Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

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Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

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Capstone for partial fulfillment of Master’s degree in International Education at SIT Graduate Institute in Brattleboro, Vermont

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Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Table of Contents

Acronyms .......................................................................................................................... 5
Abstract ................................................................................................................................. 6
Introduction .......................................................................................................................... 7
Background ........................................................................................................................... 8
  Current Italy Program ........................................................................................................ 9
  Literature Review ........................................................................................................... 10
Needs Assessment-Intercultural Communication through Study Away (ICTSA) Course ................................................................. 15
  Survey methodology ....................................................................................................... 15
  Student Cross Cultural Interactions ............................................................................... 16
  Course Credit Equivalency .............................................................................................. 18
  Intercultural communication courses currently offered to higher-ed students ............. 20
KSC Course: Intercultural Communication through Study Away (ICTSA) Course ...... 21
  ICTSA Course Description ............................................................................................ 21
  Course participants ........................................................................................................ 22
  Course Scope .................................................................................................................. 23
  Course Timeline ............................................................................................................. 23
Curriculum .......................................................................................................................... 25
  Instructional Methods .................................................................................................... 29
  Pre-Departure Overview ............................................................................................... 31
  In-country overview ...................................................................................................... 32
  Return sessions ............................................................................................................... 33
  Class Topics .................................................................................................................... 33
Staffing Plan ....................................................................................................................... 35
Student Recruitment and Admissions .............................................................................. 36
Marketing Plan-Students & Faculty ................................................................................. 37
Logistics ............................................................................................................................... 38
Health & Safety .................................................................................................................. 38
Crisis Management ............................................................................................................. 39
Budget ................................................................................................................................. 40
Evaluation Plan ................................................................................................................... 41
Conclusion ........................................................................................................................... 42
Bibliography ....................................................................................................................... 43
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

**Acronyms**

ICC: Intercultural communication competence

LdM: Lorenzo de Medici

KSC: Keene State College

ICTSA: Intercultural Communication through Study Away

DMIS: Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity

GEO: Global Education Office

ISP: Integrative Study Program

WSU: Winona State University

UA: University of Arizona

UCLA: The University of Los Angeles
Abstract

Today’s society is becoming more interconnected and globalized, making intercultural communication competence (ICC) a necessary competence. Universities are responding to this demand through study away programs. Many students are encouraged to study away during their undergrad years. However, as Alfred and Bryarm (2002) found there is no guarantee a student will enhance their ICC through a study away experience. This capstone project outlines an ICC learning opportunity for students while on the Italy study away program, run through Lorenzo de Medici (LdM) International Institute in Florence, Italy. Lorenzo de Medici is a study abroad institute at which Keene State College (KSC) students are directly enrolled in Florence, Italy.

The capstone project proposes the one credit Intercultural Communication through Study Away (ICTSA) course designed as a co-curriculum to the student’s Italy study away program. The course will be a foundation for ICC learning that will consist of intercultural communication, culture, identity and forms of communication theories and topics. Milton Bennett’s (1986, 1993, 2004, 2013) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (DMIS) is a key theory which will be used throughout the course. The course will draw upon lecture, dialogue, cross-cultural experiences and guest speakers to deliver key concepts. The foundation students receive through this session will provide guidance in understanding their interactions, their new culture and their own culture. This will create movement across Bennett’s (1986) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. This movement will also allow students to communicate more effectively across cultures, allowing them to have a better quality experience. The objective of this course is to develop a deeper understanding of ICC through the use of each student’s everyday study away experiences, theory and intentional reflection. To meet course
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

objectives, Kolb’s experiential learning theory (1984) and a learner-centered learning environment will provide necessary framework.

Introduction

As a study away advisor at KSC I work with many students throughout the entirety of their study away process. This opportunity has piqued my interest in student ICC growth while away, specifically on the Italy program. On average the Global Education Office (GEO) sends 15 students per semester on the Italy program. The Italy study away program run through LdM is situated in Florence and caters to study abroad students from all across the world. This capstone project outlines and provides support for an ICC learning opportunity for students who are registered to study on the Italy study away program. The learning opportunity provided to students will be through the form of the one credit course ICTSA offered during the pre-departure, in-country and post study away phases of the study away experience. The course will offer a foundation for ICC learning that will consist of intercultural communication, culture, identity and forms of communication theories and topics. Theories will be delivered in multiple formats to meet all student learning styles. The support students receive through this session will provide guidance in understanding their interactions, their new culture and their own culture. This will create movement across Bennett’s (1986) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. This movement will allow students to communicate more effectively across cultures, allowing them to have a better quality experience. The objective of this course is to develop a deeper understanding of ICC through the use of each student’s everyday study away experiences, theory and intentional reflection. This capstone will first provide you with documented
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

information on why there is a need for the ICC course and then will lay out the ICTSA course curriculum, design, logistics, and marketing processes.

Background

In my role as GEO advisor overseeing the Italy program I have had the opportunity to assist many students throughout their study away process and have gained immense interest in the program as a whole. The Italy study away program allows KSC’s undergraduate students the opportunity to study abroad for a semester or a year. While the program is popular, students often return lacking one credit toward their degree program, along with unmet expectations of a true cultural immersion experience.

While away, students are required to take a full 12-credit load of courses per semester, and one course needs to be an Italian language course. Many students who enroll do so with the intent to explore a new culture, earn required academic credit and build their resumes. The Global Education Office (GEO) supports students in reaching their goals by providing programs which “enhance your academic coursework and keep you on track to graduating on time” (Global Education Office, 2017, p. 2). This is all while striving to ensure the student is “engaged in their learning” (Global Education Office, 2017, p. 1). The GEO supports students in achieving these goals by assisting them through their course and housing selection process. Additionally, the GEO informs students of all opportunities to get involved in the Florence community. However, it is up to the student to make the final choice on their courses, housing and whether they do a language exchange with a host national or volunteer in the community.

Upon the student’s return, through an informal sit down, an advisor discusses the study away experiences. However the sit down is not mandatory and often happens organically with
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

approximately 30% of the returnees when students stop by to say ‘hi’ or have a follow-up question. The past conversations have highlighted frustration in course equivalency upon return while also revealing that most students experience little integration into the Florence community. KSC is not an anomaly when it comes to lack of integration and new cultural knowledge of a host community. According to Pekenpaugh (2013), “Study abroad is often touted as the ideal means to incite linguistic and cultural competence, the reality of student learning is not a given” (p. 8). If a student does not immerse themselves, reflect on their home culture, their identity and their new culture, it will be hard to enhance their ICC skills.

The GEO Director recognizes the issue of students lacking one credit and the lack of meaningful cross cultural interactions. The creation of a one-credit ICC course, proposed as this capstone project, that students could take simultaneously while studying away seems to be a reasonable solution to both problems. However in its current form, the program does not offer a substitute for the credit equivalency problem or a program to enhance student ICC learning. The course will begin prior to their departure, continue through their study away program and conclude upon their return to the States.

