Training students for intercultural development:
The Scholar Ship Study Abroad Program
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University of Maryland Baltimore County; January 15, 2015
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The Scholar Ship

- An academic program
- A passenger ship with 50 nationalities onboard
- 350 undergraduate and postgraduate students
- Two semesters (Fall 2007 and Spring 2008)
- The world (visited 17 countries on 5 continents)
Institutions behind The Scholar Ship

The Scholar Ship was developed in collaboration with a group of leading institutions and organizations from around the world.

CONSORTIUM OF ACADEMIC STEWARDS

- Al Akhawayn University
  - Morocco

- Cardiff University
  - Wales

- Fudan University
  - China

- Tecnológico de Monterrey
  - Mexico

- University of California, Berkeley
  - USA

- Macquarie University *
  - Australia

- University of Ghana
  - Ghana

* On behalf of the consortium, Macquarie University was designated to award the academic credit for the program.
The Scholar Ship *Offered*

- Globally relevant learning outcomes
- Experiential education both onboard and onshore
- An intercultural “immersion” experience
- A global network of contacts
- Partnerships with international universities and institutions
The Program was Built on

Four Key Elements

- An onboard classroom learning environment
- A multicultural residential and social community
- An academically integrated port program
- A strategic research initiative
Students chose a Learning Circle in which they participated during the program...
Onboard **Life**

- Linked Academic, Port, and Onboard Life Programs
- Led *experiential activities*, group and individual briefings
- Developed *rapport* with students to assist in the adjustment
- Assisted with policy infractions and behavioral issues
- Developed opportunities for *leadership* and *learning* through student organizations, cultural events, and intercultural programs
- Ensured a strong sense of *community*, support, and cohesion among diverse student and staff body
- Intentionally *matched roommates* based on national difference and provided direction and support through living agreements and mediations
Intercultural Programming

- Pre-voyage Staff Training
- Orientation and Re-entry Programs
- Onboard Life: Judicial
- Intercultural Communication Classes
- Intercultural Initiatives
- IDI Related Intercultural Initiatives
Pre-voyage Staff Training

- Staff:
  - Executive and Academic Teaching Staff
  - Intercultural Residential Counselors (IRCs)
  - Academic Support Center
  - Mental Health Professionals
  - Library Staff
  - IT Team
  - Security
  - Port Programs

- Duration: **4 days and an evening**
- Format: Plenaries and break out sessions
- Topics: Logistics, intercultural, job related, community building
Orientation and Re-entry Programs

- Online & face-to-face
- Orientation programs
- Re-entry programs
- Social networking
Onboard Life: **Student Conduct**

- Start with intentions: Safety
- Research: Other judicial systems, norming behavior, cultural informants
- Write culturally sensitive policies while adhering to Maritime law, student affairs western culture, Royal Caribbean regulations, port security, local enforcement, national/international trends, cultural manifestations, geo-political climate, expectations
- Meeting with student: Consistent, flexible, re-frame, world view, triggers
- Link between IDI and behavior: Ethnocentric = violate policy, Ethnorelative = understand policy as community safety
- Examples: Alcohol, rules governed by, roommate/hallmates
Intercultural Communication Class

- Postgraduate (800-level) and undergraduate (200 & 300-level)
- Textbooks:
  800-level: Collection of relevant articles
- 20 sessions, 16-weeks
- Teaching methods addressing multiple learning styles
  Lectures, small group activities, games, pair, triad, and small group conversations, simulations, role plays, peer teaching, movies and movie analysis (A Different Place: Intercultural Classroom, Crash, Babel, My Big Fat Greek Wedding, Spanish Apartment), inventories (IDI, ICS), port journals, collecting cultural symbols from the ports, free-writes about the classroom experiences, mini-research onboard about nonverbal differences, mid-term exam, final project and presentation
Intercultural Initiatives

- Matching roommates based on cultural difference
- Personal Leadership workshops
- Power, Prejudice, and Privilege Workshop
- Intercultural Simulations (Barnga, Dots, Zoom)
- Meeting with global SIETAR members in different ports
- Professional development on Kolb’s Learning Styles and Intercultural Conflict Style Inventory (for OBL)
- All IRC attended the Intercultural Communication class
- Professional development on how to facilitate an intercultural classroom (for faculty)
Intercultural Development Inventory
Initiatives

