Research Article

From Pre-Freshman Abroad to Freshman On-Campus: Examining Intercultural Competence Development Through an Extended Journey

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Abstract

As students transition from high school to college, their abilities to adapt and adjust are put to the test. This study examines the outcomes of a multi-stage study abroad program targeting first-year college students. The authors investigated student intercultural competence levels prior to matriculation, their development while abroad, and their continued expansion by means of a post-travel, on-campus component. Mixed-methods data collection and analyses indicated that students gained significant intercultural competence development through participating in a short-term overseas experience, which stretched into their transition to college life. This research contributes to the study abroad and intercultural learning literature by investigating the effect of an innovative program model and the understudied population of pre-freshman students. The findings provide practical implications for designing and assessing intercultural programing overseas and on campus.

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Abstract in Chinese

在由高中升入大学的这一过程中，学生的适应调节能力受到了考验。本文旨在检验以大一新生为目标群体的多阶段海外学习项目的成果。作者研究了学生在不同阶段的跨文化能力水平的发展过程，包括入学之前的水平，在海外学习时的能力进展，以及回国之后、通过继续参与该项目的校园阶段学习而取得的能力扩展。采用混合方法（定量和定性）的数据采集和分析表明，学生通过参与短期海外学习，以及过渡到大学生活，他们的跨文化能力得到了显著的提高。本研究通过调查针对大一预备生的创新项目模式的成效，为海外学习和跨文化学习的文献做出了贡献。该研究发现为设计评估海外及本土的跨文化项目提供了实践性参考。

Keywords:

Introduction

Never before has our world been more interconnected. As social and economic globalization expanded, so too did the global dimensions of post-secondary education (de Wit, 2019). Colleges and universities began referring to global or international education in their mission statements and aimed to produce graduates who master the skills required for success in a globalized society (Koch, 2008). Specifically, leaders in higher education have been taking action to prioritize international education through promoting student mobility and internationalization at home (Altbach & Knight, 2016; Griffin, 2020). As such, comprehensive internationalization became the common wisdom, and globalizing campuses came to be institutionally imperative (Hudzik, 2011).

Research studies and university reports over numerous decades document the progress of globalized education. Learning opportunities were forged for students to develop foundational principles for global learning uniquely curated for the 21st Century, including reflecting, preparing for global citizenship, comprehending diverse cultures, and developing intercultural skills (Cornwell & Stoddard, 1999; Kahn & Agnew, 2017). Among such educational goals, intercultural competence development emerged as the primary intended outcome of many institutions' internationalization efforts, as assessing students' intercultural competence gives meaning to the numerical outputs (e.g., number of international students, number of study abroad programs) that are

commonly cited as evidence of successful internationalization, and thus is integral to measure the effectiveness of internationalization strategies (Deardorff, 2006).

Despite the increasing institutional focus on the internationalization of higher education, obstacles remain. Faculty members profit little professionally as they help internationalize their campuses, and foreign students are predominantly viewed as economic resources. The Covid-19 pandemic exacerbated the ever-present limitations in the further enhancement of international education. Other obstacles include the lack of consistent measurements of internationalization and lack of intentional learning objectives (Beelen & Jones, 2015; Green, 2012). To develop globally minded students sustainably, new models, methods, and perspectives must be integrated (Altbach & Peterson, 1998; Griffin, 2020; Sahasrabudhe et al., 2020). This study highlights a process that combines pedagogically intentional overseas instruction with continued on-campus mentorship, providing an example of how to further global learning in the context of higher education internationalization. The objective of this research is to explore the assessed development of intercultural competence of first-year college students going through two cultural transitions: studying abroad and transitioning into life on campus.

Literature Review

Study Abroad and Intercultural Competence Development

There is general agreement, it can be said, that the reported outcome and general goal of all in international education is to promote students' awareness of global issues and broaden their worldviews (Dolby, 2007). Universities in the United States have relied heavily on study abroad programming to boost intercultural competence (Berg et al., 2009), which is considered crucial for students to be competitive on the world stage (Deardorff, 2006). As interest in intercultural competence grew, intercultural scholars and higher education administrators have been making a concerted effort to outline its key components, compose a working definition, and clarify how to assess the development of intercultural competence (de Wit & Altbach, 2021; Koester et al., 1993). Although it has long been considered a complicated construct that is difficult to conceptualize or clearly define (Wolff & Borzikowsky, 2018), scholars and educators generally agree that the core components of intercultural

competence can be specified into three domains of learning outcomes—knowledge (cognitive), attitude (affective), and skills (behavioral) (Meyer-Lee & Evans, 2007; Spitzberg & Changnon, 2009). In the context of international education programs designed for college students, as investigated in this study, the authors view intercultural development as the learning process where students become aware of cultural similarities and differences, willing to adjust one's behaviors, and capable of communicating effectively and appropriately in intercultural interactions (Deardorff, 2006).

Previous research indicates that study abroad experiences, even those short in duration, can be instrumental in developing intercultural competence (Berg et al., 2009; Caffrey et al., 2005; Ferranto, 2015; Smith et al., 2014). However, to help ensure positive intercultural learning outcomes, program design and execution should be considered. Educators should intervene during the experience, directing targeted reflections that aid in the processing of engagement with culturally different others. Intervention should be intentional, repeated, even spontaneous. Instructors are expected to seize opportunities for learning and mentorship wherever and whenever they occur (Berg et al., 2012). This intentionality was prioritized in the design and implementation of the program examined here.

Furthermore, thorough assessment of study abroad programming is required in order to confirm any intercultural learning that may have occurred as a result of experiences overseas. Efforts have been made to quantify a wide variety of learning outcomes, including language learning, global citizenship, comprehension of cultural elements, personality variables, and intercultural sensitivity (Ferranto, 2015; Smith et al., 2014). Perhaps more so than others, the development of intercultural competence has drawn attention from international educators (Roy et al., 2014). Researchers indicate that intercultural competence is measurable and may be better evaluated by combining quantitative and qualitative methods that include self-assessments and observations by others (Deardorff, 2006). The labor put forth in demonstrating the efficacy of study abroad, however, is only useful if the results are utilized and shared widely throughout the field (Bolen, 2007).

Internationalization at Home

Intercultural learning happens for U.S. students not only through interactions with those from another nationality. Such learning also takes place

64

within communities; even within the U.S. Barriers to student mobility will likely always exist, restricting study abroad as the ideal mechanism. In turn, U.S. colleges and universities also harness homegrown resources to enhance student abilities to work successfully across cultural differences. Additional experiences, especially when paired with study abroad, can help stimulate intercultural competence (Lyons et al., 2018). Campuses are containers for individuals who look at and respond to the world in myriad ways. Though it may help, students need not board a plane or cross a border to experience and learn from differences (Doerr, 2018). Colleges and universities champion their international student populations, as well as efforts to recruit and hire students, faculty, and staff from diverse backgrounds. University leaders view these resources as positive contributions to institutions' strategic initiatives towards internationalization (Urban & Palmer, 2014).

