

Guiding Site Visits Abroad: Strategies for Exploring Power and Privilege and Increasing Cultural Competency

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Positionality Exercise: Your Visit to Barcelona

- 1) Take a few moments to consider what aspects of WHO YOU ARE, your *standpoint*, will influence your impressions, what you perceive and your reactions to the urban environment of Barcelona during your visit. This can include elements of your self such as age, gender, ethnicity, languages you speak, economic class, social status, nationality, and so on.
- 2) Now speculate for a few moments about a few aspects that may influence how local residents perceive and receive *you*, based upon information they may think they have about who you are. What might some of that information be and how is it likely to influence how you are received by locals?
- 3) Once you have reflected sufficiently, share what you are comfortable sharing with at least two of your colleagues sitting next to you.

Session Goals

- Think critically about strategies for exploring power and privilege in the shifting paradigms of study abroad
- Discuss how the conceptualization of culture predominant in ICC curricula can be enriched by drawing on critical pedagogy, subaltern, and ethnographic theoretical frameworks
- Explore lesson plans derived from ethnographic methodology that can be applied to study abroad site visits
- Explore case studies to find practical solutions to asymmetrical power relations between study abroad students and local cultural actors

Why site visits?

- Site visits, understood in a very broad sense here, are the principal, structured and intentional moments in study abroad where there is an opportunity to privilege experiential learning over traditional, classroom-based cognitive learning.
- Site visits offer unique opportunities for student observation of and dialogue with the host culture (with individuals, groups, practices and live representations)
- Site visits are for these reasons the *sine qua non* of study abroad and therefore worthy of considered attention to methodology and practice.

Critical Pedagogy For Study Abroad Site Visits

- **Critical pedagogy** has often been used to support educational efforts with disenfranchised communities, with informal community-based education, or with efforts to create a more diverse and culturally inclusive learning environment within the formal university or college context.
- **Subaltern Studies:** Arising first in South Asian historians, by the early 1990s, subaltern studies had been adopted by Latin Americanists and other groups as a powerful theoretical and empirical conceptual framework for understanding how we study communities and groups who lack an effective voice in society.
- **Ethnography:** In study abroad, many students may have never been exposed to the field of ethnography, though many of the intercultural lesson plans that faculty directors would use to infuse intercultural learning into the program design ask of our students to be familiar with these methods. This means how we teach and facilitate such learning is critical.

Tulane University: “Critical Pedagogy, Subaltern Studies, and Ethnographic Method in the Study Abroad Lesson Plan”

Tulane in Costa Rica, Freshman Semester, Fall 2011

Tulane in Cuba, Fall Semester 2012-2014

Diaspora Cultural Immersion Short Term Study Abroad Series:

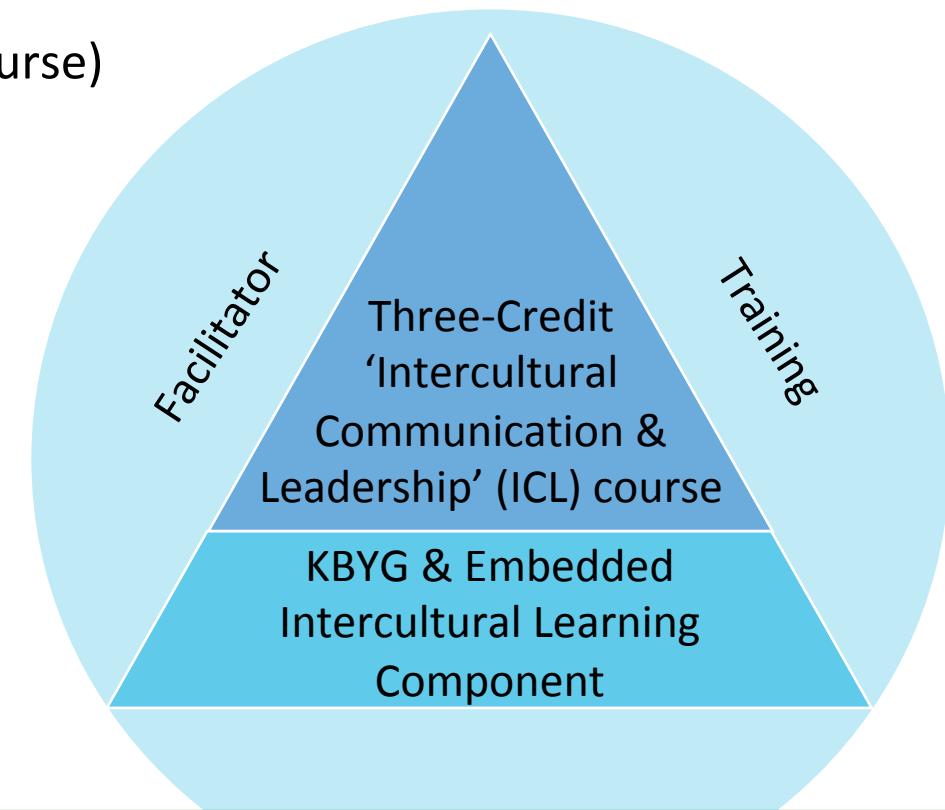
- Senegal and New Orleans Transatlantic Connections (Summer 2017)
- Race, Immigration, and Identity in DR and Haiti (Summer 2018)
- Race and Performance Cultures in Brazil (Projected Summer 2019)

Increase Student Learning by:

1. Train faculty to understand experiential learning as a methodology for their course content.
2. Build course reading and reflection into the structure of the program to increase student learning outcomes. Focus on student voice vis-à-vis community.
3. Ethnographic Methods: Have faculty consider the integration of learning content at the micro level (site visits) as well as the macro level (overall program).