- IDI pre-test and post-test for students and staff
- DMIS/IDI training to OBL team
- IDI coaching mandatory for OBL team, available also for faculty
- IDI sub-groupings for each RC, IRC coaching how to use it
- Students learned about the DMIS and IDI in class
- Individualized IDI coaching available for students
## Intercultural Challenges and Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenges with colleagues</th>
<th>Solutions:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple organizations/organizational culture</td>
<td><strong>Personal Leadership</strong>, patience, flexibility, time to discuss with one another, research, critical thinking, problem solving, ask questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept of time</td>
<td>Understanding, put theory into practice, training on time across cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Different learning styles</td>
<td>Time to talk, <strong>Personal Leadership</strong>, listen, training on learning styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication style</td>
<td>Reinterpret, feedback, <strong>Personal Leadership</strong>, training on communication styles, conflict styles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power distance</td>
<td><strong>Personal Leadership</strong>, feedback, different communication methods, understand power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty in minimization/defense, need to build competence</td>
<td><strong>Personal Leadership</strong>, intercultural communication skills, theory to practice, training on DMIS/IDI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diverse team with diverse styles and needs</td>
<td>Theory to practice, shared styles, training on styles, team dynamics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnocentric leaders</td>
<td><strong>Personal Leadership</strong>, pause before react</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complaints about overwhelm, ambiguity, fatigue</td>
<td>Exercise, take time to relax, share info, support</td>
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# Intercultural Challenges and Solutions

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<th>Challenges with/among students:</th>
<th>Solutions:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class differential</td>
<td>Open discussions, feedback, support, <a href="#">Personal Leadership</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residential Community needs</td>
<td>Ask questions, approach one another, participate or not, challenge by choice, <a href="#">Personal Leadership</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community development needs</td>
<td>Set goals as group, meet one on one, gather feedback, understand needs and styles of group, re-frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roommate conflicts</td>
<td>Offer alternatives: write letter, meet one on one, mediation, roommate agreements/contract, <a href="#">Personal Leadership</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept of time</td>
<td>Learn about cultural time paradigms and apply theory to practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cultural Shows/Displays</td>
<td>Understand issues and use cultural knowledge to facilitate dialogue, <a href="#">Personal Leadership</a></td>
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<th>Challenges between students &amp; staff:</th>
<th>Solutions:</th>
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<tr>
<td>Communication styles</td>
<td>Teach communication styles, learning styles, conflict styles, apply theory to practice, use <strong>Personal Leadership</strong> methods, IDI coaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differing expectations regarding dress, time, participation, faculty/staff-student engagement</td>
<td>Teach cultural norms, determine expectations, offer support, role model, <strong>Personal Leadership</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation styles (experiential/debriefing)</td>
<td>Ask questions, approach one another, participate or not, challenge by choice, constantly flex with group, modify, offer all styles/opportunities, 3rd culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grading system/TSS model</td>
<td>Deal with dominant culture and system, be open to alternatives, balance perspectives while explaining rationales, <strong>Personal Leadership</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom styles: learning, communication, conflict, language proficiency</td>
<td>Teach styles in class, talk slowly, use power point and handouts, allow preparation time, do not dominate with one style or culture, use all learning styles, <strong>Personal Leadership</strong></td>
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<th>Challenges in Port:</th>
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<td>Cultural Norms/Rules and Behavior</td>
<td>Teach taboos and norms, apply theory to practice, use cultural informants, role model, provide feedback, be willing to change own style, teach rules and regulations (Teach ins)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debriefing</td>
<td>Teach communication styles, learning styles, apply theory to practice, use <a href="#">Personal Leadership methods</a>, use journals, mix up options, explain intentions and rationale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port preparation</td>
<td>Teach cultural norms, broaden scope of information both on safety and culture, <a href="#">Personal Leadership</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port experiences (class differential)</td>
<td>Allow all options, talk about differences, offer range of options, use debriefing as opportunity to acknowledge, fundraising, teach classism, <a href="#">Personal Leadership</a></td>
</tr>
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</table>
Intercultural Competencies

Knowledge
- Personal Leadership,
- Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS),
- Intercultural Development Inventory,
- DIE model,
- Culture general knowledge,
- Culture specific knowledge,
- Styles in communication, learning, and conflict
Intercultural Competencies

Skills

- Knowledge of self (edges, triggers, limitations)
- Reflection and self-reflection/processing
- Being mindful of context and dynamics of the group
- Listening at all levels & asking clarifying questions
- Attending to judgment, emotions and physical sensations
- Creating a vision
- Engaging ambiguity
Intercultural Competencies

