Practical Advising for Non-Traditional Destinations: They Don’t Know What They Don’t Know

Stephen Appiah-Padi, Ph.D., Director, Office of Global & Off-Campus Education, Bucknell University

Elena Corbett, P.h.D., Director for Education Abroad, AMIDEAST

Heather McGann, Associate Director of Education Abroad, NAFSA

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In This Session:

- Session Outcomes
- What is a “non-traditional” destination?
- Why have a session about advising for them?
- Why do they need more preparation?
- Common problems
- Practical advice for preparing students to engage the practical
- Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues
- Scenarios and discussion
- Checklists for students
Session Outcomes:

- Participants in this session will:
  
  1. Understand different student needs at non-traditional vs. traditional destinations and to tailor advising accordingly
  
  2. Learn best practices for successful study abroad preparation for Non-Traditional Destinations
  
  3. Through case studies, acquire new skills in advising for Non-Traditional Destinations
What makes an NTD?:

Non-Traditional Destinations Defined
Do They Require Special Advising?
Identifying 2 common mistakes in advising for “non-traditional” destinations:

Despite Good Intentions, are you making:

1) Mistake of omission:

1) Mistake of commission
Why Do Students Need More Prep for NTDs?:

▪ Safety Issues

▪ Lack of Travel Savvy Skills

▪ False Expectations of the Experience
Why Do Students Need More Prep for NTDs?:

- Easy to be Overwhelmed: Too much new information
- Students are often unaware of how much support is available at home institution
- We want them to come back wanting more such interactions.
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

1) Health & Safety Issues
   -a) Mental Health

   “I thought if I just went somewhere new I would be ok.”
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the practical:

1) Health & Safety Issues
   - b) International Student Health Insurance

“I will figure it out later.”
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

- 2) Cultural Knowledge: Collectivist vs individualist
  - Me vs We
  - Taking care of oneself vs Taking care of each other
  - Express Individuality vs Express Group Fit

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RT-bZ33yB3c

Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

- 2) b- **Cultural Knowledge**

**D.I.E Tool for Students**

- D – Describe
- I – Interpret
- E – Evaluate
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

- **3) Classroom Etiquette**
- **Learning to Dialogue instead of Debate**

“The professor hates me!”
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the practical:

- 4) Financial Intelligence

  “It’s a once in a lifetime experience!”
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the practical:

- 5) Navigating the International Airport & Immigration

“I think I just exited on tourist visa.”
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

6) **Race and Gender**

“I was caught completely off guard!”
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

- **7) Sexual Identity**
- **Laws**
- **Less Known Consequences**

“It shouldn’t be this way... no one will talk to me.”

https://ilga.org/maps-sexual-orientation-laws
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

▪ 7) **Religion**

“They believe in spirits called the Djinn!”
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

- **Socialization Considerations**

  “I don’t have any girl friends because they can’t go out at night.”

**Mixed Party at Night vs. Game Day on Campus**
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

9) **Naiveté**

“Why do they put up with this!?”
Practical advice for preparing students to engage the bigger issues:

- 9) **Obey the Laws**
  - Social Media & Slander
  - Importing Medication
  - Alcohol & Drugs

“*I just posted a funny video...that’s all!*”
Case Studies:
How can you help these students be successful?

1) Zoe has learned that she may be placed with a host family who identifies as Christian and understands that many homestay families identify as such. She says that she has chosen to study in a Muslim-majority country for a reason, has aligned her coursework with this in mind, and that this will be a wasted opportunity if she goes all the way there only to live with people practicing faith traditions with which she herself identifies.
2) Rushod has never left the U.S. and only recently ventured to a major metropolitan area.

- He is excited to be going on a semester exchange to western Africa even though the only other student he knew decided to postpone the program until next year.

- He has expressed interest in learning about his heritage.

- He has mentioned plans to travel all over Africa and even to the Middle East and possibly Asia.
3) Gustavo asks if he will have any trouble taking his medication with him to his program that begins in 3 weeks in southeast Asia.

-He says he takes medication for anxiety and mentions that he suffers from ADD and takes separate medication for that as well.

-He is also worried about academic issues and asks if the host program can help him work with his professors for extra time on assignments and exams.

-He also asks if there is a counselor at the host institution.
What Info to Provide for The Drill Down:

- Evaluate your PDOs
  - Avoid generalities
  - Encourage returning students
  - PDOs for NTDs must focus directly on location
What Info to Provide for The Drill Down:

- **Student Checklists**
  - What do students typically do for recreation?
  - Gender divide?
  - Know how to receive money if necessary?
  - Currency calculations – find an app.
  - Relevant laws
  - Prescription medication permitted
  - Basics of dominant host country religion
What Info to Provide for The Drill Down:

- Student Checklists cont...
  - Curfew
  - Mental health counselor
  - Public holidays (impacts banking, travel, etc...)
  - Passport copies in triplicate and passport photos
  - Check out the most popular newspaper in country
  - Visit U.S. Dept. of State’s website for Travel/Country Info
  - Enroll in U.S. Dept. of State’s S.T.E.P. program
Summary

Skills and Attitude

▪ Be open
▪ Not too general but linked/specific to NTD

It's Ok to be Uncomfortable (it does not = the unsafe)

Don’t create fear in them
Thank you!