One study by Soria and Troisi (2014) suggests that participation in activities related to internationalization at home, such as thoughtful interaction with international students and participation in intercultural co-curricular activities, may even net greater perceived benefits for the development of intercultural competence than study abroad. Yet, rarely is students' overseas experience intentionally paired with intercultural learning on-campus in a focused effort to measure the development of intercultural competence. Moreover, the contribution of first-year students to campus internationalization is limited. This study aims to examine first-year college students' intercultural competence development qualitatively and quantitatively, throughout two intercultural journeys—studying abroad in Peru, and transitioning into life on a university campus.

Intercultural Learning in First-Year Students

A relatively new trend in education abroad has been the development of programming for college students in their first year. During the 2017/2018 academic year, 341,751 U.S. post-secondary students studied overseas for course credit. Most were in their third and fourth year (IIE, Open Doors, 2019). Various program models feed these totals, with durations ranging from as short as a few days to as long as an academic year. Combined, more U.S. students studied internationally that year than ever before. Even so, first-year students accounted for only 4.2% of participants (IIE, Open Doors, 2019). These were the students classified as "Freshman", combining programs of all models and durations. Due to the uniqueness of the program model examined in this study

(pre-freshman study abroad), few from this subset were studying overseas prior to the start of their first academic term on campus. There has been minimal research on the learning outcomes of students participating in first-year study abroad programs, much less pre-freshman (Carroll, 2019).

Much research has been conducted on the learning outcomes of international academic programs in broad terms, but less is known when the focus narrows to specific classifications of learners. To date, sparse research has been conducted on the impact of educational experiences for the development of intercultural competence amongst first-year university students (Lyons et al., 2018). Bridge programs commonly provide supplemental learning opportunities for high school graduates just as they are about to matriculate into universities. Similarly, the program examined here aimed to help pre-freshman establish academic and social structures at a pivotal transition. Yet, while many bridge programs address the idea that students enter college lacking the skills and knowledge required for success, few studies have evaluated their attempts (Sablan, 2014). Instead, studies focus on retention and targeted demographic groups, choosing not to examine skill development (Suzuki et al., 2012; Tomasko, 2016; Wachen et al., 2018). Some literature exists on first-year study abroad experiences that inspect the expansion of cultural skills (Olson & Lalley, 2012). However, what remains to be known is what skills and attitudes students possess prior to entering college, how an intercultural experience can affect their capabilities, and what interculturally competent first-year students can bring to their campuses (Hightower, 2016). This study addresses the problem by examining the pre, midpoint, and post-program outcomes of an intercultural learning experience that took place overseas prior to students moving to college and continued through their first semester on-campus.

Program Structure & Curriculum Design

The Global Leadership Program for Freshman was developed not within an academic unit, but in the university's Study Abroad office, under International Programs. This unit promotes and facilitates intercultural learning opportunities for the entire university. Thus, the curriculum was designed with specific and intentional pedagogical approaches to develop intercultural competence. Curricular elements aimed to meet students where they were currently at in their intercultural development. Readings, exercises, and intercultural intervention activities were based on the intended outcomes

of the American Association of Colleges & Universities' (AAC&U) Intercultural Knowledge and Competence (IKC) VALUE Rubric (AAC&U, 2009). Where the group stayed, sites they visited, even where they ate was carefully considered and re-evaluated each year. Development of the skills and outcomes outlined in the rubric drove all programmatic design and implementation decisions.

The instructor worked closely with each cohort from July through November. Pre-departure to Peru, students completed a course reading packet/workbook and viewed ten videos introducing the course themes of leadership, sustainability, and intercultural learning. A dialogue occurred online after each viewing. Students were challenged to think critically about how each piece of the curriculum interconnected.

During the two weeks in Peru in August, students participated in class sessions supplemented by site visits and guest lectures at a rigorous pace. They completed 8-10 reflective journal entries addressing prompts tailored to their cultural engagement activities. A variation of the Thiagi Debrief guided their reflections (i.e., "What mattered?" "How do you feel?" "Do you know what was learned?" "How does this relate?" "What if...?" and "So, now what?"). Videos, articles, site visits, class discussions, and interactions with Peruvians provided material to dissect. Multiple one-on-one journal coaching sessions took place to develop more meaningful reflection. Students stayed 2-3 nights with host families in Lima, at an eco-lodge in the Amazon, and in hotels elsewhere. At each stop, roommate pairings changed, intending to acquaint students with each other and expose them to challenging living situations they may have to adapt to in college.

After the students came back from Peru to campus, each cohort met for eight sessions to implement Intercultural Development Plans (IDPs) to further the overseas curriculum, and to develop their own Action Projects in the fall semester. Cultural intervention activities, described in the appendix, were implemented in each class session abroad and on campus, followed by debriefings and discussions. In an effort to stretch the learning and leadership opportunities beyond the typical study abroad, program alumni joined each cohort as Global Leadership Mentors, i.e., Teaching Assistants for the fall sessions. Activities throughout the fall aligned with suggestions outlined in their IDPs. Action Projects were student-driven and assigned each to put their intercultural and leadership training into practice in their new environment. Students were tasked with identifying an issue they felt strongly about and

attempting to make a positive impact. Some members of the 2018 and 2019 cohorts instead conducted a Conversation Project, a variation focused more directly on intercultural learning, structured for students whose original project did not materialize. These students engaged in twelve meaningful conversations with those who were culturally different. All students presented their projects to instructors, classmates, and program alumni near the end of November. A final comprehensive, written or oral reflection was undertaken soon thereafter.

The intercultural needs of students evolved over time due to experiences abroad, transitions into college-life, and with the curriculum that extended through both. Students were repeatedly urged to self-assess. Curricular design elements, including an intercultural workshop with Peruvian university students, directly incorporated the skills, attitudes, and areas of knowledge the AAC&U rubric specifies. The top priority of the program instructor was to serve as an intercultural coach. The instructor actively intervened into experiences, whenever appropriate, to challenge participants to practice the skills and attitudes the curriculum aimed to develop. The instructor looked to support students as they worked through the challenges of engaging with culturally different others, while in Peru and on-campus. Seeking optimal intercultural growth, all program design and pedagogical elements aimed to balance the challenges with support and assistance.

Methods

The study obtained approval for research on human subjects through the university Institutional Review Board (IRB). The instructor of the program (first author) is a qualified administrator of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI®) and designed course content focusing on intercultural competency development with the intention of using the IDI®.

Instruments

The AAC&U IKC VALUE Rubric and IDI® were used to assess and guide participants' intercultural competence development. The IKC rubric measures six capabilities (i.e., cultural self-awareness, knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks, empathy, verbal and nonverbal communication, curiosity, and openness), categorized into knowledge, skills, or attitudes (Rhodes, 2010). Results from a 2019 publication in *Studies in Educational Evaluation* provided evidence of the rubric to be reliable and valid, providing support for its use to measure IKC (Gray et al., 2019).