Current Italy Program

The Italy study away program is run through Lorenzo de Medici (LdM) in Florence, Italy. The LdM program allows undergraduate students from across the world to study abroad for a semester or a year at their institution. The LdM institution is established to provide courses and a support system to solely study away students. KSC is an official affiliate of LdM which allows for an easy enrollment process for all KSC students. While away, they are required to take a full 12-credit load of courses per semester, and one course needs to be an Italian language course. In addition to LdM’s hands-on classes, which use the city of Florence as their classroom, LdM
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

offers students opportunities to integrate themselves into the community. Students can immerse themselves in all things Florence by doing language and/or cultural exchanges, staying with a host family and participating in volunteer opportunities. LdM advertises their volunteer opportunities as “giving back to the community while experiencing personal growth and intercultural growth” (Lorenzo De Medici, 2015, p. 1). However, many students do not take advantage of this opportunity that is offered to them reflecting a common trend at other institutions as well. According to Pekenpaugh (2013), “Study abroad is often touted as the ideal means to incite linguistic and cultural competence, but the reality of student learning is not a given” (p. 8). If a student does not immerse themselves or reflect on themselves and their new culture, it will be hard to grow their ICC skills. Through the analysis of student returnee evaluations, it is obvious that their most memorable experiences were those with fellow KSC students. When asked if they took the opportunity to join a club or community volunteer initiative, a number of students marked “no.” Research about participants maximizing study abroad to become more transcultural by Peckenpaugh (2013) states, “One model for promoting student learning is to integrate study abroad into the campus curriculum” (p. 8). The addition of a one-credit Experiential Intercultural Communication course will provide the Italy study away program the needed foundation for student ICC learning.

Literature Review

Within this section, I will look at the growing importance of cultural understanding on U.S. college campuses, the use of study abroad to support this understanding, and why study abroad by itself often does not enhance cultural communication among students. It has become increasingly popular for universities to include cultural understanding as part of their values and mission statements. KSC is not unique, the need for improved ICC learning opportunities is
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

much broader thus this literature review will look at the growing importance of cultural understanding on U.S. college campuses, the use of study abroad to support this understanding, and why study abroad by itself often does not enhance cultural communication among students. It has become increasingly popular for colleges to include cultural understanding as part of their values and mission statements. As Williams (2015) notes in Exploring the Impact of Study Abroad on Students’ Intercultural Communication Skills: Adaptability and Sensitivity, “colleges and universities also include some version of ‘knowledge of other cultures’ as a component of a liberal education” (citing Hopkins, 1999, p. 36). Although each university has its specific reason(s) to include knowledge of other cultures in their goals and missions, the most prominent reason is globalization, because “[u]niversities are places which provide their students and employees with an internationalized environment to enable them to develop the intercultural competences they need in today’s global society” (Lukešová, 2014, p. 1). As society becomes more globalized, it is essential that a person gain ICC skills. Upon graduation, students will find they will be applying for jobs or graduate school and they will be competing with a large pool of applicants. Many understand that “American students are no longer only competing against themselves for job placement, but also against a larger number of graduates worldwide” (Orahood et al., 2008, p. 133). Thus, universities want to prepare their students for success after graduation, and many are focusing on intercultural understanding as a key component of success. This is further supported by the human capital theory, where it is said by “providing knowledge, skills, and a way of analyzing problems” a person/organization is more productive (Becker, 1964, p. 20). Becker (1994) goes on to say “education and training are the most important investments in human capital” (p. 17). The more knowledge a person has the more marketable they are.
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

As Almarza, Martínez, and Llavador (2015) state, “in tertiary education, study abroad is an especially relevant instance within a range of possibilities towards the development of intercultural communicative competence (ICC)” (p. 73). Additionally, there exists a “link between study abroad and employability and the need for students to gain ‘global’ or ‘intercultural’ competencies to compete in the workforce” (Redden, 2015, p. 1). However, although study abroad provides the ideal opportunity to gain ICC, often students do not take advantage of their time away to reflect on their new culture and to enhance their ICC skills, and in turn, they are not enhancing their employability to the fullest extent.

The researcher Salisbury (2011) suggests “that while study abroad participation increases one’s inclination toward diverse contact, it has no statistically significant effect on one’s comfort with diverse interactions” (p. 93). However, even with study abroad marketed as the tool to gain ICC skills, the “reality of student learning is not a given” (Alfred & Byram, 2002). A key aspect of students becoming interculturally competent is to be able to communicate their experience and growth effectively while abroad. Often students will have a difficult time analyzing and sharing their experiences. Redden (2015) directs our attention to Martha Johnson’s, assistant dean for learning at the University of Minnesota, comments during the recent Generation Study Abroad Summit, who “discussed the need to help students articulate the skills they gain in study abroad” (p. 1). Similarly, Ngampornchai and Root (2012) recommend “students be trained in intercultural communication to better help them articulate their learning” (p.3). A student will have a variety of interactions while away “yet if the element of reflection is absent, an individual may fail to ever make meaning out of such events” (Einbeck, 2002, p. 60). In this way, the literature seems to argue that while a student is living in a new culture and having new experiences they need to
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

have a framework in place to intentionally analyze what they are seeing and experiencing to make progress in their ICC knowledge.

To gain the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately, it takes more than observation and research on a new culture. A student must engage, get involved, and have intentional interactions. Many students find themselves living in a new culture, but not interacting with local people. Martin and Nakayama (2010) argue that “[i]t’s better to engage others in a dialogue about their cultural realities” (p. 36). To simply scratch the surface of understanding a host culture and its daily realities a student needs to have conversation with host natives, and experience traditions. For many students who go abroad, they may find themselves spending time with fellow study abroad students from American universities rather than fully engaging outside their home institution’s circle of friends. In turn, they merely observe their new culture, something that communication scholar Bradford Hall criticizes as “using the ‘zoo approach’ to studying culture” (Martin & Nakayama, 2010, p. 36). Thus, it is important that students have a framework and support to reflect and engage deeply during their study abroad experience.

Such a framework can provide the support and motivation to delve into the understanding of the student’s new host culture as well as their home culture. When a student intentionally focuses on “getting to know the identities and cultures of the people they are interacting with and using this to reflect on their culture, the learner may become an ‘intercultural speaker’” (Byram and Zarate, 1997, p. 4). As Bennett (2004) suggests, for one to move from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism within his developmental model of intercultural sensitivity, a person positively creates “movements in and out of cultures” as a necessity and as part of their identity (p. 9). On this spectrum, ethnocentrism is the view of “one’s culture as central to reality,” while
ethnorelativism is the view of “one’s beliefs and behaviors as just one organization of reality among many viable possibilities” (Bennett, 2004, p. 1). It follows that lack of movement from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism hinders a person’s communication abilities.

For one to be interculturally competent, an individual must have “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations, which is based on intercultural awareness, skills, and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2006, p. 247). Bennett (2008) further states that “intercultural competence is a set of cognitive, affective and behavioral skills and characteristics that support effective and appropriate interaction in a variety of cultural contexts” (p. 97). While becoming aware of oneself and having dialogue with locals within the host culture a person can build the appropriate skills necessary to communicate appropriately and effectively across cultures.

For a student to be able to explore their identity and view of new cultures they must interact with the new culture and have new experiences. Hopkins (1999) further argues that “[s]tudy abroad is active learning at its best--another important part of ‘experiential education’ (p. 2). Kolb (1984) defines experiential learning as “the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience” (p. 41). The study abroad experience can be a prime example of the experiential learning theory. Accordingly, “In this model of learning, an individual will begin the learning process by having a concrete experience, which is followed by observation and reflection, and then forming new knowledge or concepts” (Peckenpaugh, 2014, p. 119).

In summary, although many universities rely on study abroad to build their students’ ICC skills, study abroad on its own will not do that. Salisbury (2011) states that institutions should “[c]onsider introducing more intentionally developed educational experiences before departure,
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

throughout the experience abroad, and upon return to ensure that students engage” p. 94). A well-intentioned study abroad curriculum will be “preparing them to study abroad before they ever leave, as well as aiding them with the subsequent unpacking of their experiences” (Peckenpaugh, 2013, p. 13). The course proposed within this capstone responds to this need because the course will be structured to give students the framework and opportunity to reflect, deepen their self-awareness and strengthen their intercultural competence. The following section explores this need in a more intricate way and specifically as it applies to KSC.

