

Equal Opportunities, Unique Experiences: Navigating Identities of Disability, Race, Gender, and Sexuality While Traveling Abroad

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2019 CIEE ANNUAL CONFERENCE

BROOKLYN

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STUDY ABROAD 2019 | OPENING DOORS TO INCREASE DIVERSITY IN STUDY ABROAD



Nice to Meet You!

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A Glimpse Ahead

- Welcome & Introductions
- Reflecting on experiences of LGBTQIA+ people of color studying abroad
- Lessons from leading university students with disabilities to Japan
- Resources for supporting students with disabilities in education abroad
- Questions & Discussion



Reflecting on experiences of LGBTQIA+ people of color studying abroad

Warm Up Exercise

write down these letters

T S E I A M X L E W T O T E R R K S

cross out six letters to reveal a word common in the English language

T S E I A M X L E W T O T E R R K S

Aspects of an Experience Abroad

Pre Travel and Personal Context:

motivations and resources to go abroad, program/country selection
support and perceptions of family/friends of going abroad

During Travel:

safety, wellness, support, and community, program content
perceptions, stereotypes, visibility and invisibility

Post Travel:

re-entry and reverse culture shock
talking with friends, family, and others about your experience

Pre Travel & Personal Context

Motivations/Resources

- All the reasons everybody else goes abroad, possibly emphasizing:
 - Heritage
 - A space for self-expression apart from one's environment of residence
 - A space for self-understanding through contrast from one's environment of residence
 - Vicarious travel of one's family or friends
 - A vacation from one's typical campus activism

Recommendations for Pre Travel

- Review pre-travel orientation, programs, brochures, website, applications, etc
- Develop support programs for POC & Queer participants to share advice and concerns
- Implement competency-based education for faculty/staff
- Co-sponsor/Create campus programs aimed at supporting different identities abroad

During An Orientation:

- To integrate discussions of multiple identities and social acceptance
- Explore the multilayered concepts that create culture and identity
- Integrate statistics & info about the destination country
- Host a peer-led discussion group led by returners holding a QTPOC identity

Recommendations for Pre Travel

- What is important for you in selecting this program or country?
- Do you have certain desires or expectations? What if the reality is different?
- What do you think this program is likely to develop for you in your sense of who you are and how you express yourself?
- What sorts of questions, concerns, research, and planning do you need to consider in order to help you be safe and supported in being yourself as much as it's possible?
- Are there some people or networks that you want to connect with before you go that will support you around your various identities?

During Travel: Safety & Wellness

Perceived Barriers:

- Students are asking themselves:
 - how does the host country(ies) treat POC/Queer folks
 - what's the local "scene"
- Transportation Security Administration

Logistical Barriers:

- Housing accommodations and bathrooms
- Access to medical facilities, hormone treatment, therapy, and insurance
- Academic coursework related to identity
- Social and cultural programming
- University policies and legality
 - Title IX
 - bias reporting system

Recommendations for During Travel

- Encourage deeper immersion into the host culture through community involvement:
 - local organizations serving marginalized populations
 - attendance at community activities for identity- specific causes
 - Include information about relationship safety in on-site orientations
 - Implement competency-based education for campus security, housing, medical staff, and homestays
- Continue the Conversation:**
- To integrate discussions of multiple identities and social acceptance
 - Build awareness of perceptions and stereotypes that may impact students while in the host country(ies)