The IDI® is one of the most widely used tools for measuring intercultural competence. It is a short, but rigorously validated, survey (Paige et al., 2003; Wiley, 2016) categorizing a learner's ability to interact effectively and appropriately across differences, per a 5-stage developmental model, from an ethnocentric (monocultural) to an ethnorelative (intercultural) orientation. The IDI® has been used in research across disciplines to provide consistent, field-building understanding of intercultural competence development (Hammer, 2015). The IDI® has been cited as an effectively robust measurer and is especially apt for evaluating intercultural development in study abroad students (Anderson & Lawton, 2011; Hammer, 2011). Particularly beneficial to achieving the purpose of this study is that the IDI® could be facilitated with ease during the pre-departure stage, in which the program instructor was able to learn about the group's IDI® profiles before meeting the students in person and utilize the data when implementing the curriculum.

The IDI® questionnaire generates a Developmental Orientation (DO) score, which indicates the primary orientation assessed by the IDI®. The theoretical foundation of the IDI® is based on the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC), developed from Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). The DMIS states that intercultural competence ranges from the monocultural, or ethnocentric attitudes of Denial (DO = 55-70) and Polarization (DO = 71-85) to the intercultural, ethnorelative attitudes of Acceptance (DO = 116-130) and Adaptation (DO = 131-145; Bennett, 1986). This structure also includes Minimization (DO = 86-115), a transitional phase in the middle (e.g., Hammer, 2011). The IDI® approximates the DMIS and has a low social desirability bias (Paige et al., 2003).

All participants completed the IDI® online, at three distinct stages of the program. By means of a 50-item questionnaire, the IDI® utilizes a five-point, Likert-type scale ranging from disagree (1) to agree (5). The IDI® provides differentiated instructional strategies for learners at each stage of the model. Thus, using it as a pre-departure assessment helped provide an understanding on how to appropriately challenge and support each group of learners towards the goal of increased competency. After taking the survey, the IDI® generates individual and group profile reports. Student debriefing occurred as a group in Peru, individually once on campus, and individually upon request at the end of the fall semester. Customized Intercultural Development Plans (IDP) were

provided for each participant. The IDP provides a self-guided curriculum for developing intercultural competence.

Data Collection

Quantitative as well as in-depth qualitative data were gathered. Specifically, this study examines: 1) pre, midpoint, and post-program administration of the IDI® (Hammer et al., 2003) to track adjustments in participants' intercultural competence through participation in the program; 2) student reflection journals addressing intentional cultural intervention activities completed throughout; and 3) final reflection papers, or Outcomes Assessments, submitted by students towards the conclusion of their first semester on campus.

Data Analysis

Quantitative Analysis

Effectiveness was measured via pre, midpoint, and post-program administration of the IDI®. Paired sample t-tests were used to compare DO results within three cohorts. The effect sizes were measured using Cohen's d to compare changes of DO scores from pre-, mid-, to post-program: a value less than .20 suggests a small effect, .50 medium effect, .80 large effect, and 1.20 very large effect (Cohen, 1977; Cohen, 1988; Sawilowsky, 2009).

Qualitative Analysis

The second and third authors completed a thematic analysis to collect pronounced themes from student reflections. A theoretical approach to thematic analysis was adopted, as the data coding process was driven by the analytic interest in looking for evidence of students' intercultural competence development (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The IKC rubric was used as a pre-existing coding framework to support the identification of the themes recognized by the authors (AAC&U, 2009). Qualitative data was gleaned from reflective journals and student Outcomes Assessments, a final written reflection of the program in its entirety. Journals each contained eight to ten entries. Students drafted entries during the overseas portion of the program. They were revised and edited after returning home, and submitted prior to transitioning to the university campus. Outcomes Assessments were written at the end of the fall semester component and evaluated as a final exam.

Students' reflection papers were de-identified and analyzed using a constant comparative method as an analytic strategy (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Kolb, 2012; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). First, two coders (second author and third author) analyzed a sample of 10 reflections to develop initial categories of emerging themes. Discussions between the two coders occurred until reaching a consensus. The specific steps in coding included: open coding, in which open codes were attached to reflections line by line by describing the observations, and axial coding, in which connections were identified between open codes. Open coding and axial coding helped to develop categories by connecting data; afterwards, selective coding was used to refine the core categories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Descriptive categories were then developed as themes by comparing codes applicable to each category (Glaser, 1965). The two coders analyzed student reflections independently for the themes discussed, and addressed disagreement and differences through frequent discussion. Finally, themes and sub-themes were identified.
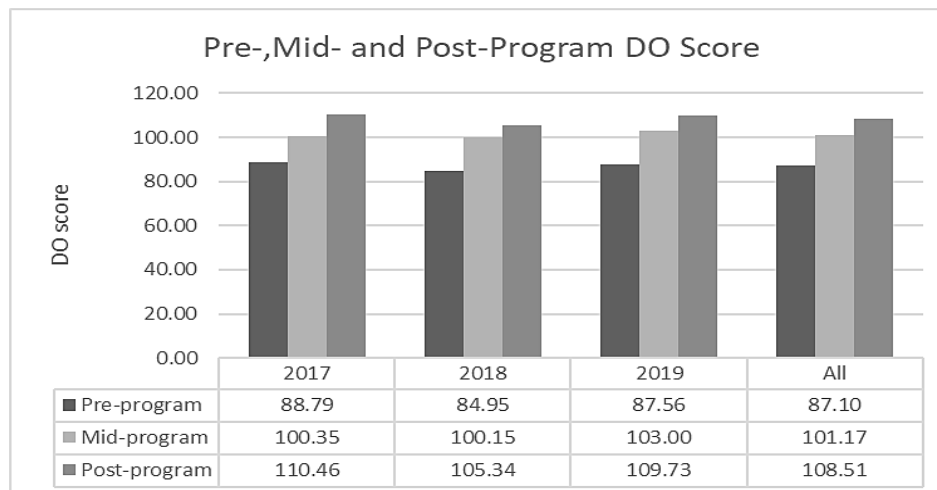
Findings

Applying a mixed-method approach, this study evaluated participants' intercultural competence prior to, in the middle, and at the conclusion of a program intentionally designed to net intercultural growth. The aim was to determine the extent of how a curriculum, including embedded cultural intervention activities and guided intercultural mentorship both abroad and on-campus, led to increased intercultural development in first-year college students.

Demographics

This study included participants (N = 71) over three iterations of the same program, running 2017-19, assessing their intercultural development qualitatively and quantitatively at numerous stages. Each year, demographics (as shown in Table 1) were similar to the university's typical study abroad students.