Needs Assessment-Intercultural Communication through Study Away (ICTSA) Course

The ICTSA course is grounded in an in-depth needs assessment. The was conducted to establish the need and want for the ICTSA course on the KSC campus, best design of the course and define current practices in the field. The highlights of this assessment are presented here. I begin with an overview of the survey methodology and then continue with a presentation of result highlights and common themes found.

Survey methodology

As is customary, the needs assessment for this proposed course was designed to provide a deeper understanding of the problem. Kiritz (2014) states “until you can understand and define the problem you’re concerned about, you can’t plan a program to address the situation effectively” (p. 42). The needs assessment utilized mixed methods of inquiry to capture “diverse perspectives and practices for generating knowledge” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2011, p. 4). The principle methods were interviews, surveys and a document review. Purposive sampling was used in the selection of participants, which Hesse-Biber & Leavy (2011) describe as when
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

“participants will be chosen based off particular characteristics as determined by the specific goals of the research” (p. 55).

I conducted interviews with one study abroad director and one study abroad assistant director from KSC to gain input on course content, the feasibility of a one-credit course, and student interest and needs. The interviews were both held at KSC for approximately 45 minutes. The director with 23 years and assistant director with 21 years of experience in the field of international education, which brought an insightful perspective to recognize the need for and creation of the one-credit intercultural communication course.

To triangulate the data collected in interviews with administrators and invite contributions of various stakeholders, I sent a Google survey (see appendix A for instrument) to 55 students who had studied away on the Italy program in the past two years. The survey questions were mixed of open and close-ended questions about the student’s experience on the Italy study away program. The list of student data was compiled from the GEO database. The surveys focused on student growth in ICC while studying in Italy, past integration into the host community and the need for the ICC course. To increase student participation, I provided the students who participated in the survey a small incentive, a chance at winning a $20 Amazon gift card. Working with surveys in higher education environments, Laguilles, Williams, and Saunders (2011) note that “lottery incentives can positively impact both survey response and survey completion rates” (p. 549). With the use of a lottery incentive of a $20 Amazon gift card, the response rate of the student surveys was 8 out of 55 students.

**Student Cross Cultural Interactions**

A concept brought up throughout the needs assessment I conducted at Keene State College in the interview with the director and assistant director was of cross-cultural interactions
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

varying from person to person. The director noted each student participating on the program has their own culture, and therefore their own communication styles and experiences will vary. For example there are upper, middle, or the low income classes, and first generation, non-traditional, and the traditional student each background will bring its own perspective and have shaped the student’s identity.

To further support the director’s statement the student survey results indicated that all of the student respondents spent the majority of their time with other study abroad or KSC students. No participants indicated they spent a large portion of time with host nationals. However, when asked if they felt comfortable interacting across cultures, the majority of participants indicated that they did feel comfortable and were now more open. Student statements made in response to their comfort interacting across cultures and integration were “It has not changed-I have always felt comfortable” and “integrated well” or “loved the location of our apartment and it made me like a real Italian.” However one can infer from the student responses that the definition of cross cultural interactions, and integration vary from person to person.

For integration, each student indicated varying aspects of what it truly takes to be integrated. For example, one student indicated they made friends with many locals, another mentioned the location of their apartment and another mentioned living with a host family and getting outside the LdM bubble. Each of the student’s statements about integration are great steps to enhancing ICC but they are just that: steps. For example a student needs to do more than live in a great location to truly be considered integrated and enhance their ICC. The student has immense opportunity for growth but they need to be motivated to make friends, go out of their way to experience the culture outside the LdM bubble and integrate into the community. The director supports this finding by stating there needs to be something in place to assist students in
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

analyzing their experiences and allowing them to articulate their experience to others. Although this need has been identified there has not been a successful answer to the problem.

The assistant director agrees that there needs to be a space for students to reflect on their experiences. The assistant director is a strong advocate for students taking classes which will get them outside of the traditional classroom and enable them to utilize Florence as their classroom. He mentioned the need for students to have less structured experiences in the host country. There also needs to be a solid cultural foundation in place prior to the student’s departure to Florence. The assistant director elaborated that the culture of Florence is very different from other areas of Italy, very similar to the concept of varying cultures within the United States. Therefore, there is a need for students to understand their own identity and culture to truly understand another. He went on to say students need to explore their culture and the role it plays in their daily life prior to studying away. He believes doing this will allow the student to be more aware of themselves and their actions in the host culture. Moreover, student survey results further indicated a strong interest in exploring the host culture and that the students would enjoy having better knowledge of the culture they studied.

**Course Credit Equivalency**

The students expressed their interest in learning more about the culture and an intercultural communication course through inquiry into credit equivalency. When participants were asked if they took Integrative Study Program (ISP) courses while away all 8 respondents indicated they took a course to fulfill an ISP requirement. However, of the 8 respondents 2 were not satisfied with how the credits transferred back. (See figure 1: Italy student study away survey: satisfaction in course credit equivalency below.)
The participants were asked a follow-up question within the survey: if they would have participated in a one-credit ICC course had it been offered, and 7 out of 8 indicated maybe or yes they would have been interested in the course. A participant indicated “I would definitely take it because I want to get the most out of my experience. It also seems really interesting to me and is a big part of why I want to study abroad” (Italy student study away survey, 2017). Yet another participant stated it would allow them to “dive deeper into the culture.” Outside of wanting to know a culture more, students stressed that they would be interested in taking the course because it would allow them to be “more comfortable with the host language” or the “Italian language course only focused on certain topics.” Student responses indicate a strong interest in an intercultural communication course. The assistant director and director were also asked about the issue of student frustration with returning to campus and being short a credit. When asked about the loss of credit frustration by students, both the director and assistant director indicated it is not a driving force for change, as it is possible to petition the registrar for
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

one credit. However, when the student takes all integrative study program (ISP) classes they will be a larger issue and then the assistant director and director do understand the frustration.

**Intercultural communication courses currently offered to higher-ed students**

In order to respond and support the needs raised in this inquiry, I also researched other institutions and their courses to see how they were supporting and or building ICC. While reviewing other intercultural communication courses offered to the higher education audience, I found a variety of approaches. For example, Winona State University (WSU) offers not only a course but a minor in ICC. However, the minor does not have a study away or in the field component (Winona, 2017). Similar to WSU, the University of Arizona (UA) offers a certificate in intercultural communication. UA “certifies that an individual with this certificate has distinct knowledge and skills in terms of working productively in an international or intercultural setting” (UA, 2017). Unlike WSU the UA requires the student to obtain 6 elective communication credits at their partner school in Italy (UA, 2017). The University of Los Angeles (UCLA) has a similar course to WSU, and has a required assignment of a cross-cultural experience. Once again, however, the length of integration is short. CIEE, a study away third party provider, that is, an independent organization which solely facilitates study abroad programming, offers a full three-credit course in ICC with a current push to have the course offered at all of their study away locations. The course’s objective is to “increase your own cultural self-awareness and develop personal leadership skills to help you become more effective in an interdependent world” (CIEE, 2015). CIEE attempts to assist students in reaching the objective by providing theory, hands-on learning and reflection throughout the entire semester students are studying away on one of their programs. However, the course does not start until they are at the site.
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

In summary it can be concluded students will benefit from and want the ICTSA course. Through the needs assessment process both students and the director of the GEO indicated the need for a form of motivation/space to enhance student understanding of their new culture and ICC. Through review of ICC courses currently being offered it is clear that the experiential aspect of ICC studies is essential but an understanding of self is just as important. This understanding of self was further supported by the director and assistant director who both believe there is an importance to understanding your host culture but your culture has a large impact on your experience and how you understand and articulate your cross-cultural experiences while away. The ICTSA course will allow students to utilize the student’s hands on experience as the core to their learning. Additionally the ICTSA course will be structured to provide theory and support for dialogue pre-departure, in country and during the re-entry phase.

