh, eat, worry, and die, it can introduce the idea that if we try and understand each other, we may even become friends."
-- Maya Angelou

For more information, please visit the Global Education Office or email the Cross Cultural Coordinator at eclen001@plattsburgh.edu. Apply at: www.plattsburgh.edu/cccprogram/application.pdf

CROSS-CULTURAL CONFIDENCE (CCC) PROGRAM
Prepare yourself for the increasingly international and diverse workplace with the CCC program! We’ll help you learn how to handle cross-cultural communication and situations so that you can thrive and stand out in your career field.

- One semester commitment
- Three workshops in a judgement-free zone
- Take part in fun activities on campus
- Learn from your classmates
- Earn a professional development certificate and a special cord when you graduate

• Boost your marketability
• Enhance your resume
• Become globally-ready
• Earn your certificate award
• Useful for any major

“I’m so glad I did this program. I made some new friends who I would not have met otherwise, and I have some great experience to put in my resume.”
- Jeremy Clarkson, International Business major

“If like me you get nervous talking to people from other countries, you should totally do this program. It helped me overcome my anxiety about offending people and understand other perspectives, which is so important in my major.”
- Mary Shelly, Marketing major

“I’ve been looking for a way to fit in since I came to the USA to study and this really helped me understand my American classmates. Everyone can get something valuable from this program.”
- Mauricio Cortez, Accounting major
Appendix C

List of Campus Intercultural Activities

**Cultural:**

Night of Nations
Vagina Monologues
Holi Festival
International Performance Art events
Black Poetry Day Reading

Multicultural Alliance:

- National Coming Out Week
- Native American History Month
- Latino Heritage Month
- Black History Month
- Women’s History Month
- National Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- National Hazing Prevention Week
- Traditional Multicultural Holidays and Celebrations
- Multicultural & World History and Customs
- History of the North Country

Theater of the Oppressed performance
Black History Month Banquet

**Discussion:**

Guest Speaker Event – Race Relations and US History

Center for Diversity, Pluralism & Inclusion (CDPI) events

- Film Series & Wrap Sessions
- Faculty Panel Discussion Series
- Diversity Enlightenment Sessions

Know Better, Do Better: College, Racism, and YOU

Multicultural Alliance events

- Multiculturalism in America: A College Student’s Perspective Panel Series
Experiential:

International club meetings and events

Spring Break in the North Country

Community Service Club – Halloween Trick or Treat Safety

Tunnel of Oppression
Appendix D

CCC Program Workshops

Workshop 1

2 hours, 10 students

Introductions - 5 min

Icebreaker – 10 min

Explain and provide handout(s) for general program and timeline – 5 min

Goals and Objectives – 5 min

- Program
- Participant
- Workshop 1

Workshop 1 Goals

- Prepare participants for intercultural learning
- Increase participants’ awareness of difference and common humanity

Objectives

By the end of this workshop students will be able to:

- Explain basic elements of the first two stages of the DMIS
- Recognize general characteristics of Denial and Defense stages

Establish group norms – 5 min

Get-to-know-you activity – 10 min

Introduce basic concept of DMIS, explain Denial and Defense/Reversal stages (handout) – 15 min

Media – film clips, art, news centering on common humanity of cultural groups – 5 min

Brainstorm and Discussion – 40 min

- What was the media about?
- What did the media make you think about/feel? Why?
- What kind of attitudes and behaviors tend to encourage this view of humanity? What kind of attitudes and behaviors discourage it?
- Which of these attitudes or behaviors have you experienced or witnessed? What happened?
- How are these attitudes or behaviors linked to Denial or Defense?
• Where do these behaviors come from? What do they say about society?
• Why is it important to recognize and understand Denial and Defense attitudes/behaviors?
• How can we use our understanding of these stages in real life?

Explain and hand out assignment for the next session – cultural activity

• Participants must attend a cultural event on campus regarding a cultural group that is not their own. While there, they need to take a selfie with someone they talked to at the event. They must write a short (1 pg) reflection entry to share with the group at the next meeting in 2 weeks’ time.
• Reflection Assignment questions: What did you learn about the culture you experienced? How were they different from you? How were they the same?