TABLE 1. PROFILE OF PARTICIPANTS BY YEAR.

Demographics	2017		2018		2019		Total (N = 71)	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Gender Identity								
Woman	18	82	18	75	21	84	57	80.3
Man	4	18	6	25	3	12	13	18.3
Non-binary	0	0	0	0	1	4	1	1.4
Residence								
In-State	11	50	12	50	20	80	43	60.6
Out-of-State	11	50	12	50	5	20	28	39.4
Race/Ethnicity								
White	21	95.5	21	87.5	21	84	63	88.8
Black	1	4.5	0	0	1	4	2	2.8
Asian	0	0	2	8	2	8	4	5.6
Latinx	0	0	1	4.5	1	4	2	2.8
Native American	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1st Gen. Am.	0	0	3	12.5	2	8	5	7
Major								
STEM	14	64	16	67	16	64	46	65
Non-STEM	8	36	8	33	9	36	25	35

FIGURE 1. PRE-, MID-, AND POST-PROGRAM DEVELOPMENTAL ORIENTATION SCORES

|	2017	2018	2019	All
Pre-program	88.79	84.95	87.56	87.10
Mid-program	100.35	100.15	103.00	101.17
Post-program	110.46	105.34	109.73	108.51

Quantitative Results

Pre-, midpoint and post-program Developmental Orientation (DO) results, from three cohorts, were compared to examine intercultural

competence development throughout the full program experience, as shown in Figure 1. Means and standard deviations for participants' IDI® DO scores are shown in Table 2. Shifts in participants' orientation, or mindset from pre-, mid-, to post-program are displayed in Figure 2.

TABLE 2. MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR IDI® DO SCORES IN EACH YEAR OF THE PROGRAM AND FOR THE ENTIRE SAMPLE

		Pre-program		Mid-program		Post-program	
	N	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
2017	22	88.79	10.98	100.35	12.94	110.46	14.68
2018	24	84.95	18.42	100.15	18.01	105.34	21.76
2019	25	87.56	13.84	103.00	14.36	109.73	14.79
All	71	87.10	14.42	101.17	15.10	108.51	17.08

FIGURE 2. CHANGES IN PARTICIPANT DEVELOPMENTAL ORIENTATIONS FROM PRE-, MID-, TO POST-PROGRAM
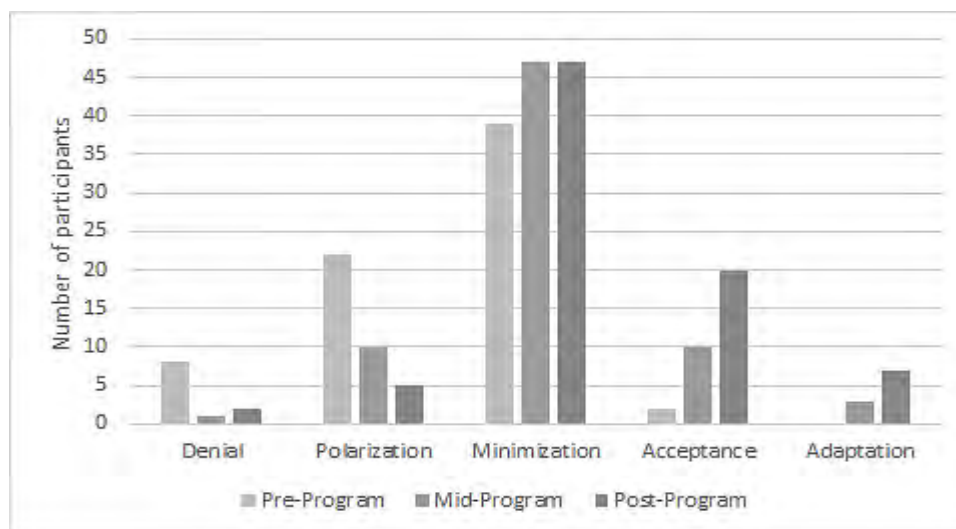
Using paired sample t-tests, the pre-, mid-, and post- DO scores for each cohort and the overall sample were compared. There were significant differences between pre- and mid- DO scores ($t(21) = 6.44$, $p < .0005$, $d = 2.7$), between mid- and post- DO scores ($t(21) = 5.27$, $p < .0005$, $d = 2.2$), and between pre- and post- DO scores ($t(21) = 9.85$, $p < .0005$, $d = 4.2$) for the 2017 cohort. Significant differences between pre- and mid- DO scores ($t(23) = 4.75$, $p < .0005$, $d = 1.9$), between mid- and post- DO scores ($t(23) = 2.14$, $p = .04$, $d = 0.9$), and between pre- and post- DO scores ($t(23) = 5.35$, $p < .0005$, $d = 2.2$) were also demonstrated for the 2018 cohort. There were significant differences between pre- and mid- DO scores ($t(24) = 7.54$, $p < .0005$, $d = 3.0$), between mid- and post- DO scores ($t(24) = 2.77$, $p = .01$, $d = 1.1$), and between pre- and post- DO scores ($t(24) = 7.93$, $p < .0005$, $d = 3.2$) for the 2019 cohort. Therefore, the results indicated that all three cohorts obtained significant growth in IDI® from pre- to mid-, from mid- to post-, and from pre- to post-program. The perspectives and experiences of the participating students were further captured through their reflective journals, of which findings were described below.

Qualitative Results

All participants wrote reflective journals throughout the overseas experience and completed a final comprehensive reflection at the end of their first semester on campus. Qualitative data is used to support, or question meanings from the quantitative data (Chi, 1997). Student reflections demonstrated how the program experience had changed and developed their intercultural knowledge, attitudes and skills (Deardorff, 2009; Havis, 2019). The authors informed the emerging themes by the concepts used in the AAC&U IKC VALUE rubric (see Table 3). One dimension of the rubric, empathy, was not exclusively exhibited in the thematic structure of our findings. Aliases were used for all student quotations.

TABLE 3. THEMATIC STRUCTURE WITH ALIGNED LEARNING OUTCOMES

AAC&U IKC VALUE Rubric Dimensions (AAC&U, 2009)	Learning Outcomes	Themes	Sub-themes
Curiosity; Openness	Critically analyze issues on a local and global level with curiosity, openness, and empathy.	1. Enhancing attitudes of openness and curiosity.	1. Dealing with discomfort. 2. Initiating conversation with local people. 3. Suspending judgment.
Knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks	Engage those with different cultural experiences, beliefs, values, and ways of solving problems.	2. Increasing knowledge of cultural worldview frameworks.	1. Awareness of cultural differences. 2. Understanding the complexity of elements behind cultural differences.
Verbal and nonverbal communication	Develop greater verbal and nonverbal communication skills.	3. Improving verbal and nonverbal communication skills.	1. Improving understanding by using body language and facial expressions. 2. Gaining awareness of different communication styles. 3. Trying to speak Spanish for everyone's benefit.
Cultural self-awareness	Develop greater self-awareness and cross-cultural comfort	4. Increasing cultural self-awareness.	1. Being aware of own cultural rules and biases. 2. Experiencing cultural identity confusion.