KSC Course: Intercultural Communication through Study Away (ICTSA) Course

This section will provide a detailed break-down of the ICTSA course.

ICTSA Course Description

The curriculum for the ICTSA course is designed to enhance the student’s intercultural communication competence. The course is designed for a three-phase application and the course will begin 1) prior to departure, then, 2) have in country sessions and 3) finish upon the student’s return to KSC. Instruction will be facilitated in-person and remotely. The key topics to be covered are intercultural communication, identity, non-formal communication and stereotypes. To address these topics, the course will have the following program and student objective and goals:

Goals & Objectives: Program Goals

- Cultivate an understanding of the importance of ICC among students
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Program Objectives

☐ Provide a learner-centered framework for student growth
☐ Incorporate supplemental materials to support theory and student practice
☐ Provide a safe space for class discussion to enhance student growth
☐ Create a space for students to apply ICC theory through dialogue and reflection
☐ Provide a source of academic credit to offset loss of credit within ISP while studying away

Participant Course Goals

☐ Learn and apply course theories to everyday experiences
☐ Develop understanding of personal identity and its role in cross-cultural interactions
☐ Develop skills to communicate comfortably across cultures

Participant Objectives

☐ To acquire new cultural knowledge
☐ To increase understanding of personal identity and the impact it plays in cross-cultural interactions
☐ To develop an in-depth understanding of ICC through the use of theory

Course participants

The students enrolled in this course will be the students enrolled in the Italy study away program. Through advising I have found the typical student to participate on the Italy study away program through the GEO at KSC is female, middle class, a non- New Hampshire resident, between the ages of 19-21 with no prior knowledge of the Italian language. On average the GEO will send 35 KSC to LdM in Florence, Italy each year. For many students it will be their first time in Italy and being away from the U.S. for an extended period of time. Additionally, through
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

in-formal sit downs students who study away on the program express a need to complete degree requirements while away and if possible would like to do that through the hands-on classes offered through the institution in Italy. After a general GEO application is filled out, students sit down with me, the study away advisor, for an informal interview. The interview allows the advisor and student to discuss their goals for their time away, as well as to ensure the program is the right fit for them.

The student will next attend a required informal interview, and while in the interview they will be reminded of the one-credit ICC course which will provide them a framework to explore communication across cultures and have a better understanding of the Italian culture and their experience. This course can also be taken to as partial fulfillment of their integrative study program (ISP) courses.

Course Scope

Students are directly enrolled in Lorenzo de Medici prior to arrival in Florence. Prior to departure, they also complete their class selections and receive their course schedules for the semester (3 months). The students are required to take five classes. One class must be an Italian language course. Upon arrival, they are provided an orientation which covers safety, class participation, travel, volunteer opportunities, housing and clubs (see appendix E for list of LdM extra-curricular activities). After orientation, it is up to the students’ initiative to take advantage of the opportunities available to them.

Course Timeline

The course is designed to begin prior to departure with two pre-departure session, run while in country with four once a month remote sessions, and have two return sessions upon return to KSC. Students will register during the month of October if they are studying away in
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

the spring semester. If they are studying away in the fall semester they will register in April. It is
during student registration the GEO advisor will be collaborating with LdM to arrange the
classroom, technology and LdM advisor availability for the in-country portion of the course. The
GEO advisor will also confirm the KSC classroom assignment for pre-departure and return
sessions during the registration window. The pre-departure sessions will be held on the two
separate Saturdays directly before students leave for Italy. The four in-country sessions will be
held once a month on a to-be announced Friday. The return sessions will be held on two separate
Saturdays two weeks after the students return to the United States. Prior to departure, students
will meet with their academic and study away advisor to select their courses for their semester
away. During this process, students also meet with their study away advisor to discuss their
housing options of an apartment or homestay. Students are also required to attend the study away
orientation. The study away orientation covers safety, travel, course selection, travel
documentation, etc. During this orientation they meet with an alumni of the program to learn
about the program and aspects of Florence. Upon arrival in Florence, students attend a
mandatory two-day orientation offered by LdM. Once the semester officially begins classes are
on average once a week, and no classes are offered on Fridays. Students will commit to a total of
15 hours of direct instruction and 30 hours of self-instruction outside of class. Students will be
expected to engage in dialogue, reflection and complete supplemental readings outside structured
sections to meet the 30 hours of self-instruction.
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Figure 2: Intercultural Communication through Study Away (ICTSA) course outline

**Registration and Application**
- GEO staff will begin recruitment, advising and marketing for Italy program and ICTSA course
- GEO advisor will collaborate with LdM to arrange technology, classroom and advisor availability
- GEO advisor will confirm classroom on the KSC campus
- Students apply to the GEO
- GEO Advisor will process application and conduct informal interview with student
- Students register for course through MyKSC
- Students must attend mandatory orientation held by GEO

**Pre-Departure sessions**
- Two saturday sessions (2 hours each)
- Facilitated by Dr. Stephenson
- Students convene at designated classroom on the KSC campus
- GEO advisor will confirm with LdM classroom, technology and advisor availability is arranged

**In country sessions**
- Four remote sessions (1.5 hours each)
- Facilitated through Skype by Dr. Stephenson
- Students convene at designated classroom on the LdM campus

**Re-entry sessions**
- Two saturday sessions (2 hours each)
- Facilitated by Dr. Stephenson
- Students convene at designated classroom on the KSC campus

**Curriculum**

The curriculum for this course is designed to enhance the student’s intercultural communication competence. The course will begin prior to departure, have in-country sessions and finish upon the student’s return to KSC. Instruction will be facilitated in-person and
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

remotely. Facilitation will be done in multiple formats with the use of Paulo Freire’s (1968) student centered learning environment as the guide for class discussion. Class discussion will form from student’s everyday experiences and reflection as the course will be founded in Kolb’s (1984) theory of experiential learning.

The student’s study away experience will play a key role in their learning process. Thus the experiential learning theory will be used as the basis for all teaching techniques. Kolb (1999) established his theory of the experiential learning theory due to the “emphasize the central role that experience plays in the learning process, an emphasis that distinguishes ELT from other learning theories” (p. 2).

All course aspects of teaching and learning will be designed with Kolb’s experiential learning cycle in mind. Kolb has identified four stages of movement within his experiential learning cycle. The four stages (see Figure 3. Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle) are “Concrete Experience (CE) and Abstract Conceptualization (AC) -- and two dialectically related modes of transforming experience -- Reflective Observation (RO) and Active Experimentation (AE)” (Kolb, 1999, p. 3).
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Figure 3. Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle (1984).

To support Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning cycle it can be assumed although students often enter the cycle at different points they will utilize provided theories and experiences they are having while in Italy to begin the cycle. With a required weekly journal reflection students will be given the opportunity to reflect on their experience in Italy in comparison to their home culture and learned theories. Students will also be given ample opportunity to have dialogue with classmates to further their reflection and conceptualize the experience.