Skills

- Fostering team work
- Giving and receiving feedback
- Utilizing the diversity of staff and students
- Giving people leadership: empowerment, validation, and support
- Embracing conflict and facilitating mediation
- Code shifting
- Finding resources
Intercultural **Competencies**

**Attitudes**
- Keeping an objective mind
- Patience
- Anticipation
- Vulnerability
- Authenticity
- Flexibility
- Adaptability
- Creativity & imagination
- Turning challenges into learning opportunities

**Personal Practices**
- Peer support
- Personal/spiritual practices
- Journaling
- Finding work and life balance
Fostering Intercultural Insights

- Discussed values and how students’ behavior reflected those values
- Taught students how one’s behavior impacts others
- Assisted students to understand the impact of communication styles
- Helped students to look at things from another point of view
- Empowered students and staff to work with one another
- Turned the challenges to learning opportunities
- Facilitated a formation of a third culture and created a community of inclusion
- Used sociograms to find the students operating under a narrow social network and helped them broaden it
- Facilitated experiential activities
- Looked for cultural informants from the staff and got them involved
- Challenged assumptions
- Asked difficult questions about representation and privilege
- Role-modeled how to be an intercultural bridge
Fostering Intercultural Insights

- Used the experiences in class, onboard, ports to reflect on the content of class and drew connections from conceptual framework to their lived experience, Practice-Theory-Practice Spiral Curriculum
- Applied the simulations to real life
- Taught self-reflection skills: Personal Leadership
- Normalized the experience of difference
- Encouraged curiosity instead of judgment
- Encouraged intentional inquiry
- Asked questions
- Explored interactions
- Connected the dots
- Played Devil’s advocate
- Taught empathy
- Maintained a mentoring relationship
Personal Leadership

MAKING A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE
Spheres of IC Learning
Sphere #1

Learn about the cultures with which you come into contact:

- get culture-specific information
Culture-Specific Data

- Working with the Japanese
- Living in Mexico
- Asian American Non-Verbals
- France for Foreigners
- US Cultural Patterns
Sphere #2

Learn about the patterns by which cultural groups differ:

- get culture-general information
Culture-General Patterns

- View of The Self
- Sense of Time
- Sense of Physical Space
- Communication Styles
- Value Orientations

Cultural continua
Spheres of IC Competence

learn

*general* information

learn *specific* information
Sphere #3

Practice Personal Leadership of your own cultural experience, in interaction with the cultural other:

- disentangle from your default cultural programming
- discern your right action
Spheres of IC Learning

practice ‘Personal Leadership’

learn general information

learn specific information
Personal Leadership is about:

- turning theories, models, and knowledge into a personal practice for applied competence
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- taking leadership of our habitual responses and reactions so that we can better interact with the new and unfamiliar
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- turning theories, models, and knowledge into a personal practice for applied competence
- taking leadership of our habitual responses and reactions so that we can better interact with the new and unfamiliar
- discerning our ‘right action’ for the particular time and place in which we find ourselves
PL’s Choice Point

In the face of the uncomfortable, ambiguous and unknown; navigating your experience abroad; interacting with person, place, or event?

Do What You’ve Always Done
Operate from automatic pilot, from your habitual cultural perspective.

Practice Personal Leadership
Respond mindfully and creatively to the unique situation.
Principles of Personal Leadership
Practices of Personal Leadership

- Aligning with Vision
- Attending to Judgment
- Attending to Emotion
- Attending to Physical Sensation
- Engaging Ambiguity
- Cultivating Stillness
Crafting A Powerful Vision

The “Five P’s” of a Powerful Vision:

- **Personal** — it’s about you, not about anyone else
- **Present** — it’s in the present tense, not a conditional future (even if you don’t model it all the time)
- **Positive** — it’s what you are committed to, rather than what you’re not
- **Passionate** — it’s alive to you; it makes your spine tingle and gives you ‘goose bumps’
- **Purpose** — it’s about the bigger picture of your intention, and the difference you expect your way of being to make in the world.
Example

- As an effective interculturalist and PL practitioner at my highest and best, I am caring, playful, loving and well; so that I help others become aware of their cultural programming and handle cultural differences productively.
Contact me if interested in having a workshop:
medina@umbc.edu


Website: http://plseminars.com/
Thank you for your attention!