Are Two Locations ‘Better’ Than One?

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Thematic Framework

- Program design
- Pedagogy
- Faculty Involvement
- Value
Rome to Barcelona
Florence to Taormina, Sicily
Istanbul to Rome
Program Design

- Logistics ➔ Learning Objectives
- Location
- Expectations
  - Orientation

“Invoking a romanticized, hence well-meaning but nevertheless stereotypical, version of ‘local culture’ as all the context one needs to know...devalues communities as coeducators...” (Sutton, 2011, p. 126)
Program Design

“Sicily was fun! But way overscheduled...sometimes I felt like I was a typical tourist being led around cities.”

“Almost too much academic focus on the Barcelona trip.”
Program Design

• Academic Integration
  – Core Course
  – Flexibility
• Host Communities
• Scaffolding
Program Design

“I would recommend that [the study tour] be earlier in the program since that was when the group really bonded and became friends.”
Pedagogy

• Pre-during-post
• Learner centered design
• Guided reflection- verbal & written
• Challenge & support

“Reflective learning involves assessment or reassessment of assumptions. Reflective learning becomes transformative learning whenever assumptions of premises are found to be distorting, inauthentic, or otherwise invalid. Transformative learning results in new or transformed meaning schemes” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 6).
“One of the most valuable aspects of study abroad was how experiential the learning was. We were able to immediately apply what we learned in class to the outside world, moving beyond textbooks to something tangible. The assignments were greatly reflective in nature, inviting us to really process what we were learning, to discover what it meant for us in the context of a new culture.”
Faculty Involvement

- Motivation
- Personal cultural awareness
- Ability and buy-in for facilitation & reflection
- Fold into host-country course
- Expectations

“Deep learning involves faculty and students coconstructing knowledge, with teachers helping students become more self-aware and able to shift frames of reference” (Hemming Lou, Vande Berg, Paige, 2012, p. 414)
Faculty Involvement

“...we ventured to Barcelona and focused on slums...instead of studying great works of architecture.”

“I absolutely loved Sicily - it was my favorite part of the trip and I couldn't imagine being there for less than a week. The entire trip was very well connected to the courses and a lot of fun.”
Value

• Is it worth it?
• Recruiting
• Awareness – Expectations – Outcomes
• Enrollments

“...an intimate and complex understanding of a culture, including detailed culture-specific knowledge, makes effective interactions in a host culture possible.” La Brack, Bathurst, 2012, p. 206
Is it worth it?
We got to experience southern Italian culture firsthand, and it made me realize just how different it is from Tuscany. The food, people, dialect, and values are really different and we got to see it for ourselves!
Group Discussion

- **Program design** What are effective tools for academic integration across cities?
- **Pedagogy** How do you best facilitate perspective shift for a more complex understanding of Europe?
- **Faculty Involvement** How do we engage our faculty to integrate comparative study into curriculum?
- **Value** How do we measure added value? Is it worth it?
Thank You

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