		5. Increased confidence and action-taking on intercultural interactions when beginning college.	1. Initiating intercultural interactions with diverse others on campus. 2. Dealing with ambiguity. 3. Being more mindful and attentive to surroundings.

Theme 1: Enhancing Attitudes of Openness and Curiosity

Participants emphasized that as a result of in-class instruction, intervention exercises, and reflection on their personal values, they interacted more with diverse others and engaged in new cultural events. Through guided mentorship, they gained insight into their surroundings and further developed attitudes of openness. In particular, they acquired the value of expanding their comfort zones. Learners actively developed conversations and interactions with locals, became more aware of stereotypes, and put effort into suspending judgment.

Sub-theme 1: Dealing with Discomfort

Students indicated that as a result of being mentored through new, often challenging experiences, they made more intentional efforts to leave their comfort zone, thus were able to move into a learning zone and discover their abilities to adapt to new experiences.

> P14 (Began in Minimization (M), ended in M): I learned that in order to get the most out of my experiences I was going to need to get out of my comfort zone, like asking more questions to the people around me. I learned how to stop being comfortable, and how to manage my emotions when I am in the learning zone. I had been afraid of others who do not speak a common language, but I realized that speaking is not the only way to be able to interact with others different than me. I learned to stop being afraid of something I have not seen before.

P17 (Began in M, ended in Acceptance (AC)): This trip helped push me out of my comfort zone to meet new people and experience new things. I was uncomfortable a lot of the time but all of the uncomfortable experiences that I had ended up being positive, whether it was talking to new people or navigating the streets. I will use the uncomfortable but positive experiences as reminders to continue to push myself out of my comfort zone on campus and throughout the rest of my life.

P13 (Began in lower M, ended in upper M): My first takeaway is that outside of the comfort zone is the learning zone. It's when I am forced outside of that zone that I actually start learning something. I could have broken down and just let the other girls do the speaking for me, but I gave my best effort to talk with and understand my host mom. Now that I have reflected over this, I know how important it is to step out of the comfort zone.

Sub-theme 2: Initiating Conversation with Local People

Many participants described engaging in conversations with local people to gain understanding. Cultural intervention activities, designed primarily with the U.S. students in mind, tasked students with instigating interactions. The *Compliment Experiment* and *Intercultural Openness* activity were two examples where students connected with individuals of their host country to discover and evaluate their perspectives.

P8 (Began in M, ended in AC): What we did in the village made me feel a stronger connection to the people there than I have felt to others in my other travels. I actually got to know one of the ladies there and developed a personal connection. This experience was much more meaningful than if I had approached this opportunity as a tourist. Being able to get to know the people in the village left me with a better understanding of the Quechua people and their way of life. I learned that interactions with local people are important in order to have a meaningful cultural experience. These interactions with local people have made my time here much more enjoyable and worthwhile because I am truly learning more about their home.

P3 (Began in M, ended in AC): Cathy and I were curious about a tree that we had seen around Lima. We had asked a couple of different people about it, but no one knew the name. Finally, we asked Carmen, and she

brought us a book about trees so that we could look it up. We pursued our curiosity by communicating in a different language, and we were proud that our efforts resulted in an answer.

P17 (Began in M, ended in AC): When we had time to play soccer and volleyball with the community, I sat on the sidelines and taught some of the young girls how to take pictures with my camera. I tried to use the small amount of Spanish that I know to not only teach them, but to also ask them questions and learn from them. It was very fun and I also got a lot out of the experience.

Sub-theme 3: Suspending Judgment

Participants pointed out that, they did not realize nor question that they held unconscious judgments until interacting with diverse others through this program. Through mentorship and reflection, they learned that by being mindful and gaining a better understanding of those different from them, they could suspend judgment and work through differences in a positive manner.

P7 (Began in Polarization (P), ended in P): I have maximized this intercultural opportunity by forcing mother culture's thoughts out of my head...I will not let mother culture dictate how I view other people and cultures, but instead will try to learn about and participate in cultures different than my own. It will take practice, but reflection and practice will help me to be more diligent in noticing when I make assumptions.

P8 (Began in M, ended in AC): I will have to remember that people's values come from the culture and environment that they grew up in. Before making judgements of those whose values differ from mine, I will need to consider why they value what they do. By doing this, I will ensure that I can work effectively with people different than myself.

P20 (Began in P, ended in M): Learning to not immediately judge others' differences before understanding is a meaningful thought to keep in mind when meeting people culturally different than me. ... I am constantly attempting to make sure I am seeking an understanding of others, as opposed to automatically judging them for their own beliefs and practices.

Overall, students' journals within this theme described their willingness and competency to initiate intercultural interactions with people from different

cultural backgrounds, ask deep and meaningful questions to better understand cultural rules, and engage with others to enhance their intercultural competence.

Theme 2: Increasing Knowledge of Cultural Worldview Frameworks

Likely as a result of repeated study of the AAC&U rubric over the course of the Peru and on-campus experiences, students commented on their improved understanding of diverse values, norms, beliefs, and behaviors. They displayed an ability to think about and investigate deeper explanations as to why people viewed the world and behaved differently than they did. They expressed signs of empathy and respect for the worldviews of others while exposing themselves to the differences found in Peru and in their new homes on campus.

Sub-theme 1: Awareness of Cultural Differences

The program as a whole, helped participants realize considerable differences in gender roles, time management, education systems, and other culturally relevant perspectives.

> P4 (Began in lower M, ended in upper M): Instead of viewing women doing their art/craft as a traditional women's role that I would never like to do, I should have realized that this was Mother Culture's perspective on the situation and that the women's crafts were honoring their tradition while bringing them financial income/independence.

> P16 (Began in P, ended in M): It made me feel nervous and antsy how they blatantly ignored the time restraints. I was worried that we were going to get embarrassed in front of everybody when we got back and when we didn't I was really surprised. I was stuck in my own home culture of rushing around, with no excuse for tardiness, that I seemed to have forgotten I was in a totally different place with a different culture.

> P21 (Began in P, ended in M): We both identified with the value of action and work orientation. However, our reasons for doing so were quite different. The fact that I realized this trend will help me in the future to understand why people I encounter may have the same morals as me, but different values and beliefs altogether.

Sub-theme 2: Understanding the Complexity of Elements behind Cultural Differences

By processing their encounters through guided reflections, students learned to understand the complexity of elements important to those of other cultures and consider the formation of one's cultural framework.

P23 (Began in Denial (D), ended in P): While encountering the differences…I am going to refrain from judging and instead, try to understand why Peruvians do what they do. I am going to be open-minded towards another person's opinions even when they are different from mine…I understood that her cultural values are not the same as the ones that I grew up with. My society influenced me to feel passionate about discovering a life without always having my parents right beside me. I am able to differentiate between the two cultures because I am aware of my own culture, while understanding the elements of theirs.