Provide list of cultural events on campus w/I the next 2 weeks

**Workshop 2**

2 hours, 10 participants

Warm-up activity - 5 min

Introduce Workshop Goals and Objectives – 2 min

Goals

• Increase participants’ awareness of own cultural identity
• Familiarize participants with the Minimization stage

Objectives

By the end of this workshop participants will be able to:

• Demonstrate cultural self-awareness
• Explain basic elements of the Minimization stage

Quick review of learning from last workshop – 5 min

Participants share experience from cultural activity – 15 min

• What did you learn about the culture you experienced? How were they different from you? How were they the same?
• How did you feel about their differences? Their similarities?
• Do any of these experiences connect to concepts within Denial or Defense stages? Why or why not?

Introduce and describe the Minimization stage (handout) – 5 min

Self-Awareness Exercise

• Participants fill out handout with eight spaces, each for a different identity important to who they are – 5 min
Participants pair up and share these identities – 5 min
In pairing, answer questions and listen to partner’s answers. – 15 min
  o Which identities are the most important to you?
  o Which identities are shaped by your ethnic/cultural group? How?
  o Have your identities changed over time? How?
  o Which identities are you most/least comfortable with? Why?
  o How would you feel if someone ignored one of these identities? How would this affect your communication with that person?
Share with group an insight you gained about yourself and your partner - 15 min
Discussion – 15 min
  o What are we learning about ourselves as human beings?
  o Why are these lessons important?
  o How are these lessons connected to the Minimization stage?
  o How can we use our understanding of this stage in real life?

Explain and hand out assignment for the next session – discussion/forum activity – 5 min
  o Participants must attend an event on campus in which there is discussion, debate, or a forum regarding a cultural topic. While there, they need to take a selfie with someone outside of their own cultural group who they talked to at the event. They must write a short (1 pg) reflection entry to share with the group at the next meeting in 2 weeks’ time.
  o Reflection Assignment questions: What perspectives did you hear from? What insights did you gain? What questions or dilemmas arose for you?

Provide list of events on campus w/i the next 2 weeks – recommend attending with others in program

Workshop 3
2 hours, 10 participants
Quick review of learning from last workshop – 5 min
Introduce Goals and Objectives – 3 min
Goals
  • Familiarize participants with Acceptance and Adaptation stages
  • Help participants resolve personal values and cultural relativity
Objectives
By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to:
  • Explain general characteristics of Acceptance and Adaptation Stages
  • Explain basic concept of cultural relativity
Introduce and describe cultural relativity, Acceptance and Adaptation stages (handout) – 5 min

Participants share experience from cultural activity. Group participants according to the specific event attended or topic of event(s). In groups, participants discuss - 15 min

- What perspectives did you hear from?
- How did people communicate?
- What did you observe/notice about the discussion/forum?
- What insights did you gain?
- What questions or dilemmas arose for you?

Groups share main points of their discussion – 15 min

General Discussion - 10 min

- Do any of the behaviors and attitudes you experienced and/or observed (at the event) relate to the stages of Acceptance or Adaptation? Why or why not?
- What are we learning about being able to see and empathize with the perspective of another cultural group?

Adaptation activity - 15 min

- Separate participants into two groups, A and B, which will represent two different cultural groups
- Group A goes outside or to another room
- The groups receive different instructions. They contain the behavior and perspective of their cultural group which the participants must exhibit.
- Groups A and B get 2-3 minutes to practice their behaviors
- Group A returns to the room with Group B
- The two groups must mingle as though at a party and try to have a successful conversation with someone from the other group
- After mingling, Groups A and B reveal their cultural behaviors and perspectives

Discussion questions – 20 min

- What happened? What did you notice?
- How did you initially react to people from the other group?
- How did you adapt in order to more effectively communicate with those from the other group?
- Where do interactions like these happen in real life?
- What insight can we gain about communication and culture from this activity?
- How might we now approach a situation involving a member of a different culture given these insights?
- How do these lessons relate to the Adaptation stage?

