CAS IP101: The Global Learning Experience

Instructors: Sue Griffin and Dr. Célia Bianconi

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Credit</th>
<th>8 sessions</th>
<th>2-3 weeks pre-departure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phase I: Getting Ready to Go</td>
<td>2 sessions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase II: I’m abroad!</td>
<td>5 sessions</td>
<td>Onsite-semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase III: Welcome home! Now what?</td>
<td>1 session</td>
<td>1-2 weeks post-semester</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pass/Fail
Your final grade will usually be posted between 2 and 4 weeks after departure from your host country.

Course Description:

The main objectives of this 1-credit course are to enable you to enhance your learning in a study abroad location and to help you to better understand and reflect upon the experience. The course will provide you with tools for analyzing your learning process and identifying cultural patterns, differences, similarities and values. Ultimately it will navigate you towards perhaps becoming a global citizen while remaining an ambassador for your own culture. These topics will be approached in a non-site specific way, however you will also need to complete exercises and assignments related to your host country/site.

The course will examine theoretical aspects of interacting with other cultures and methods of learning, as well as providing practical exercises in which you will need to observe, document, research and reflect upon assigned topics. It will require you to take stock of your experience, your personal growth and learning. It will also challenge you to think critically about the host country and your own identity. Ultimately, the course will impact upon your view of your experience abroad, but personal growth will depend on your own engagement in this process.

The readings and lectures are brief and assignments have been designed so that they should not feel onerous. Sessions may be completed over approximately a two-week period.

Finally, this course will not deal with logistics or practical issues about studying abroad (safety, money, packing, etc.). Please check with your program manager about these issues.

This course was developed and designed by Boston University Study Abroad faculty Amalia Perez Juez, Elisabetta Convento and Michael Peplar with assistance from research and teaching assistants Rebecca Moy, Mariachiara Berizzi and Samantha Peterson. It has subsequently been adapted by Sue Griffin and Célia Bianconi.
Course objectives

Enhance students’ preparation for studying abroad through i) learning basic information about the host culture ii) setting goals for the study abroad experience iii) developing an awareness of students’ own cultural values iv) developing an understanding of the concept of inter-cultural competence and iv) preparing students to interact with people in the host country and their own peers.

Enable students to reflect upon and deepen the study abroad experience while it is happening through i) structured reflections ii) the development of an awareness of cultural difference and of culture’s role in shaping beliefs, practices and perceptions iii) the development of new perspectives on students’ own culture and iv) an understanding of the stages of cultural adaptation, especially focusing on culture shock.

Prepare students for a successful re-entry into their home culture through i) a recognition of possible issues connected to re-entering the home culture and ii) the practical application of their experiences in academic and professional goals.

Support students in the reentry process by i) providing information on reverse culture shock and how to manage the re-adaptation process ii) providing an outlet for student reflection on the personal impact of study abroad iii) presenting practical, on-campus involvement with international students and/or incoming study abroad students.

Materials used in the course

- Readings: either posted on the course platform or available via a link
- Links to existing videos
- Videos produced by BUSA

Assessment:

Each phase has a series of assignments all clearly posted online from the start of the course. In order to pass the course, you must complete all assignments on time. Although this is a pass/fail course, keep in mind that ultimately the more you invest, the more you will gain from this course and from your study abroad experience in general. All readings, materials, videos, and other necessary documents will be available on the platform, so you don’t have to worry about locating sources.

You will have to set up an Digication ePortfolio account which you will develop during the course. Your personal account will be used to record your experience abroad throughout the course and for your own future reference.

Please view the ePortfolio set-up guides linked to from the Blackboard course site home page (in the Course Overview module) to learn how to set up your ePortfolio and how to indicate to your instructors in the Digication course that you have completed each assignment in the ePortfolio.
Interaction between participants

At the end of each assignment the instructors will begin a new discussion in the Digication ePortfolio course site which addresses some of the commonalities in your postings while highlighting some thought-provoking observations you have made. Students are encouraged to continue this discussion using this central forum.

Depending on class size and time differences, we anticipate one or two synchronous conversations during the course. We will provide instructions on using a web-conferencing tool as needed.

Phase I: Getting ready to go

This initial phase of the course is introductory and will take one to two weeks to complete, depending on the amount of time devoted to it. It includes two sessions that will inform you about the importance of setting academic, cultural, personal, and professional goals for study abroad as well as asking you to complete some light research on the host culture in order to prepare for departure.