CIEE's Approach to Intercultural Learning

- Major Curricular Components
- Know Before You Go Online Pre-Departure Modules
- Embedded Intercultural Component
- COMM 3301 Intercultural Communication & Leadership (3 cr. course)



CIEE's Approach to Intercultural Learning

Embedded Intercultural Learning	“Intercultural Communication and Leadership” course	Facilitator Training and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Intercultural learning framework that is embedded into each CIEE program• Intended to reach all students on a CIEE program• Approximately 12 hours over course of semester• Not-for-credit• Know Before You Go pre-departure modules	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Advanced three-credit (45 contact hours) intercultural elective course• Curriculum builds on the embedded component• Listed as Communication course• Emphasis on leadership• Increased academic rigor• Currently offered at 80% of CIEE locations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online development courses and community for facilitators• Emphasis on developing instructors' own intercultural leadership practice• Building a shared language about intercultural development• Continued 1:1 coaching and support

CIEE: How the Global Institute in Rio de Janeiro Addresses Asymmetrical Relations in Preparing for Study Abroad Site Visits

- Pre-brief and debrief all visits
- Partnering strategies: train and empower local guides & hosts in experiential learning as a methodology
- Representation and inclusion: choose partners whose own standpoints bring nuance and critical, often “double” perspectives to host culture (that is, that can model both dominant and non-dominant views)
- Further empower local partners by integrating them into classroom experience as much as possible
- Explain the CIEE mission to *all* service-providers in contact with student participants and encourage them to have a stake in that mission (co-educators)
- Focus on contested cultural spaces: attend to relations of power within host culture

Intercultural Competence: IDI

- The **capability** to shift cultural perspective and adapt—or bridge--behavior to cultural commonality & difference
 - Deep cultural self-awareness
 - Deep understanding of the experiences of people from different cultural communities—in perceptions, values, beliefs, behavior and practices
 - Behavioral shifting across these various cultural differences



Critical questions in ethnographic methodology that build along the IDC continuum

- Self awareness: Identity
 - How do students reflect upon and evaluate their own purpose, intentions, and frames of analysis as students and researchers?
 - How do they learn to predict the consequences or evaluate their own potential to influence their environment and even to do harm?
- Awareness of Others:
 - How do students learn to maintain a dialogue of collaboration in their research between themselves and others?
 - How do students ask questions in culturally appropriate ways?
 - How do students assess the credibility of intercultural sources?
- Ability to Shift Cultural Perspective
 - How will students critically analyze their observations and articulate deeper meanings of their experience in their ethnographic writing?

The effective ethnographer is also an effective intercultural leader with the ability to:

- facilitate multicultural groups in discussion and debate (including turn-taking, participation, use of silence, etc.)
- “Code-shift” from one communication style to another
- interview a cultural informant to obtain needed information on subjective culture
- suspend judgment of alternative cultural norms
- develop multiple frames of reference for interpreting intercultural situations and test hypothesis.
- Practice good judgment in selecting the most appropriate interpretation in a transcultural situation
- Ask sensitively phrased questions
- Interpret nonverbal behavior in culturally appropriate ways
- Monitor the use of humor for cultural appropriateness
- Display cultural humility
- Be culturally self-aware

Best practices in site visits develop ethnographic skills:

Design Your Curriculum to Envision the
“Pre”, “During”, and “Post” of Site Visits

Pre: “Choosing a Field Site” and Background Research

From Touring to Experiential Learning:

1. Hold students accountable for the itinerary by framing the visit.
2. Encourage guided assignments and readings about site before the visit
3. Define the research question
4. Negotiate Access: Permissions? Important Gatekeepers?
5. Prepare tour guides, bus drivers, Ta's to understand their roles as co-educators
6. Prepare students to seek out co-educators

Experiential Classroom Activities: Entering Communities

- Example: Codevi, Dominican Republic

During: Active Engagement = Ethnography

1. Define Field Work: Give them expectations for the visit.
2. Keep Field Notes: (Jottings and/or description)
3. Foster Ethnographic Research Techniques (participant observation, interviews, study key documents on site)

On Site Engagement Activities:

Mini-Participant Observation Activity
Museum Visits

Guidelines for conducting ethnographic fieldwork

- Collect a variety of information from different perspectives and different sources.
- Use observation, open interviews, and site documentation, as well as audio-visual materials such as recordings and photographs.
- Write field notes that are descriptive and rich in detail.
- Represent participants in their own terms by using quotations and short stories. Capture participants' views of their own experiences in their own words.

Eriksson and Kovalainen. "Ethnographic Research"

After: Reflection and Write Up

Focus Student Development on:

- Analysis of Experience
- Situation of Self in the Narration of Experience
- Understanding meaningfulness from the perspective of the host
- Classroom Activities Post Site Visit:
Guided Reflections
Classroom Written Assignments
Final Papers

Case Studies for Site Visits and Reflections

Lesson Plans for Experiential Learning Based on Ethnographic Methodology

- Pre Site Visit
 - Building pre-research assignments into the site visit
 - Introduction to Informed Consent Forms: Introduce students to the field of research by explaining IRB.
 - “**Doing Ethnography Demonstration**” as part of on site orientation
 - Positionality and standpoint activity
 - Pre-briefing: purpose and goals of the visit; prepare for dialogue; prerequisite background knowledge for making sense
- During Site Visit
 - **Mini-Participant Observation Assignment**
 - **Observation Skills During Museum Visits**
- Post Site Visit
 - **Guided Reflections**

Session Presentation and Resources



THANK YOU