Cultural Connections in Senegal: Outcomes of Study Abroad Course

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Yvette D. Hyter, Ph.D., Speech, Language and Hearing Sciences
Sarah Summy, Ed.D., Special Education and Literacy Studies
WMU – Academic Leadership Academy 2016-2017

Purpose of Research Project
The purpose of this study was to examine the intercultural competence, critical thinking, and global engagement of students participating in the Cultural Connections in Senegal Study Abroad Course, offered during summer I.

Research Questions
1. Are there differences in the students’ cultural responsiveness as measures by the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) administered before and after the course?
2. What themes emerge from the students’ journal entries that relate to cultural responsive knowledge, skills, and attitudes and global engagement?
3. When journal entries are compared, are the themes that emerge from their journal entries during the sixth week of the course more culturally responsive than the themes that emerge from journal entries during the third week of the course.

Methodology
• Received HSIRB approval on 12 May 2017
• Students completed the IDI during the ﬁrst week of the course, and then again three weeks after returning from Senegal
• IDI data and quantitative proﬁles were completed by Mr. Chris Sligh, Director of the Ofﬁce of Student Engagement, and a qualiﬁed administrator of the IDI
• Students were instructed to write reﬂective statements in their journals 3 days per week over a 7 week period
• A content analysis was applied to the journals by co–principal investigators
• Recurring themes were identiﬁed

Cultural Connections in Senegal Study Abroad course focuses on the effects of globalization on systems such as educational, health, linguistic, cultural, food, transportation, housing and ecological systems. One of the goals is to produce culturally responsive, globally engaged citizens able to apply what they learn in the course to their current ﬁeld of study, and to begin to develop strategies for solving shared problems in the U. S.

Results of Journal Analysis*
Themes Emerging from Journals

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Field Study and Research
• Language Lessons in Wolof (Local Lingua Franca)
• Excursions related to course and student research topics
• Lab Sites focusing on education, disabilities, and globalization

Outcomes of the course since 2012
• 53 students
• 18 honors theses
• 2 Voted best honors thesis of the year
• 53 Capstone Projects
• 4 National and State Presentations
• 1 Publication

Results of IDI Analysis

BEFORE

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Resolved disengagement – how well a person identiﬁes with their own cultural identity

Unresolved disengagement – how well a person becomes disconnected from their own cultural identity

Summary & Next Steps
• Haenicke Institute for Global Education – Supports study abroad course
• Office of Student Engagement – Administered the Intercultural Development Inventory (pre and post course)
• Ofﬁce of the Vice President of Research – HSIRB Citi training for students and faculty
• Approval of proposal for student research abroad

Outcomes of a Study Abroad Course

• Study Abroad Participants. a day at a beach in Senegal, 2017

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Sarah Summy, Ed.D. 269-387-5943 sarah.summy@wmich.edu

Partners
• Haenicke Institute for Global Education – Supports study abroad course

− Co-Curricular learning opportunities
− Promote greats involvement of undergraduates in research and creative activities
− Increase feasibility of broad based participation in study abroad programs
− Create mutually beneficial partnerships that impact scientiﬁc, economic, and social problems, attentive to local and global needs
− We will conduct a replication study with a higher number of students

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