Kolb expanded on his theory to explain individual adult’s learning preferences. “Adults have learned values, communication patterns and set intentions which can make learning new and unlearning new things difficult” (pg. 267). It is essential to acknowledge a person has their own values, and communication patterns because due to this one can presume they also have their own preference in learning styles. Knowledge of student’s having varying learning styles will be met with multiple instructional methods utilized throughout the course to meet all student needs.
According to Kolb, there are four distinct learning styles (Figure 4. Kolb’s learning styles). Each learning style has a preference for a specific form of instruction and learning environment. Due to these different learning styles, the instructional format of the ICTSA course will be varied throughout the semester to meet the needs of all students.

Figure 4. Kolb’s learning styles. (1974).

Each class will change format of instruction throughout the class to accommodate as many individual learning styles as possible. For example, a person of the diverging learning style will often “prefer to watch rather than do, tending to gather information and use imagination to solve problems” (McLeaod, 2013, p. 17). The diverger will often thrive within a group. The assimilator will favor theory and in turn appreciate lecture style classes. For example
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

small group discussion, role play and or a PowerPoint presentation will be used when a new topic is introduced to meet the needs of the varying learning styles.

The second piece of the curriculum’s foundation will be learner-centered teaching. All class sessions will be structured with Paulo Freire’s (1968) concept of the student-centered learning environment in mind. The student centered learning environment will allow for a shift of power from the professor to the student, with this shift allowing for the student to take ownership of their learning. To further support the student-centered class, Weimer states, “Sharing power also involves that students need to be told less and discover more” (2002, p. 42). The learner-centered teaching environment will be established through choice of dialogue topics, format of reflection and class participation level. (See appendix B for full list of class topics and materials.)

**Instructional Methods**

To support Kolb’s (1984) experiential learning model the design of this course will provide students space for reflection, with opportunities for investigation into themselves, their new culture and dialogue. Reflection and experience will serve as the main tools of teaching throughout this course but to meet the needs of all learning styles additional tools will be utilized such as lecture and dialogue. A breakdown of the teaching tools can be found below.

*Lecture*

Lecture will be utilized as a primary instructional tool prior to departure. It will be used to provide students with a foundation as to what they will be/are experiencing. Students will be provided new terminology, theories and perceived notions of their culture and the Italian culture.

*Journaling*
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Journaling will be a required reflection tool for all students. Journaling will be required from the first pre-departure session through the first return session. After a student has had a Concrete Experience (CE), they will be encouraged to journal. A student’s CE will vary from student to student. An example of a student’s CE is a miscommunication with a host national due to the cultural norms and communication styles varying from home. The journaling will be utilized as a form of reflection. The “Concrete Experiences (CE) are the basis for observations and reflections. These reflections are assimilated and distilled into abstract concepts from which new implications for action can be drawn. These implications can be actively tested and serve as guides in creating new experiences” (Kolb, 1999, p. 3). To support the learner-centered classroom the student will have the option to complete a written or video journal. It will be up to the preference of the student how they would like to complete their journal entries. The journal entries will be kept by the student throughout the course but will be given to the professor upon completion as a method of evaluation. Students will be evaluated on completion and use of supplemental material to analyze their experiences.

Dialogue

Dialogue will be utilized heavily throughout the entirety of the course. Dialogue will be used as a tool to invoke deep conversation for students to further reflect, share and analyze their thoughts. Students will be given topics with supplemental materials. Topics for dialogue will vary some examples are the impact culture has on a person’s identity or non-verbal communication. With use of the learner-centered classroom, the professor will simply guide the conversation and provide thought-invoking questions to the students. Questions asked of students will be open ended, provide students the opportunity to further explore the topic and analyze their own culture and belief systems. For example how do you believe a person’s upbringing can
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

*shape a person's identity and beliefs? How would you define ICC and where do you see there being a need for it if at all?*

Dialogue will allow students to share their insights as well as to hear their counterparts’ insights. Dialogue will be set up in both large and small groups with students finalizing the topic they would like to discuss. Each dialogue group as a team will chose their own facilitator from the group to lead their discussion. Upon completion the class will meet as a whole to discuss and share what was learned in their small groups.

*Cross-cultural experiences*

To further support the students’ movement within Kolb’s experiential learning model, students will be required to participate in cross-cultural events. The cross cultural experiences will provide concrete experiences for students. Additionally the experiences will support the students’ study away experiences and ICC growth. Kolb (1984) notes, the “ELT learning model suggests that learning requires abilities that are polar opposites” (p. 3). For a student to enhance their knowledge of ICC and move through Bennett’s (1986, 1993, 2004, 2013) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity a person must explore new cultures and have new experiences.

*Pre-Departure Overview*

The first pre-departure session will cover the topic of intercultural communication. The session will be held on a Saturday morning for a total of two hours. The session will be very informal with the provided supplemental materials as prompts. (See appendix B for additional information on supplemental materials.) This class period is designed to accomplish the following:

- Students will gain a better understanding of ICC through the use of supplemental material, lecture and discussion
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

- Students will write a letter to themselves which they will open at the end of the program. This letter will incorporate their personal goals pertaining to the course, study away, etc. The letter will be a form of self-evaluation.

- To build a sense of community the class will incorporate an ice breaker and team building activity. (See appendix B for additional information on team building activities.)

The second pre-departure session will be centered on the topics of self-identity, the Italian culture, U.S. culture and the role culture plays in communication. The session will be held on the Saturday after the first pre-departure session for an additional two hours. This class will include the following:

- An alumnus of the Italy study away program will share their insights.
- Students will complete an activity on identity
- Dialogue on culture will occur with facilitation.

Students will also be required to meet with the facilitator, Stephenson, for a one-on-one check-in. The check-in will be utilized to discuss the study away process, set guidelines for student-facilitator interaction while away, and to review class learnings. The check-in will be held at The GEO in Stephenson’s office.

**In-country overview**

In order to ensure students have a safe environment to share their experiences, they will meet together in a designated LdM classroom while their professor skypes in. The in-country sessions will be held for an hour and a half once a month during their four months away, for a total of four hours in-country. Each session will have a pre-determined topic with required supplemental material to be reviewed prior to meeting. The topics will range from stereotypes,
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

forms of communication, values and how they all relate to ICC as a whole. Students will utilize their everyday experiences and interactions as a source of reference.

**Return sessions**

There will be two class sessions upon return to KSC. The two return sessions will be held on two separate Saturdays, a week apart, for two hours each. The sessions will be on KSC’s campus in a designated classroom. The final two sessions will consist of review, reflection and student presentations. Students will have the opportunity to discuss, share and analyze their experiences within the safe environment of the classroom.