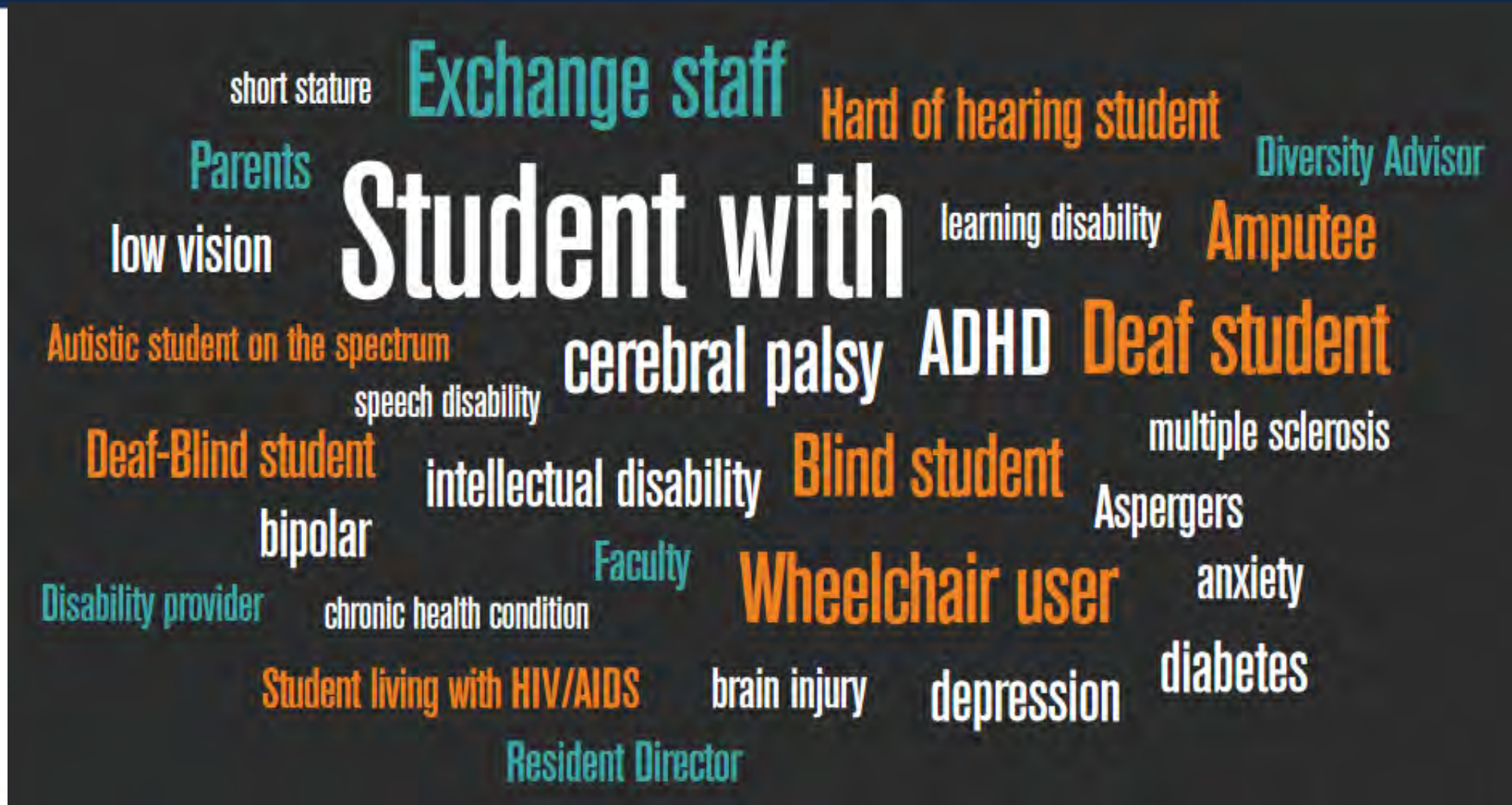


Lessons from leading university students with disabilities to Japan



Resources for supporting students with disabilities in education abroad

Disability IS an Aspect of Diversity!



Role Reversal

"Because of my Latin American roots and appearance, many Costa Ricans assumed that I was a local. If I was with a group of American friends, the Costa Rican people we met would often address me - in Spanish - instead of others in the group, assuming I was the interpreter.

Considering the times in the U.S. when people would address my friends instead of me due to my disability (for example at a restaurant, waiters would assume that I couldn't order for myself), it was an interesting role reversal!"

-Juanita Lillie, Study abroad alum to Costa



Setting the Tone

"...So this time I went to the actual study abroad office and they were absolutely amazing. They encouraged me not to settle and to find the perfect program that met my goals." - Alex Stone, intern abroad to South Africa

"As a college student, I was encouraged by study abroad staff to travel to places where accessibility would not be challenging, such as the U.K. and Canada, but programs in these countries did not match my goals as a student of a foreign language and international affairs the way Tanzania would." - Rachel Garaghty, research abroad to Tanzania

Challenge By Choice

People with disabilities have the right to choose adventure and risk, and to find their own ways to contend with difficult conditions



What's the International Educator's Role?

- Provide potential participants with complete and accurate information about program sites
- Discuss possible accommodation strategies
- Encourage participants to make informed choices about their participation based that information
- Talk with the individual about their comfort level and "stretch zone" and their ability to succeed in difficult or unfamiliar access conditions
- Choose activities that pose a range of challenges for all group members

Choose Your Own Adventure...Abroad!



Want to Dip Your Toes in the Water?



Ready to Splash Through Some Puddles?



Can't Wait to Feel the Spray of Waterfalls?

Yes, it's my first time abroad.

Yes, I want challenge by choice.

Yes, I'm very adaptable and adventurous.