P20 (Began in P, ended in M): As an older woman, Sonia is more tied to deeper cultural values and understands the importance of others. As a younger person, I am reflecting on what my values are and constantly building a better understanding of what truly matters to me, and changing my worldview constantly.

P12 (Began in M, ended in AC): What I've noticed about Peruvians (at least, the ones we've encountered) is that their sustainable actions stem from a passion for their land. Their soil is their home. It should be looked after because it is something they value, not because they're blindly following sustainable practices they grew up doing.

Participants not only increased understanding of different cultural values, but also acquired more knowledge of the underlying history, values, and practices that form these differences. They vocalized insights into their own cultural programming.

Theme 3: Improving Verbal and Nonverbal Communication Skills

After instruction from their mentors and self-reflection on close, intentional interactions with culturally different others, participants were able to recognize and implement verbal and non-verbal aspects of communication.

Sub-theme 1: Improving Understanding by Using Body Language and Facial Expressions

As a result of repeated, meaningful exposure and opportunities to interact with those different from them, students recognized the importance of, and improved their nonverbal communication skills, especially when encountering language barriers.

> P33 (Began in D, ended in AC): …the importance of proper Verbal and Nonverbal Communication that exhibits one's understanding of another's cultural differences is the keystone of maintaining healthy friendships and being an effective participant in group efforts. Moreover, I learned about myself that I handle Intercultural Opportunities like this fairly well; I took advantage of my pre-existing Nonverbal Communication skills. I smiled and nodded along…

> P40 (Began in lower M, ended in upper M): …Nicolasa and I were eventually able to understand and communicate with facial expressions and body language, even if we didn't share the same language. Using nonverbal communication, Nicolasa and I were very successful in troubleshooting during the making of our bracelet.

Sub-theme 2: Gaining Awareness of Different Communication Styles

As students engaged more with culturally different others, they gained a deeper understanding of variations in communication styles, such as direct versus indirect communication (e.g., openly expressing disagreement in a group).

> P31 (Began in D, ended in M): I engaged Peruvians in my attempt to really understand their problems, ideas, and criticism, but I didn't attempt to adapt to their more laid-back style of problem solving. …Ana was internally processing her ideas; whereas I like to verbally work through my thoughts.

> P32 (Began in D, ended in M): I was terrified that someone would direct their disagreement in such a targeting manner that my own self-confidence would suffer. I think I would have taken such a disagreement personally, which is why I tend to avoid such confrontation. After processing and reflecting on this hypothetical, though, I'm trying to remind myself that even if this had happened, it would have reflected

cultural difference. I view such attacks as personal, but to others it is merely an honest verbal expression of differing opinions.

Sub-theme 3: Trying to Speak Spanish for Everyone's Benefit

Although most participants had limited Spanish-speaking skills or experienced discomfort while speaking Spanish, many emphasized its importance in order to adapt. Therefore, they made efforts to speak Spanish, such as in the "Ask a Peruvian" activity where students were encouraged to venture out and talk with local people. By expanding independent learning outside the classroom, students quickly gained first-hand knowledge by engaging with residents and participating in the happenings of their new environment.

> P39 (Began in lower M, ended in upper M): …forcing myself to speak Spanish to strangers during the "Ask a Peruvian" activity really got me out of my comfort zone. Although I took Spanish I'm not very confident in my abilities and therefore don't try to use it. This forced me to do my best and step out of my comfort zone.

> P23 (Began in D, ended in P): …I learned to be comfortable with speaking in Spanish, even when I am only able to produce choppy sentences. Many Peruvians only know how to speak Spanish, so even when I ask someone to take a picture for me, I use Spanish. This demonstrates that I have good verbal communications with the locals in Lima. I actively communicated even though there was a cultural difference. During my visit, I even attempted to speak Spanish with a couple of the older kids. I would ask another [university] student how to say certain words, and then create sentences to conversate with some of the locals.

Theme 4: Increasing Cultural Self-awareness

The curriculum also developed students' cultural self-awareness, consciousness of their own cultural values, and awareness of cultural biases. Some students re-evaluated their own cultural identity even though they experienced confusion, which triggered further reflection and learning.

Sub-theme 1: Being Aware of Own Cultural Rules and Biases

Reflective journal entries documented that students developed a greater awareness of how their mother culture and prior experiences had established their own cultural rules, values and perceptions. They also recognized biases

that were based on the standards of the culture in which they were raised, which resulted in judgment making.

> P23 (Began in D, ended in P): In order to talk about the deeper topics, I needed to know what I truly believed in and valued. I guess I have never asked myself what I felt about expectations within a family or how I will raise my children. It is important to understand how my experiences and atmosphere shaped me to feel the way I feel. I could sense my cultural self-awareness develop because I was talking and thinking about my own beliefs.

> P1 (Began in M, ended in Adaptation (AD)): I felt extremely shocked to learn that the article was about Americans because when I first read it I was thinking how terrible and vain this culture was. However, after reading it again I felt like I was hit with a ton of bricks because it describes my culture so perfectly. I felt guilty that I came up with the conclusion so quickly that the culture was so terrible, and it made me feel bad for being so judgmental.

Sub-theme 2: Experiencing Cultural Identity Confusion

Some participants expressed confusion regarding their own identity when exposed to new surroundings and interpersonal interactions. This re-evaluation of cultural self-awareness and identity additionally pushed them to learn more about themselves.

> P20 (Began in P, ended in M): I feel confused upon attempting to understand cultural identity, as I could not understand why I had difficulty trying to explain my own culture to others, as I believe I belong to many. So I will make more efforts to learn about what is really meaningful to me, and what cultural values influence my behavior.

> P43 (Began in M, ended in AC): ...I'm at a point of confusion and severe questioning of my religion. Am I able to rise above religion to be genuinely multicultural? Is that necessary? At the same time, religion provides answers when nothing else does.

> P33 (Began in D, ended in AC): I felt confused and frustrated with myself for being unable to decide and pick a moral standing. This led to more feelings of insecurity. This is what I need to work on in the future.

Student reflections in this theme focused on increased awareness of the impact of their own cultural upbringing on individuals' beliefs, biases, and identity confusion as an important stage of learning.

Theme 5: Increased Confidence and Action-taking on Intercultural Interactions When Beginning College

The participants, as pre-freshman, were motivated to push themselves to be engaged and continue their intercultural learning journey. As the program and intercultural mentoring continued into the fall semester, students put lessons learned abroad into practice on-campus. They expressed desires for community and to make new friends with the same level of respect and openness; empathize with people who have different worldviews; deal with ambiguity and be aware of their surroundings without making assumptions. The takeaways from the program prepared them to seek out and establish relationships in the new environment of their university. They were becoming comfortable with being uncomfortable through the process of being mentored, reflecting, and learning interculturally.