**Class Topics**

*Figure 5. ICTSA Class schedule*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pre-Departure Class 1 (2 hours)</td>
<td>What is intercultural communication (ICC)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Community building activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Self-assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Pre-departure class 2 (2 hours)</td>
<td>Identity: Who am I? What is my culture? Who are the Italians of Florence?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Pre-departure check-in (1 hour)</td>
<td>Review student’s status in study away process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Comfort level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Concerns about new culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Establish guidelines for communication with facilitator while away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Session</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4       | In country session 1 (remote/online) (1.5 hours) | First impressions: Stereotypes/assumptions being challenged. (Stereotypes of self/locals)  
- Culture shock/transition  
(reading on stereotypes prior to class) |
| 5       | In Country Session 2 (remote/online) (1.5 hours) | Forms of communication: nonverbal  
(reading prior to class) |
| 6       | In country session 3 (remote/online) (1.5 hours) | Values: Host nationals and self  
- Students will be required to have a cultural exchange they arrange prior to class (utilize LdM for assistance) ex.: Meal with local, dance class, go off the beaten path, language exchange, etc.  
(reading prior to class) |
| 7       | In country session 4 (remote/online) (1.5 hours) | Review of what ICC is. Reflection: where can you push yourself for growth?  
- Reverse Culture shock |
| 8       | Return class 1 (2 hours) | Debrief learning:  
- Struggles, learning, victories  
- Learning to articulate your new knowledge (speaker from Academic and career affairs) |
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9</th>
<th>Return class 2 (2 hours)</th>
<th>Presentations: digital story telling on their ICC journey/movement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Total Hours:** 15 hours

**Staffing Plan**

The key person for the ICC course is the instructor. The instructor will be Skye Stephenson, GEO Director. Dr. Stephenson as the instructor will allow for a tie to study away for the students. Stephenson will facilitate discussion, review reflections, and provide motivation throughout the program. Stephenson has expressed support and interest in facilitating this course. The students also will be supported by the study away advisor should general questions arise. The study away advisor will provide motivation and check-ins prior, during and after the program. The advisor will check-in via e-mail and skype while the students are in country.

Dr. Stephenson has been a professional in the field of international education since 1980 and holds a doctorate in International Relations. She has a strong passion for global learning as a means to help transform the world. She ran a study away program in Chile for more than a decade and works closely with the *Pluriversidad Amwatay Wasi* of Ecuador, an intercultural institution (KSC, 2017). Additionally students will be supported by faculty and staff at LdM. Students will be supported by LdM faculty through their regular class discussions and site visits. LdM staff will provide logistical, health and safety, and other necessary support while students are in Florence. This support is already in place as part of the student’s tuition cost and enrollment at LdM. All LdM logistical support is done in collaboration with the GEO advisor and Dr. Stephenson’s full collaboration and assistance to ensure the student’s needs are met.
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

**Student Recruitment and Admissions**

The Global Education Office has an established plan for enrollment requirements. The enrollment requirements detail both the ICTSA course and student requirements to enroll in the course.

**Enrollment Requirements:**

This opportunity will be open to all KSC students who have been accepted to study away on the Italy study abroad program. The average the number of accepted students per semester is 15. There will be no prerequisites. The class will be capped at 15 students per semester. The following section outlines the program and selection requirements.

**Selection Considerations:**

- Accepted to the Italy program
- Registered during the course registration window (dependent on semester away)

The Italy study abroad program has a separate application process and requirements. The GEO advisor will assist students in collecting and completing this process. The GEO advisor will submit the materials to LdM upon student completion. All materials will be submitted electronically.

**Italy study abroad program requirements:**

- 2.8 GPA*
- Official transcript
- Completed electronic application

*Should a student not have a 2.8 GPA they need to submit the additional materials:

- Essay explaining academic career
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

☐ Two letters of recommendation

GEO Recruitment Plans

To recruit students for the one-credit ICC course, the GEO will utilize multiple tactics. The GEO will use processes that are already in place which recruit students for their study away programs. The main form of recruitment the GEO will utilize is the one-on-one advising session with students who are interested in the Italy study away program. During this time, the course design, credit and benefits the course can offer the student will be discussed. The advising session will cover all aspects of the program. Additionally, accepted students will be reminded of the opportunity at the first pre-departure meeting. To further support recruitment efforts the GEO will utilize formed relationships with faculty members, specifically those in the communications and business departments. The GEO will ask the faculty members to share the opportunity with their students and advisees.

Marketing Plan-Students & Faculty

This course will be marketed through channels already established by the GEO. The course will be highlighted during one-on-one advising sessions with students. The advisor will discuss the student’s goals for their study away experience and how the course will assist in reaching those goals and enhance their experience. Further, the course will be marketed to faculty and staff through an internal campus e-mail to all faculty, staff and administration. The e-mail will express the highlights of the program as well as how it supports the campus wide learning outcome of intercultural competence, and encourage all employees to share the availability of this opportunity with students. The e-mail will contain an easy-to-print brochure for staff to share.
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Logistics

The main faculty member involved with the course is a member of the Global Education Office and fully aware of the processes that will be needed to support the proposed program. In turn, the GEO will make the logistical decisions for the entirety of the course with the support of LdM. As all students who are enrolled in the course will be students of LdM they will benefit from all of LdM’s offices including but not limited to housing, advising and the registrar’s office. Prior to departure, there is no required travel off-campus. The facilitator, Stephenson, and students will meet in the designated classroom on campus for all pre-departure class sessions. For classes held while in Italy the GEO will work with LdM’s registrar’s office to reserve a classroom with technology. Students will be required to arrange their own travel to and from the host country and LdM. The in-country logistics pertaining to student housing will be arranged by LdM. Students, with assistance from the GEO, will complete a housing request form which LdM will utilize to assign students to their housing accommodation for the semester. There are two housing options available to students. A student can choose to live in a lightly furnished apartment with 2-6 other students, or in a homestay with 1-3 other students. The homestay option includes two meals a day, whereas the apartment requires students to prepare their own meals. Students will be encouraged by the GEO advisor to choose the homestay option to further support their ICC learning while in the host country. Students will not be required to travel for the course while in the host country.

Health & Safety

The ICTSA course will take advantage of the health and safety plan that KSC has developed to support all students who study away through the GEO. Students will be informed of all safety precautions during their mandatory orientation. This information includes processing
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

of mandatory international insurance, emergency contact numbers and general safety while in the host country. Students also will be informed of the mandatory international travel insurance they must obtain while studying away. To ensure this is done the GEO will arrange the insurance for them. Students who study away on the Italy program are also supported by LdM. LdM has its own health and safety plan in place. Students will be informed of those practices at their mandatory orientation upon arrival (see appendix D for additional LdM health and safety information).

Crisis Management

LdM maintains a separate crisis management plan from KSC. The LdM crisis management plan will be the main plan utilized for this program. Should a crisis arise LdM and KSC have an established person(s) of contact. This person is first the director followed by the assistant director. Should LdM be unable to reach the director or assistant director they are instructed to contact the KSC campus safety. (see appendix D for contact information) KSC and LdM will then work together to decide the appropriate steps to be taken. LdM requires all students to have a working cell phone at all times. Crisis management plans are discussed in detail at the students ‘orientation upon arrival. Students are given instructions as to who to contact, and where to go in case of an emergency. LdM has separate emergency plans for housing accommodations and classrooms. Should an emergency happen at a student’s residence, students are provided plans, meeting points and phone numbers in advance for such occurrences. Additionally, all classrooms have posted instructions as what to do in case of an emergency. Students are provided a handbook with this information at orientation. It is up to their discretion to carry this with them or not. Further, should an emergency arise, the GEO provides LdM and
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

students with emergency contact numbers. The contact numbers include the GEO director, assistant director, title IX coordinator, counseling services and campus safety.

