Cross-Cultural Engagement Training for Faculty: A Model for Faculty Preparation

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Faculty-led Study Abroad

• The big picture: 10,000 – 20,000 U.S. faculty are going abroad with students this year
• Only a small number have received formal training regarding intercultural learning
• At Wake Forest (7000 total students), approx. 30-40 faculty lead programs abroad most years
• Can they help students
  – engage with a local community?
  – participate in cross cultural learning?
Most faculty training efforts focus on logistics

• Expectations of faculty
• Marketing and communication with students
• Budgets and finances
• Student Orientations
• Health and safety training
• Mental health training

Should we not also focus on intercultural learning of students?

• A recent study of German students who studied abroad emphasized the value of students developing relationships abroad as a key element of personal development
• Many (most?) faculty also want to interact with people abroad
• Shouldn’t this be a key element of preparation?
WISE: How we got there

- In 2006, Wake Forest submitted a 10-year reaccreditation "Quality Enhancement Plan to SACS (Southern Association of Colleges and schools): "Beyond Boundaries: Preparing Students to Become Global Citizens"
- Three study abroad support courses were created and offered beginning in Fall 2007
- Goal of preparing students to become global citizens has focused on intercultural competence

We realized we were missing intercultural preparation for faculty

Faculty realized that they lacked resources and guidance on best-practices for helping students with cross-cultural learning
- Faculty Study Abroad Committee reviews proposals for new programs, asks about a proposed program’s focus on the use of the local environment and intentional interaction w locals
- But what about our own faculty-led programs?
Our Solution: A Workshop

- WISE (Workshop on Intercultural Skills Enhancement) was created by faculty for faculty
- WISE designed as a practitioner’s workshop to help faculty develop knowledge, strategies and activities so they can help students develop intercultural skills and awareness
- A steering committee of six faculty worked with me to design the content
- WISE first offered in Feb. 2009, six months after we started

WISE as Workshop

- We learned a lot along the way
- WISE 2009 had 57 attendees
- Wake Forest faculty and staff could attend at no cost
- The workshop fee was $295 and included one night of accommodation plus dinner, coffee and snacks
- WISE 2009 began at 1pm on Friday, ran through 8pm, then Saturday from 8:30 to 11:45 am
- WISE 2010 increased attendance to 75
- WISE 2011 started at 9am on Friday
WISE as Conference

- Beginning in 2013, WISE turned into a professional conference
- We recognized the need to include more perspectives and programs that are being taught/used around the world
- WISE 2013 was held Friday and Saturday morning
- WISE 2014 was held Thursday and Friday plus pre-conference workshop
- The focus remains on intercultural learning and activities / program elements to encourage it

Content of WISE

- Has changed over time
- The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)
- Sessions on assessing intercultural competence, cross-cultural engagement courses, integration of language learning and cultural training, and approaches to language in non-language pgms
- Sessions on mentoring while abroad, effective assignments and activities, challenges of developing countries, and risk management
- Participants have had option of taking IDI since 2011
Impact on faculty 1

- Many faculty have implemented new activities or changed the content of their programs based on what they learned at WISE
- Kathleen Macfie (UNC Greensboro) came back in 2011 to report on new efforts to have students self-reflect and blog during their program
- Keith Mobley (UNC Greensboro) created a journaling template for structuring reflection and guiding activities; he also focused more time on group dynamics and processing of activities

Impact on faculty 2

- Joan Clifford and Deb Reisinger (Duke University) attended in 2012, then presented in 2013 on a set of activities they designed to help students appreciate diverse perspectives
- Kacy Peckenpaugh (Weber State University) attended in 2010, then presented at WISE 2014 on a post-study abroad cultural mentoring course she developed
- Many presentations from past conferences are available: http://global.wfu.edu/wise/past-conferences/
Impact on study abroaders

• Brett Krutzsch (NYU) reported: “I returned from WISE with new information about making cross-cultural awareness, cultural adjustment and identity reflection key components of the study abroad pre-departure process and with ideas on how to get others at my institution on board. We have begun to restructure our pre-departure curriculum so that our focus is not just logistics, but heavily about self-reflection and preparing for cultural immersion.”

Another model: Faculty Learning Community

• Hosting a learning community this year with 10 faculty, in conjunction with our Teaching and Learning Center
• Focus on reflective learning in study abroad
• Reading chapters from *Student Learning Abroad*
• Great response
Next Steps at WFU

- Working with 8-10 faculty to implement research elements into their summer 2014 programs, such as the IDI and observation of student competency (not self report of impact)
- Need to work more actively with faculty, coach them more consciously about cross-cultural activities
- Plan to hold group faculty discussions 2-3 times per semester to discuss common study abroad challenges

What can you do?

- Encourage faculty leading study abroad programs to explain what activities and structures they have designed to introduce the need and value of intercultural learning
- Investigate options for adding intercultural learning to existing programs (co-curriculum)
- Investigate options for developing a pre-departure or post-return course for students
- Invite faculty to attend WISE 2015 or to submit a proposal for a conference session