Sub-theme 1: Initiating Intercultural Interactions with Diverse Others on Campus

In journals (written while abroad) and final reflections (at the end of their first semester), students described that they felt more confident and comfortable interacting with diverse others. They voiced being more passionate about initiating and developing intercultural interactions.

> P1 (Began in M, ended in AD): I met many other students who are studying at [university] from other countries and was able to speak with them about our differing beliefs and values. My communication skills with those who are different than myself also increased, and I am much more comfortable initiating a conversation with someone who is different than myself. This definitely helped me with my interactions...because I wasn't nearly as nervous to just go up to them and ask deep questions and make a connection with them as I was before going to Peru.

> P4 (Began in M, ended in M): Throughout my first semester at [university], I have made a very conscious effort to interact with people who are different than me. I have made friends with students from different states and different countries. By meeting these people, I have

been exposed to their cultures and ideas. One of the most impactful interactions that I have had was one with a student from Panama. We discussed the current political climate of the United States and South American countries. I really enjoyed this discussion because he gave me a lot of first hand insight. I believe that this interaction along with many others have helped me become more interculturally competent.

Sub-theme 2: Dealing with Ambiguity

In their final reflections, students indicated they gained awareness and abilities to accept ambiguity, became more flexible with uncertainty, and were able to expand their capacity for new information. Having been introduced to *Mindfulness* and exercising how to respond thoughtfully instead of reacting spontaneously, students showed that they could hold space for uncertainty. They had been exploring this theme for months, experienced changes in two new environments, and realized the benefits for a potentially stressful transition into college-life.

> P2 (Began in P, ended in M): I will have to deal with the fact that I have no clue how college classes operate or how extra-curricular activities work. I think that if I would have been able to deal with ambiguity better, I would have had more enriching experiences and would be an adventurous person today. I will learn to deal with ambiguity better at [university] and my future career by reducing stress. I will achieve this by working out more and doing those mindfulness exercises to put my stress of the unknown in perspective.

Sub-theme 3: Being More Mindful and Attentive to Surroundings

Students learned to consciously adopt an interculturally competent mindset once on campus, being mindful about observing their surroundings.

> P20 (Began in P, ended in M): ...at [university] there will be so many students present at once and being surrounded by so many people is something I will need to get adjusted to. These experiences can relate to being mindful and aware of what is going on, and that we are not the only ones present to get something out of an experience, such as many students attending the same university to achieve different goals. My default setting was to show a bit of frustration with others, and not understand their views on traveling. By recognizing the default setting, I

was able to calm down and realize that I needed more self-awareness to understand that my problems are not the most important ones.

P22 (Began in M, ended in AC): By becoming more mindful, a greater appreciation of my surroundings is evident, and it allows me to see the effects of Mother Culture's whispering in our minds.

Overall, students reported that their experiences throughout the program aided them in developing openness to interacting with diverse others, acquiring more confidence to ask deep questions, and becoming proactive in connecting with new, diverse people. Lessons learned affected their outlook and guided them through the transition into college.

Discussion

The objective of this research was to explore the intercultural competence development of first-year students involved in a study abroad experience, and to provide practitioners an example of what is attainable. This study contributes to the literature by examining their intercultural development going through two cultural transitions - studying abroad in Peru and transitioning into life on a university campus. Overall, results indicated that the participants' intercultural competence significantly increased from pre-departure to the end of studying abroad, and from the end of studying abroad through their first semester on campus. Results, consistent over three years, suggest that specific and intentional pedagogical approaches, as outlined in section 3 (Program Structure & Curriculum Design) and the appendix, were essential to develop students' intercultural competence. Through intentionally designed programs where thorough reflection is directed, interventions are mentored, and cultural interactions of consequence are implemented, meaningful intercultural growth can be achieved.

Furthermore, supplemental development can occur by extending the curriculum and examining additional encounters of difference in another cultural setting - on campus. Qualitative data from participants' written reflections supported the quantitative findings, indicating that crucial development included attitudes of openness and curiosity, knowledge of worldview frameworks, skills of verbal and non-verbal communication, cultural awareness, and increased confidence in transitioning to life in college. Findings showed that the study abroad experience helped incoming college

students prepare for, and had an effect on, the intercultural environment of their university campus.

Results of this study support previous literature relating to the positive impact of intentional intercultural learning endeavors on first-year and study abroad students. Specifically, this study reinforces the findings of Lee et al. (2014), in that intercultural learning practitioners can indeed "develop a deeper understanding of how to structure learning environments, design curricula, and implement pedagogical strategies that facilitate students' intercultural development" (p. 522). The importance of intentional and theory-based curriculum design as a crucial component in any effective study abroad program was highlighted (Paras et al., 2019). For example, specific elements based on the AAC&U VALUE rubric and the Intercultural Development Continuum were incorporated into the readings, class activities, and discussions during the program. In addition, students were guided to implement personalized developmental plans as they transitioned into life on-campus.

Consistent with the study by Heinzmann et al. (2015), written reflections indicate that students who actively and openly engaged and took full advantage of opportunities to connect with culturally different others, have exercised their intercultural skills and demonstrated attitudes leading to competency development. Likewise, this active, often guided engagement helped them overcome common feelings of frustration. Therefore, this study suggests that intercultural learning ventures, whether overseas or on-campus, should be intentionally designed to include thorough, engaging activities between culturally different others, and administered by educators able to mentor participants through challenges while providing thoughtful support.

On average, each cohort started the program just past the cusp of Minimization, which means that, as a group, they lacked a strong ability to connect meaningfully across cultural differences. First-year college experiences are often about finding common ground and learning not to be turned off by what is different. During the overseas portion of the program, students were equipped with this mindset and skillset, and as groups, progressed solidly into Minimization. Once on campus, participants further exposed themselves to differences while continuing the developmental curriculum and receiving further cultural mentorship from the instructor. Thus, each cohort developed further towards Acceptance.

Participants in this study described that they felt more comfortable and confident interacting with diverse others after studying abroad and having been guided into the new college environment. A wider sense of belongingness was cultivated. Future research could investigate the potential value of having trained first-year students (intercultural influencers) on-campus spreading global competence over their college careers. The authors urge researchers dealing with first-year college students to assess their global skills as early as possible in order to gather additional evidence.

This study seeks to provide stakeholders with rich data to support the effectiveness of programming intended to develop and assess intercultural learning. It is significant to students, parents, admissions administrators, student and residential life professionals, international education and intercultural learning professionals and scholars, university presidents funding such experiences, as well as national organizations such as NAFSA and the Forum on Education Abroad that advocate for the advancement of international education. This unique program example and comprehensive three-year dataset provides insights to those working on the design, implementation, facilitation, and evaluation of intercultural programing.