**Budget**

The budget implications are minimal for the ICC course. The course will be established within the existing course structure of KSC. This will allow pre-departure courses to be held on campus without charge. As indicated in the staffing section above, the instructor of the course will be Skye Stephenson from the Global Education office. As she is a full-time employee of the GEO, instructing this course will be an extension of her duties. There will be no travel expenses for the professor, as the teaching will be done remotely while students are in country. All equipment needed for remote teaching is already included under the professor’s current position and will not be an additional cost. In country students will be supported by their LdM advisor. The LdM advisor will work with the LdM registrar to ensure a room is available for the students. Additionally once a month he/she will perform a check-in with the group of students. As KSC has a strong long standing relationship with LdM this will all be done with no extra cost to KSC. Should a student enroll in the course as a part-time student this course will generate revenue for KSC as it is a one credit course. Unlike other study away courses, the tuition will not go to the institution abroad where the student is enrolled. Should a student be part-time the approximate revenue per student will be an average of $481. Refer to Figure 6 below for cost per credit issued by KSC. However due to the banded tuition policy this may not be the issue. However, should the student be a full time student there will be no added revenue for KSC.
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Figure 6. KSC Graduate and Part-Time Tuition cost. (2017).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2017 CREDIT</th>
<th>IN-STATE</th>
<th>OUT-OF-STATE</th>
<th>MANDATORY FEES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate, Credit</td>
<td>$458</td>
<td>$504</td>
<td>$38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate, Credit</td>
<td>$510</td>
<td>$560</td>
<td>$38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation Plan

Throughout the semester, students will be evaluated on completion of assigned readings, activities and reflection entries. Upon return, students will assess their overall learning through the use of Milton Bennett’s Developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. Students will be required to complete a project. The project will require students to utilize learned theories and their personal experiences. Students will utilize their journal entries to pick an experience which was most impactful on their ICC learning. They will use this experience as their focal point of their presentation supporting their growth with learned theory from the course. The goal of the project is to showcase their movement in Bennett’s DMIS. To further support student’s growth all students will complete Levinger, Morrison and Jouanelle’s ‘Not just life-changing’ self-assessment (as cited in Malloy, O’Donnell, Wingfield, 2015, p. 2). The assessment will assist students in evaluating their growth in gained skills throughout their experience.

To evaluate course satisfaction, students will be asked to provide feedback by filling out an online survey. Students will be asked to fill out this survey twice during the semester, after the second in-country session and after the last class. The professor, Stephenson, will also be open to informal feedback from students at all times.
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Conclusion

Through the use of theory and practice, the foundation students receive through this course will provide guidance in understanding their interactions, their new culture and their own culture. The movement and growth of the student will allow them to become more effective communicators across cultures.

The implementation of the course does face possible limitations. While in country, the students will have limited support from the professor. It will be key to have created a safe learning environment and established community among the students prior to departure to ensure the students continue dialogue and discussion during their remote sessions. Additionally, students will need to be self-motivated to push themselves to complete readings and integrate themselves into the culture of Florence to get the full benefit of the course.

The expanding of the study away ICC course is the foundation students need to have a well-rounded study away experience and enhance their personal growth. Should the course be successful, it has the potential to be utilized with other study away programs. In turn, this course can enhance the GEO’s goal to have students return with a new global perspective while supporting KSC’s campus-wide learning outcome of ICC.
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

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Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

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Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course


Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course


46
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Appendices

Appendix A: Student Survey Questions

Italy Study Away Experience

* Required

1. Thank you for taking the time to complete this voluntary ten minute survey about your Italy study abroad experience. Once you have completed the survey you will be entered into the raffle for the $20 Amazon gift card. The survey will remain open until April 20th. Please take your time to review all questions. All information you provide will be utilized for the sole purpose of partial fulfillment of my MA degree in International Education. I will not include your name or identifying characteristics in published materials. Should you have any questions do not hesitate to reach out to ask for clarification. By checking “yes” you are acknowledging your consent to participate in this survey, you are 18 years of age or older and you acknowledge you have the right to withdraw participation at any time. *
   O Yes I will participate
   O No I would not like to participate

2. When did you go on the Italy program? Please include semester and year. *
   [Open]

3. How often did you travel outside of Florence?*
   O 1 X a month
   O 2X a month
   O Every Weekend
   O Other:

4. Who did you spend most of your time with while away?*
   O KSC students
   O Locals
   O Other study abroad students
   O Other

5. What would you say was your biggest accomplishment while away?*
   [Open]

6. How do you believe your study away experience changed you, if at all?*
   [Open]

7. Has your comfort level in interacting across cultures grown? If so how did this come about?*
   [Open]
8. Did you join and volunteer initiatives or clubs while away? If so how did the experience impact your time in Florence?*
   [Open]

9. Which housing option did you select? *
   O Apartment with fellow KSC students
   O Apartment with other study abroad students
   O Home stay with fellow KSC students
   O Home stay with other study abroad students
   O Other

10. How often did you find yourself speaking the host countries native language?*
    O Never
    O Rarely
    O Daily

11. How would you describe your integration into the host community?*
    [Open]

12. Did you take any ISP courses while away?*
    O Yes
    O No
    Comments:

13. Were you satisfied with the way your courses transferred back?*
    O Yes
    O No
    Comments:

14. If you were not satisfied with how your courses transferred back please explain.
    O N/A
    [Open]

15. If a one credit intercultural communication course were offered would you enroll in it?*
    O Yes
    O No
    O Maybe

16. Please elaborate on your interest in the one credit intercultural communication course.*
    [Open]

17. What else do you want me to know about your cross-cultural experiences while in Italy?
    [Open]
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Appendix B: Course Syllabus

Intercultural Communication for Italy Study Away
Syllabus
Instructor: Skye Stephenson, Ph.D. sstephenson@keene.edu
Office: Global Education Office, 67 Winchester St
Office Phone: 
Skype: 
Office hours: to be determined

Course Goals & Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to provide you with a foundation to enhance and expand your intercultural communication competence. In turn, allowing you to grow as a global citizen. This will be done through the use of readings, class discussion, reflection and your real life experience while studying away in Italy.

Goals:

☐ Learn and apply course theories to every day experiences
☐ Develop understanding of personal identity and its role in cross-cultural interactions
☐ Develop skills to communicate comfortably across cultures

Objectives:

☐ To acquire new cultural knowledge
☐ To Increase understanding of personal identity and the impact it plays in cross-cultural interactions
☐ Develop an in-depth understanding of intercultural communication as a whole through the use of theory
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Tentative Course Schedule and Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<td>- Self-assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- Culture shock/transition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(reading on stereotypes prior to class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>In Country Session 2 (remote/online) (1.5 hours)</td>
<td>Forms of communication: nonverbal (reading prior to class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>In country session 3 (remote/online) (1.5 hours)</td>
<td>Values: Host nationals and self</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Students will be required to have a cultural exchange they arrange prior to class (utilize LdM for assistance) ex. Meal with local, dance class, go off the beaten path, language exchange, etc. (reading prior to class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>In country session 4 (remote/online) (1.5 hours)</td>
<td>Review of what ICC is. Reflection: where can you push yourself for growth?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Reverse Culture shock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Return class 1 (2 hours)</td>
<td>Debrief learning:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Struggles, learning, victories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>□ Learning to articulate your new knowledge (speaker from Academic and career affairs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Return class 2 (2 hours)</td>
<td>Presentations: digital story telling on their ICC journey/movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Total Hours:15 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Class one**

□ No assignment due for class.
□ Be prepared to discuss readings.
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

☐ Self-assessment

*Video:* (Intercultural communication)
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SkBXaKfx17Y&list=PLYMqGFx6wu161yEQsBhZuzgyUp9U1-II

*Reading:*
Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
Chapter one- Communication and Culture: The Challenge of the Future
Pages: 12-21

**Class two**

☐ “Who am I”- Write two to three paragraphs describing you, your culture and what it means to you. Due at start of class.

☐ Be prepared to discuss reading

*Reading:*
Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
Chapter 4: Culture and the Individual Cultural Identity
Pages: 152-170

**Class three**

☐ No assignment due for class. Be prepared to discuss readings.

