Study Abroad Curriculum Integration:
Roadblock or Opportunity for Innovation?

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What is Study Abroad’s Purpose?

Transformative learning

- As a result of
  - Disruption / Disorientation / Disequalibrium
    - Mezirow, 1997, Kiely 2005

- Low-intensity dissonance vs. high-intensity dissonance
  - Kiely, 2005
Transformative Learning

- Developmental Process
  - Disruption
  - Alienation
- Questioning and Experimentation
  - Assumptions / Habits
  - Integration of old and new assumptions
  - Change in frame of reference or worldview

and each year, there is a very significant number of young people who look for job

Unemployment among university graduates Dakar, Senegal
Meaning making

Self – Social Environment

Socialized self – meaning constructed and shaped by values and expectations of others

Self-authored self – meaning informed by one’s own values and beliefs

Self-transformed self – recognizes structural systems that underlie meaning-making

*The ability to critically reflect is essential to transformative learning.*

*Erickson, 2007*
Learning Abroad is Different from at Home

Engagement with place

Time Outside the Classroom

However

“one-third of the undergraduates who go abroad have never studied the language of their host country. . . .

Most have never studied [the] history, politics, or culture. . . .

With such skimpy preparation, only a minority of enterprising students truly immerse themselves in the local society.”

Bok, 2006
Study Abroad Integration

Awards credit toward college degrees

Financially feasible

No delay in degree completion

& Opportunities for

Curricular preparation and follow-up

opportunities by major
Please click on a major below to see a sampling of opportunities including course work, internships, service-learning, excursions and cultural activities.
Today’s Session

Curriculum Integration

Michael Woolf
- Conservative Impulse – Replication of Learning at Home

Giselda Beaudin
- Radical Impulse – Rethinking Learning

Elizabeth Brewer
- Beyond Course Matching – Six Strategies
Conservative Trends in Higher Education

- Commercialization and Corporatization
  - Results in an emphasis on the measurable & quantifiable
    - All courses must “count”/be “counted”
    - Prioritize rapid progress through degree
    - Goal is productivity

- It is easier to measure and quantify when....
  - There are clear categories
  - Organizational structures are siloed
  - Specific aims can be isolated
  - Progress is defined in linear terms
Striated Space  ➔  Smooth Space
Silos → Networks
Optic Space ➞ Haptic Space
Curriculum Integration: Radical Impulse

- Movement towards transdisciplinarity:
  - Courses abroad that don’t fit cleanly into a category
  - Faculty co-teaching with colleagues outside of their discipline
  - Introduce content not normally taught at “home”
  - Interrogate the idea of “disciplines”
  - Coursework connected to the Education Abroad experience (pre-, during, post-)
Curriculum Integration: Radical Impulse

- Disturb established structures:
  - Faculty to engage in experiential learning and teaching
  - Professional staff engage in teaching and scholarship
  - Faculty and professional staff co-teach

- Facilitate new connections:
  - Between disciplines
  - Between the curricular and co-curricular
Curriculum Integration: Radical Impulse

- Shift thinking about learning
- Make space for learning that is difficult to measure
- Value learning that impacts students long after
- Disrupt linear progress towards degree as goal
- Encouraging courses that don’t count towards anything (elective credit)
- Education Abroad becomes valued *in of itself*, even when it doesn’t fit easily in the degree program
Beyond Course Matching

Study abroad in the educational continuum
What’s at Stake?

Individual student learning

Higher education

Investment in study abroad

Social good & the planet
Beyond Course Matching: Six Strategies

1. Assess

2. Challenge the Binary of Academic vs. Non-Academic Learning and Development

3. Question the Myth of Exceptionalism in Higher Education

4. Move beyond Study Abroad as the Unit of Analysis

5. Make Study Abroad Harder

6. Emphasize Qualitative Markers of Learning
References