The study sheds new light on the field of education abroad and how future best practices may be determined, especially for trending program models like the one examined here (Carroll, 2019). Pre-pandemic, this program demonstrated a flexibility in where, when, and how intercultural learning could be conducted. As global health concerns limit travel, such versatility is vital to the sustainability of international education. This study investigated the outcomes of a curriculum focusing on intercultural development implemented overseas, just prior to students first stepping foot on campus, and extending through their transition into university life. The assessments indicate a consistently productive learning experience. Qualitative analysis supplements quantitative statistics with in-depth, expository data of student reflections on their own development. This study provides a detailed assessment that has the potential to spark future research on first-year experiences and promote the expansion of program models that integrate education abroad with on-campus learning.

Limitations

The current study has some limitations that warrant attention. First, this research investigated one study abroad program targeting the pre-freshman students of a particular institution. As such, the results should be interpreted and generalized with caution when considering institutions with vastly differing student populations. Second, the design of this study did not include a control group. Future research may collect data from both study abroad participants and non-participants to further confirm the effect of the intentional curriculum on students' intercultural development. Finally, we only obtained a subset of students' final reflection papers (Outcomes Assessments) for qualitative analysis, as students were given the option of completing the assessment orally. Transcripts of such oral presentations were not collected. Nonetheless, we noticed that data saturation has been attained by the included final reflection papers along with the students' overseas reflective journals.

Conclusion

This study examines the outcomes of a multi-stage study abroad program targeting first-year college students. The authors investigated student intercultural competence levels prior to matriculation, their development while abroad, and their continued expansion through a post-travel, on-campus component. The results show that students experienced and valued their own growth in effectively dealing with culturally different others while going through two transitions—studying abroad in Peru and adjusting to life on a university campus. This research supports the integration of education abroad and on-campus learning, particularly involving first-year students, through intentional program design, effective mentorship, and continued cross-cultural interactions to enhance intercultural learning.

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Appendix

Cultural intervention activities implemented while abroad:

Body Ritual Among the Nacirema: Reading of a satirical anthropological paper on "other" cultures to consider self-awareness, value judgements, and perceptions on American cultural understanding.

Human Values Continuum: Conducted in a workshop with US and Peruvian students. Introduced cultural values and worldview frameworks; helped students visualize differences in the way they see the world compared to their peers. Students spread out creating a continuum across the room. The instructor read a series of prompts including, "Life is what I make of it. OR Life is what happens to me." Each student moved to the point along the continuum that best described their response.

The Compliment Experiment: An assignment urging students to compliment a Peruvian and carefully consider their reaction in order to notice elements of verbal & non-verbal communication.

The Story of Me, Us, and Now: An exercise to practice empathy and listening in the moment. Students privately share a pivotal life-experience with a culturally different classmate. Helped students become comfortable with being uncomfortable.

An Introduction to Mindfulness: Students were urged to download the app, *Smiling Mind* pre-departure. Two mindfulness exercises were incorporated into class discussions relating to self-care and remaining in the present moment. Others were made optional.

Space Odyssey & River Crossing Parable: Exercises executed during an intercultural workshop between program participants and Peruvian college students. Students confront dealing with ambiguity; understand how cultural assumptions shape decision-making; identify the values that impact our perceptions and judgements about others. Participants develop cultural self-awareness through open discussions on perceptions with culturally different others.

Intercultural Openness Questions: Q&A conducted either with Peruvian students while abroad, or with a culturally different other once on campus. The aim is to connect on a deeper level; to deal with difference, and practice dealing with discomfort.

Scavenger Hunt & Historic Center Walking Tour: Conducted in small groups of US and Peruvian students to provide semi-structured time for students to be independent while engaging interculturally.

Step to the Line: A group activity for reflection and self-assessment staged ¼ of the way through the experience overseas. Students are asked questions to spark introspection. Those with an affirmative response step forward.

Giving Game: Groups complete a worksheet helping them examine the U.S. culture of philanthropy. Each must determine what they value, why, and how they can engage as active citizens to express it effectively. An examination of empathy vs sympathy.

Blindfold & Collaborative Leadership Assessment: An experiential learning activity and reflection on leadership and communication styles, trust, empathy, and listening.

Cusco Self-Guided Walking Tour & Ask a Peruvian: Students are paired with those on the opposite end of the Intercultural Development Continuum. Those further to the right side of the continuum are given the opportunity to mentor their partner through experiences dealing with difference.

The Acid River Test: A final exam of sorts to demonstrate the fact we live in a global community and are all in it together. Groups of students must identify that they must not compete, but connect in order to survive.

On-campus interventions meant to further develop participants interculturally:

Human Library or Intercultural Interview: Students chose to attend a Human Library event, or to ask 20 Intercultural Questions of an international student.

Human Rights Exercise: Participants examine an article on gay rights to identify the intercultural stage of those quoted in the text.

Different Lenses: Students attended a series of intercultural learning workshops for extra credit.

The Intercultural Classroom: Students viewed this YouTube video to analyze the cultural competence of the characters. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xquMVmuNM5c

Who Am I?: A worksheet and debrief meant to develop self-awareness by helping participants pin-point elements of their cultural identity.

Pacing Exercise: An activity and debrief meant to demonstrate how differently people can communicate and how one can perceive styles that differ from one's own. Students practice recognizing difference and cultural frame-shifting.

The Most Important Skill: An exercise and discussion paired with Celeste Headlee's TED Talk, *10 Ways to Have a Better Conversation,* meant to get students thinking about listening effectively.

Keep it Real: A board game aimed at increasing participants' ability to listen, empathize, deal with difference, and manage their emotions. The game develops openness and curiosity, getting comfortable with discomfort, and world-view shifting.

Setting Yourself Aside: An activity to practice listening without judgment. Empathy, dealing with difference, openness, curiosity, and world-view shifting are tested when students enter a conversation with a classmate who has opposite views on a mutually determined topic.

Elements of Intercultural Development Plan (IDP): Students worked on their customized plan for further intercultural development. These development plans were provided to each student after the debriefing of their second (Mid) IDI®.

Author Biographies

Michael Bittinger, Assistant Director, Purdue University Study Abroad. Michael is an intercultural learning practitioner and study abroad program facilitator, leading multiple groups overseas per year. He has extensive experience developing and managing programs for the development of intercultural competence, domestically and abroad. He is a qualified administrator for the Intercultural Development Inventory, and the Global Competence Certificate.

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Xueting (Katherine) Dou, PhD, White Lodging- J.W. Marriott, Jr. School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. Xueting (Katherine) Dou recently graduated with a PhD degree in Hospitality & Tourism Management from Purdue University. Her current research focuses on tourist behavior, service innovation, and student mobility. She is especially interested in investigating the impact of travel on tourists' quality of life. Xueting also worked as a graduate assistant and student advisor in the Study Abroad Office at Purdue University.