

Embedding Intercultural Pedagogy Strategies into the curriculum on Short-term Study Abroads in Pursuit of Globalizing American Undergraduate Students

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Abstract

Global travel patterns were interrupted by the pandemic, and no generational cohort was more affected by lockdowns and travel bans than high school and college-aged students who had never traveled internationally. Badstübner and Ecke (2009) noted that cultural understanding is acquired most effectively while being immersed in a study abroad environment, but even before the pandemic, lack of intercultural insights among American youth were leading to a sharper focus on globalization within institutions of higher education. Lack of global travel often manifests in deficiencies in intercultural competencies, but study abroad pedagogies can appropriately embed curriculum that adequately exposes students to true intercultural experiences, along with methods to assess this learning. As such, new approaches to pre-planning and intra-trip experiential learning have been integrated into study abroad programs. This presentation will discuss gaps and tendencies in students' intercultural learning through an analysis of the results of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and Milville-Guzman Universality Diversity Scale (MGUDS), which were administered to study abroad students both before and after the pandemic. In particular, this study assesses developments in intercultural competencies occurring during short-term study abroad programs, both pre- and post-pandemic, which prompted changes in the pre-trip and intra-trip curriculum.

Keywords: short-term study abroad; intercultural development; American expatriate; Generation Z