Unplugging the Generation Z Student, by Plugging into Cultural Engagement

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DIS STUDY ABROAD IN SCANDINAVIA
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CIEE SEVILLE STUDY CENTER
Specific Challenges Explored

- Being Connected
- Travel Patterns
- Goals of Studying Abroad Today
What challenges are you experiencing in attempts to engage students of today in local experiences?

Are you seeing a rise in student travel at your site, beyond the host country?

Are you experiencing that students of today have new goals for their experience studying abroad?
Communication Technology

‘I’m usually scared when I don’t have a phone service because of safety. NO ONE WILL KNOW IF I DIE’

‘I loved the freedom of having less connections– it was rewarding to go without being connected and still survive. While I was preoccupied with adventures or consumed by conversations with people, life was grand.’
Student Travel Patterns While Abroad

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>DIS</th>
<th>CIEE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traveled most weekends off site (2-3 wknds/month)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel was for a weekend</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel was international</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respondents living with local host</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Generational Shifts in Perspective

2/3 *not particularly* interested in cultural engagement activities

Many going abroad to *have fun*

Time outside of class seen as detached from engaging locally

Fewer students choosing housing options/programs with contact to locals
Student Expectations

Short-Term Observation vs. Interaction

Experiences have to serve a purpose

- How will it enhance my CV / language goals?

Students defined Cultural Engagement as:

- Something I can't do/eat at home
- Some kind of contact to locals (often instructors, rather than peers)
What is preventing you from engaging locally?

- Traveling takes priority
- Academics are my priority
- Lack of time
- Costs
- Unable to match my interests
- Disinterest
Perspectives looking back...

DIS ALUMNI STUDY
Enalyzer software used to build & deploy survey

Population = 4.412 (FA13 + SP14 + FA14 + SP15)

Respondents = 500 (414 completes, 86 incompletes)

Response rate = 11.3% (including incompletes)

Margin of error is ±4.1%

SURVEY RESPONDENTS

500 Responded - 11%
3.912 Did not respond - 89%

RESPONDENTS BY SEMESTER AT DIS (n = 500)

FA13 96, 19%
SP14 97, 20%
FA14 121, 24%
SP15 186, 37%
Reflecting on your experience at DIS, what were the most important aspects of your study abroad experience?

AVERAGE SCORE
(1 = most important, 5 = least important)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acquiring European perspectives on my academic interests</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traveling to various destinations across Europe</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with locals</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning how to live independently</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connecting with other DIS students</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned?

Traveling remains a very important aspect of the study abroad experience.

Local engagement does not have a significant influence on alumni’s choice of pursuing international work or volunteer options afterwards.
BEST PRACTICES

Cross-Disciplinary Approaches
CIEE Seville

- HOUSING
- ACADEMIC
- EXTRA-CURRICULAR
A Taxonomy of Cultural Learning

- **Observation**: guided tours, theatre performances, cafés
- **Cognition**: classroom, textbook, lectures, websites
- **Application**: active experimentation outside the classroom, simulations, practicums, homestay
- **Comprehension**: reflection papers, class discussion, guided reflection
- **Evaluation**: reflection, feeling, critical thinking
- **Analysis**: analytical paper based on empirical study, discussion based on data

Engage in reflection papers, class discussions, guided reflection to enhance cultural understanding.
Lesons Learned & Looking forward...
Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration

New patterns in student expectations while abroad demand that administrators think differently about engagement in local communities...

What are some of your best practices?
Thank you!

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