Session 1: What do you want to get out of this experience?

The purpose of this session is to welcome you to the course and to ask you to reflect - before you leave home - upon your objectives for this experience. You will be asked to set your goals in advance of arrival in the host culture, in order to take a clear set of objectives with you.

Video 1: Welcome: The session begins with a welcome video that explains the purpose of the course as well as gives a brief description and summary of the course’s content.

Assignment 1: Setup: Set up your ePortfolio account.

Video 2: Darwin: This video uses the example of Charles Darwin to encourage you to take notes and reflect upon what you are experiencing while abroad.

Reading 1: Read a short text, “What do I want to get out of this experience?”

Assignment 2: Goals: Then complete “Your Study Abroad Goals” exercise.


Assignment 3: Reflect upon about what is meant by the terms, ethnocentricity, intercultural competence, and world global citizenship. What competencies and skills do you think a global citizen might be expected to have?
Session 2: What I should know before I go

The purpose of this session is to have you begin to prepare yourself in a more culture-specific way, both in terms of the host culture and self-reflection as a US American. As you are still home, the session will not explore topics related to culture shock or adaptation, but rather the idea of diversity and therefore, the value of knowledge and being prepared.

Reading 1: Hofstede’s 6 Dimensions of National Culture:

Visit [http://geert-hofstede.com/national-culture.html](http://geert-hofstede.com/national-culture.html) and read through the summary of each of these cultural dimensions. Then click on “Cultural Tools” followed by “Country Comparison”. Input your country of origin, followed by the name of your host country and read through the comparison. You’ll see a chart comparing the two countries, followed by a summary of how the dominant culture in your country of origin is reflected in the cultural dimensions. Now input these country names in the inverse order and read that summary.

Assignment 1: "Host Country Culture". With which aspects of this comparison do you agree and disagree? Explain why? What surprised you regarding the dominant cultural profile of your own culture and that of your host country? Which cultural differences might you wish to be alert to, or wish to research future?

Video 2: This concluding video gives you some last reminders before the study abroad trip begins.
**Phase II: I’m Abroad!**

**Session 1: Arrival**

You’ve already acquired some basic information about your host country in Phase 1 of the course. The first session of Phase 2 deals with some basic information you should acquire before going forward with your study abroad experience.

**Lecture/Video 1:** “What do we mean by culture?”


**Assignment 1: Idioms and Silences**

Consider idiomatic expressions in your host culture’s language and think about the use of silence within a conversation in the host culture. Are people comfortable with silence or do they feel the need to fill it?

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/20/opinion/the-how-are-you-culture-clash.html
http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/24/opinion/greetings-from-around-the-world.html?_r=0

**Assignment 2: Greetings and Leave Taking Expressions in your host country**

Write about your observations of greeting and leave taking expressions and how these might differ according to age.

**Reading 3:** 10 Common Hand Gestures That Are Easily Misunderstood Abroad

**Assignment 3:** Create an inventory of important hand gestures in your host culture

**Session 2: Culture shock?**

The second session focuses on Culture Shock, a well-known phenomenon that you may experience at some point after arriving in your host country.

**Reading 1:** This reading introduces the concept of and theories about Culture Shock.

**Reading 2:** SOUND Understanding the Sounds of Istanbul, March 20, 2014, by Daniele Volante
http://thisbigcity.net/understanding-the-sounds-of-istanbul/

**Assignment 1:** SIGHTS, SOUNDS, TASTES AND SMELLS. Think back to your arrival in your host country. What were some of the sights, sounds, tastes and smells that struck you as “different”. Did you find them pleasing or disagreeable? Reflect on how much you have adapted to your new environment. Which of these sights, sounds, tastes and smells have you ceased to notice? Which of the initially disagreeable sensations now feel comfortable? Which continue to bother you?
Video 1: The Lost Boys of Sudan talk about their experience in the US. Please watch both a) ‘From Sudan to the United States’ (length: 04.54), which sets the context, and b) ‘Cultural Differences’ (length: 04.58).

http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/movies/cultural-differences-ggtu/

Assignment 2: This assignment asks you to reflect upon cultural difference.