Break – 10 min
Introduce a simplified version of Edward Hall’s Model of High and Low Context Cultures and Hofstede’s Dimensions – 10 min

- On their own, participants think or write about these questions: - 5 min
  - Is it clear which traits you see as positive or negative? Why or why not?
  - Which traits do you identify most with? The least?
  - Are there traits you don’t identify with personally that you find positive? Which ones and why?
  - How might the traits you see as negative become positive in a different cultural context?

Participants share answers with a partner – 10 min

Ethical Dilemma Exercise – 15 min

- Divide participants into two groups and give them a handout with a description of an intercultural dilemma
- The groups must decide what would be the best way to handle the situation

Discussion: - 15 min

- What made this scenario difficult or complicated?
- What ideas did your groups come up with?
- How can we use our insights about cultural differences to handle complicated situations like this one?
- How does this learning relate to the Acceptance and Adaptation stages?
- How can we continue to understand and empathize with the differences of others while still maintaining a personal value system?

Participants take IDI test – 20-30 min

Wrap Up Session

1 hour

Hand out results of first and last IDI assessment to participants – 10 min

Discuss the following: - 15 min

- What surprised you about the results? Do you feel they are accurate?
- What are the main ideas you will take away from this experience?
- How do you think you will use this learning in the future?

Hand out program assessment survey for participants to complete and hand in - 15 min
Appendix E

Workshop 1 Handout

What is the DMIS?

Created by M. J. Bennett, the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity is a continuum between the extremes of ethnocentrism to ethnorelativity which demonstrates growth from one stage to the next. Growth is generally characterized by how one experiences difference.

Denial: the first stage in the DMIS characterized by an inability to interpret difference due to cultural isolation and/or living within a homogenous society. People at this stage see difference at a highly superficial level and lack the motivation to see or understand it. “As long as we all speak the same language, there’s no problem.”

Defense: the second stage, characterized by those who are more aware of cultural differences than the stage before, but find difference threatening. Differing cultures are hierarchical, with one seen as superior to others. There is a reverse version of this stage in which a person may hold a culture not their own as being superior to theirs. “When I go to other cultures, I realize how much better my own culture is.”
Appendix F

Workshop 2 Handout

Minimization

This is a level of cultural sensitivity which seems to reach beyond ethnocentrism, but in fact reinforces ethnocentric thinking. At this stage, people see everyone across cultures as being essentially the same, having similar needs and values. This assumption imposes their cultural norms and worldviews upon others. Comprehension of cultural difference is still shallow, focusing on aspects like food, music, traditions, and festivals as representations of culture (culture with a big ‘C’).

“No matter what their culture, people are pretty much motivated by the same things.”

Social Identities: How many different identities do you have? Think of your cultural background, your family traditions, your beliefs, ideas you relate to.
Appendix G

Workshop 3 Handout
Terminology

What is cultural relativity?

The idea that no culture is superior to any other culture. People displaying cultural relativity find all cultural beliefs equally valid and that find that truth, right and wrong are relative, depending on cultural context.

Acceptance

The first stage of ethnorelativity; allows a person to see actions and behaviors within their cultural context. Culture creates many viable alternatives to the organization of life, and this stage causes people to be curious about these different ways of seeing and doing. This stage can accept difference without necessarily agreeing with it and sometimes people here can struggle between their acceptance and the maintenance of their own values.

“People in other cultures are different in ways I hadn’t thought of before.”

Adaptation

The stage in which a person is capable of changing their perspective and behavior to suit the norms of a different cultural group. This is due to the development of intercultural empathy, which allows authenticity when a person shifts between cultural behaviors. This stage often occurs for those of multi-cultural origin and those who have lived in a different culture for an extended period of time and have thus had to adapt to the new society they live in.

“I greet people from my culture and people from the host culture somewhat differently to account for cultural differences in the way respect is communicated.”
Appendix H

Workshop 3 Handout
Adaptation Activity

Instructions: Read the description of your group’s behaviors and attitudes and practice them with others in your group until the facilitator comes to retrieve you. You are about to attend a party with a group from another culture and your goal is to successfully mingle and converse with them.

Group A:
You are a warm and affectionate people who show respect by friendly touch and showing that the other person has your full attention. To look away while someone is speaking would be considered rude. When you want to speak, you don’t worry about interrupting others - it’s just part of lively conversation. Talking loudly together shows that you are both interested in the conversation and are having a good time.