Western Europe or Australia or Canada

Take Your Pick of Countries

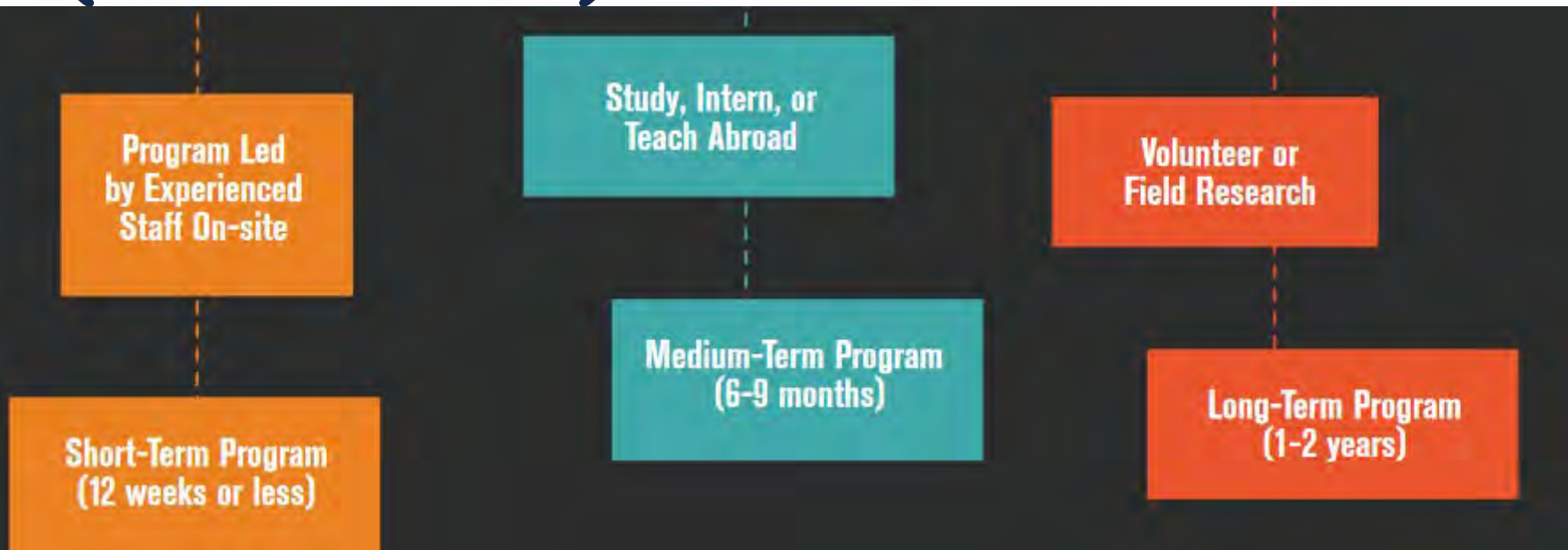
Non-traditional Country

Living with Other Americans

Living with Host Families

Living Immersed with the Locals

Choose Your Own Adventure (Continued)



Disabilities

Autism

LD / ADHD

Intellectual

Mental health

Chronic health

Physical

Blind

Deaf

Non-disabled

Accommodations

Early arrival options

Health insurance options

Local connections

Academic options

Housing options

Flexibility in schedules

Assistance funds

Electronic handouts

Challenge by choice

Disability & Ed Abroad: Where Can I Turn?

- National Clearinghouse on Disability and Exchange (Mobility International USA and U.S. Department of State's ECA)
 - www.miusa.org/ncde
- Diversity Abroad (members)
 - Disability Task Force
- Deaf Abroad Resources (Gallaudet)
 - <https://tinyurl.com/yyaktl9r>
- Abroad with Disabilities
 - <http://abroadwithdisabilities.org/>
- Access Abroad (University of Minnesota)
 - <https://umabroad.umn.edu/professionals/accessabroad>

Sample Topics in NCDE's Resource Library

- Sample disability accommodation forms
- Air travel accessibility
- Statistics on people with disabilities in international exchange
- Media accessibility (online content, presentations, etc.)
- Recruiting/including staff and interns with disabilities
- People with disabilities in global careers
- Teaching foreign languages to disabled students
- NCDE services/Collaborating with NCDE

Contact clearinghouse@miusa.org to assist with your search

Resources from NCDE (www.miusa.org)

Plan

Your Travel Abroad

Discover

the Impact of Our Work

Build

Capacity in Your Organization

Search Our Extensive Resources

SEARCH

HOME | PLAN YOUR TRAVEL ABROAD | AMERICANS GOING ABROAD



Americans Going Abroad

Words to Live & Travel B

“When you study abroad, you don’t walk away the same person you were when you walked in. Yes, I am someone who is blind, but I’m also someone who is black, a woman, a lesbian. All of these aspects are as much a part of my identity, and I am proud of them, but none of them individually solely represent me. **If you can find ways to be who you are, even when it’s difficult or not accessible, people will remember you as a whole person.**”

- Justice Shorter, study abroad alum at SIT.
www.miusa.org/resource/story/justice





Questions and Discussion



Questions and Discussion

1. What are some of the unique contributions that people who identify as disabled, LGBTQ+ and/or people of color make to international education (as students, faculty leaders, advisors and more?)



Questions and Discussion

2. How can we, as educators, hold ourselves accountable to educate ourselves and our colleagues on inclusion, oppression and privilege?



Questions and Discussion

3. Share experiences and practices that successfully engage people who have historically been underrepresented in study abroad programs? What does "success" look like?



Remember to rate our session using:

- Conference App
- Session eval email



THANK YOU

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