Fall 10-6-2017

Cultural Connections in Senegal: Outcomes of Study Abroad Course

Yvette Hyter
Western Michigan University, yvette.hyster@wmich.edu

Sarah Summy
Western Michigan University, sarah.summy@wmich.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/acad_leadership

Part of the African Languages and Societies Commons, and the Educational Leadership Commons

WMU ScholarWorks Citation
https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/acad_leadership/69

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Office of Faculty Development at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Academic Leadership Academy by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact maira.bundza@wmich.edu.
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
- Data and quantitative profiles were completed by Dr. 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

Results of Journal Analysis*

BEFORE

- 53 students
- 18 honors theses
- 2 voted best honors thesis of the year
- 53 Capstone Projects
- 4 National and State Presentations
- 1 Publication

AFTER

- 18 honors theses
- 2 voted best honors thesis of the year
- 18 National and State Presentations
- 269 Publication

What themes emerge from the students’ journal entries

- A judgmental orientation that views others as different
- An orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences.

Results of IDI Analysis

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

- These data validate the importance of our course and demonstrate how it connects with Objectives and Priority strategies of the Gold Standard 2020 such as:
  - Co-Curricular learning opportunities
  - Promote greats involvement of undergraduate students 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

Partners

- 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

Contact Information

Yvette D. Hyter, Ph.D., CCC-SLP
269-387-8025
yvette.hyter@wmich.edu

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

*See Section 4 for more detailed data and analysis.