Instructions: Read the description of your group’s behaviors and attitudes and practice them with others in your group until the facilitator comes to retrieve you. You are about to attend a party with a group from another culture and your goal is to successfully mingle and converse with them.

Group B:
You are a reserved people who show respect by averting the gaze. Looking into someone else’s face while you are talking is considered rude, as is interrupting someone when they are speaking. Conversation is quiet and words are thought of very carefully before using them. This is because your people pride themselves in the artistry of conversation and language. Men and women cannot touch unless they are related or married because touch is considered sacred and only for the closest people in your life.
Appendix I

Workshop 3 Handout
Cultural Models

High and Low Context Cultures
(Edward T. Hall)

High Context:
- Communication is indirect and uses nonverbal or situational cues
- Group is favored over the individual
- Hierarchical
- Work is conducted through relationship-building
- Formal
- “Save face”
- Slower pace and fluidity
- Deep, long-lasting friendships

Low Context:
- Communication is direct, efficient, and purposed to simply get or give information
- Individual is favored over the group
- Equality
- Relationship-building interferes with work
- Informal
- Values blunt honesty
- Faster pace and punctual
- Shallower, temporary friendships

Geert Hofstede’s Dimensions

- **Power distance index (PDI):** “the extent to which the less powerful members of organizations and institutions (like the family) accept and expect that power is distributed unequally.”

- **Individualism vs. collectivism (IDV):** “degree to which people in a society are integrated into groups.” “I” versus “we.”

- **Uncertainty avoidance index (UAI):** “a society's tolerance for ambiguity,” or its ability to handle the unexpected or unknown.

- **Masculinity vs. femininity (MAS):** In this dimension, masculinity is defined as “a preference in society for achievement, heroism, assertiveness and material rewards for success.” Its counterpart represents “a preference for cooperation, modesty, caring for the weak and quality of life.”

- **Long-term orientation vs. short-term orientation (LTO):** the connection of the past with the present and future. Adaptation and change versus tradition.

- **Indulgence vs. restraint (IND):** “a society that allows relatively free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life and having fun.”

Appendix J

Workshop 3 Handout
Ethical Dilemma Activity

You are a junior in college who has spent the last several months studying abroad in China. While there, you fell in love with the Chinese culture and language. Though you’ve had difficulties with culture shock while living with your host family, you have generally adjusted and adapted fairly well. Your host sister is very excited about a festival that is approaching and she and her family have invited you to come along with them to share this experience. You are also very excited, until you learn that this is the Lychee and Dog Meat festival in Yulin.

You are horrified because you love dogs and you care about the fair treatment of animals. You do not want to go to this festival since you know it would be a bad experience for you. But you also do not want to be rude to your host family. This is a long-standing tradition in their culture and they place a great deal of significance on it.

How would you handle this situation?
Appendix K

**CCC Program Assessment**

Please answer the following as honestly as you can. This is not a test, but a way for us to see whether or not this program has done what it was intended to do.

* Required

1. **In your opinion, how valuable is this program?**
   *Mark only one oval.*

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<th>5</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not valuable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Very valuable</td>
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2. **What did you find most valuable?**

3. **Least valuable?**

4. **Would you recommend this program to your friends?**
   *Mark only one oval.*

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<th>Yes</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>No</th>
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5. **How much more confident do you feel if you were to find yourself in an intercultural situation?**
   *Mark only one oval.*

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<tr>
<td>No more confident than before</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Much more confident</td>
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6. **Do you feel motivated to interact with people from other cultural backgrounds?**
   *Mark only one oval.*

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<tr>
<td>Not at all</td>
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<td>Very much</td>
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7. How safe did you feel to express your point of view during the workshops? *
   Mark only one oval.

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   Unsafe | | | | | Very safe |

8. How would you rate the abilities of the facilitator? *
   Mark only one oval.

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   Poor | | | | | Excellent |

9. Optional: Please tell us how this program has benefited your experience at SUNY Plattsburgh.

   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________

10. Do you think that your learning from this program will be beneficial to your future career? Please briefly explain why or why not. *
    __________________________________________
    __________________________________________
    __________________________________________
    __________________________________________
    __________________________________________