Session 3: Coping and Adjusting

The third session is concerned with developing skills to help you adjust to life in your host country. You will learn new social and cultural rules to interact with local people. You will also explore emotional resources, such as motivation, stress management capacity and self-care ability, including staying in touch with family and friends to cope with the pressure that the phase of adjustment may involve. Recognizing the impact of cultural diversity on your life, you’ll become able to appreciate both your native and host culture and negotiate between the two when needed.

Reading 1: Excerpt from Enrique Banus, Intercultural Dialogue and Citizenship, pp. 104-105

Assignment 1: “When in Rome, do as the Romans do”
Observe people acting in three different situations: (i) on the bus/train/underground, (ii) at the restaurant/bar/coffee shop, (iii) buying food at local shops/market.

Reading 2: “The world is your oyster”
http://glasgowguardian.co.uk/2013/11/26/the-world-is-your-oyster/

Assignment 2: You are asked to rate your emotional responses to your study abroad experience so far

Choose between the following reading and video

Assignment 3: Time – Reflect upon how you and others view and use time.

Session 4: Walk in someone else’s shoes

This session introduces concepts such as stereotyping, US identity, and changing attitudes towards one’s home or host culture. You will read texts and complete activities which will help you to both confront stereotypes that are held against US Americans and to challenge stereotypes you yourself may hold.

Video 1: Introduction

Reading 1a: Gone Before: You will read Kohls, L. R. (2001). Survival Kit for Overseas Living. Boston, MA: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, Chapter 2 “Others have gone before “p. 5-8 (only up to the question “How will you respond?”). This chapter explores the idea that people from other countries hold stereotypes about people from the U.S.
Reading 1b: Stereotypes Kohl’s Survival Kit for Overseas Living Chapter 3, “The Stereotyped American” p.9-12, gives a list of the most commonly held stereotypes other people have of US Americans.

Assignment 1: Stereotypes: You will answer some questions regarding your opinions on the list of stereotypes you have read.

Reading 2: Responding You will read a short text from MAXSA (student guide pgs. 60-61) about how to respond to stereotypes about US Americans while abroad.

Assignment 2: Responding You will be asked to recall a time when you were stereotyped and how you reacted.


Assignment 3: Cultural Values: You will consider a stereotype you held about your host culture prior to arrival.

Session 5: Getting ready to leave. Continue your trip.

This session ends Phase 2 and is the last on-site session. Its purpose is to bring the course full-circle, by asking you to review the goals you set for yourself before leaving for your host country, as well as asking you to reflect on your time abroad. You will begin to reflect on the last several months as well as prepare for the re-entry process.

Video 1: Introduction: This video quickly summarizes what the session will contain.

Reading 1: Smarter You will read a Time Magazine online article about how study/work abroad may make people smarter.

http://time.com/79937/how-studying-or-working-abroad-makes-you-smarter/

Assignment 1: Goal Re-evaluation You will be asked to revisit the goals you set upon pre-departure.


Reading 3: On the Eve of my Departure https://www.marist.edu/international/moy.html

Assignment 2: Journal Entries You will reflect upon the readings and on your semester in order to prepare for re-entry into the home culture.

Video 2: Conclusion This video sums up the session and bids you farewell until Phase 3.
Phase III: Welcome Home! Now What?

Session 1: Putting your Experience to Work

The purpose of this Session is firstly to bring the course to a conclusion and secondly to aid you to think of ways in which it may be possible to use study abroad experience personally, academically and professionally. You will reflect upon how the experience has benefitted you in terms of new skills and perspectives; will create an inventory of abilities and skills; and will think of ways in which you can “market” your study abroad experience on your resume, in cover letters, and in interviews. Additionally, you will be given tips for continuing with your international education and experience and using your experience within your own community.

Video 1: Introduction  You will be welcomed home and back to the course.

Reading 1: You will an article from the Chicago Tribune about how your study abroad experience may help you to stand out from your peers in applying for jobs. [http://trib.in/1MVEnKc](http://trib.in/1MVEnKc).

Reading 2: You will read an excerpt from the MAXSA Students’ Guide about a few people’s experiences post-study abroad. They talk about how their experience continues to influence them.


Assignment 1: You will reflect upon what you have learned from the study abroad experience

Assignment 2: The New You. You will be given a checklist of attributes and skills that you may have acquired while abroad.

Assignment: 3: Moving Forward. You will be given a list of options for continuing on with your international experience and will be presented with the idea of ‘shoeboxing’

Video 2: Closing  This video concludes the session and the course.