☐ Complete journal entry prior to class

*Video:* (Stereotypes intercultural communication)
R. (2012, April 18). Retrieved from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LOQtoyStMe4&index=5&list=PLYMqGFx6wu161yEQsBhZuzgyUp9U1-II

*Reading:*
Boston, MA: Cengage Learning.
Chapter 4: Culture and the individual cultural identity
Pages:170-181

**Class four**

☐ No assignment due for class. Be prepared to have discussion on experiences and readings

*Reading:* Different Aspects of Intercultural Nonverbal Communication by Kifayat Aghayeva

*Reading:*
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Chapter 7 Nonverbal Communication: The Messages of Action, Space, Time, and Silence
Pages 243-250

Class five
☐ “My cross cultural experience”- Document your cross cultural experience prior to class. Be prepared to have a discussion on your experience. (video or written)
☐ Be prepared to discuss readings

Assignment:
Set up an intentional cross-cultural experience. Example: cultural/language exchange, go to a local dance class, dinner with a host family, etc.

Reading:
Chapter 5: Shaping Interpretations of Reality: Cultural Value
Pages: 187-190

Class six
☐ No assignment due for class.
☐ Be prepared to review supplemental material
Video:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0rgZrE2VsDI

Class seven
☐ No assignment due. Are expected to have started final project
☐ Be prepared to have debrief on study away experience
☐ Will be given time to work on final project
☐ Complete self-assessment

Class eight
☐ Final project presentations addressing movement within Milton Bennett’s DMIS

Assignments:
1) Journal entries: You are expected to complete a reflective journal entry for each (8) class session. Your entry can be written or done via video. Each entry will be utilized for class discussion. All entries are due at the last class upon return to KSC. Entries will be reviewed for completion and use of theory. (35% of grade)
2) Cross-cultural experience: You will be required to set up and participate in a cross-cultural experience prior to class 4. You will be required to share your observations. Week four’s reflection should be on this experience. (20% of grade)
3) Final presentation: Your final presentation will be 10-15 minutes in length. You will demonstrate your movement within Bennett’s DMIS. Your presentation can be
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

completed in your format of choice. Your presentation will be given after your return to KSC during the last held class. (40% of grade)
4) Class Discussion: You will be expected to participate in class dialogue and discussion. (5% of grade)

Grading:
All assignments will be graded on a Pass/Fail scale. A passing grade is indicated at 60% or higher.
Appendix C: Team Building & Ice-breaker Activities

Two Truths and a Lie
Purpose: Team building, assumptions
Equipment: N/A
Time: 15-25 Minutes (dependent on class size)
Procedure:
1) Instruct students to sit in circle
2) Inform each student to think of three statements
   a. Two statements must be true (can be experiences, characteristics..)
   b. One additional statement must be false
3) Go around the circle allowing each individual to share their three statements and take vote as to which is the false/true statement

Marshmallow Challenge
Purpose: Team building, communication, are our assumptions always right, and of course having fun
Equipment (per group): Marshmallow (1), Spaghetti (20), Masking Tape (1 yard), String (1 yard), Scissors
Group Size: 20 people
Time: 15-18 minutes for construction, 5-7 minutes for processing
Procedure:
1. Group participants in teams of 5 (or size you have decided on). Tell participants they will have 15 minutes to build the tallest freestanding tower that holds the provided marshmallow. The tower will be measured from the table top up. This means the tower cannot be hung from the ceiling or chair. We encourage creativity but...
2. The entire marshmallow must be on top of the tower. The team cannot eat part of it or tear part of the marshmallow.
3. The team can use as little or as much of the provided supplies as they would like.
4. The challenge will last 15 minutes. Announce times up, hands off when time is up!
   a. Do check for understanding/Repeat instructions at each individual group to ensure they fully understand
5. The teams cannot hold/support the tower up once the challenge is complete.
6. Allow teams to view all towers.

Processing: (Needed/ but can be brief)
1. Suggestions to hit on: What was the process like? How would you do it differently? How would you apply this in the future?
Appendix D: Emergency Contact Information

KSC Emergency Contact Info:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keene State College Contact Numbers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GEO (603) 358-2348 (During office hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus Safety (603) 358-2228 (24 hour hotline)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental Health (603) 358-2437 (During office hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Students (603) 358-2842 (During office hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title IX Coordinator (603)358-2960 (During office hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Counseling Hotline (603)358-2436 (24 hour hotline)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

LdM Counseling Services:
Dr. Mags Runge- runge@lorenzomedici.it

Medical Care:
Medical service (English speaking)
Via Roma 4
Tel. 055 475 411

Hospital
General Hospital of Santa Maria Nuova
Piazza Santa Maria Nuova 1
Tel. 055 69 381

Florence Emergency telephone numbers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Police Emergency</th>
<th>113</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Carabinieri Emergency</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fire Station</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambulance-First Aid</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical Service</td>
<td>055 475 411</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Headquarters</td>
<td>055 49 771</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

United States Consulate in Florence:
Lungarno Vespucci 38
Expanding Learning While Away: Intercultural Communication Course

Tel. 055 266 951 (M-F 9am -12:30pm)  
Tel. 06 467 41 (emergencies, weekends or holidays)
Appendix E: LdM Clubs & Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunities

LdM invites you to consider volunteer and cultural exchange opportunities offered. This human experience involves you in the local Italian community resulting in an authentic cultural exchange, social value and personal growth.

There are several areas in need of volunteers:

- Care for the streets of Florence city center: remove and paint over wall graffiti
- Food bank and clothing distribution for those in need
- Education projects supporting English teaching to children
- Gardening and care of city parks
- Guiding art tours for foreigners through the most important churches of Florence (in your mother tongue or English - membership card + insurance 15€)
- Organizing the LdM Food Drive to donate food to the local food pantry
- Social fundraising in a charity second hand shop (fluent Italian required)
- Teaching Italian to foreigners (fluent Italian required)

Cultural Exchange

- Join local cultural events organized by citizens and associations of the S. Lorenzo neighborhood
- Visit a public school and support English teaching to high schoolers
- Intercultural visit to the historical places of charity in Florence
- Justice and Human Rights at R. F. Kennedy Center of Florence (help in their art exhibition and promote their center) (fluent Italian required)
- Fundraising through a local charity market to buy food for those in need (fluent Italian required)
Clubs

STUDENT CLUBS & ACTIVITIES

LORENZO de’ MEDICI FALL SEMESTER 2015
CLUB & ACTIVITIES CONCEPT

Following LdM’s philosophy and mission, our main goal is your personal and spiritual growth, which can be strongly improved by a cultural experience abroad. For this reason, we have created Student Clubs & Activities.

The LdM Student Clubs & Activities aim for a good balance between mutual interaction, socialization, introduction and participation in the host community. For this reason, LdM cooperates with a variety of respected institutions and associations working in Florence in a wide range of fields to offer the following opportunities to its students.

Clubs

- Basketball Club
- Ceramics Club
- Cinema Club
- Cooking Club
- Gazzetta Writers Club
- Gazzetta
- Photos & Illustrations Club
- Pilates Club
- Soccer Club
- Yoga Club

Clubs are small associations where people with the same interests and curiosities can develop their skills, gain experience, meet friends and take care of themselves in a completely different social environment. They meet 4 to 8 times per semester - a detailed calendar will be available in the clubs office during sign up.

ONLY Club members can attend the meetings. In order to become a member, students should sign up with the Club Coordinator at LdM Church, Via Faenza 43 from Tuesday, September 15 to Thursday, September 17 9am - 6pm. BRING YOUR CLASS SCHEDULE!