

Training Outline

Created by the Multicultural Study Abroad Group

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Outcomes & Goals for Training Session

- Provide a better understanding of the issues and concerns that may impede first-generation and multicultural students from studying abroad.
- Provide knowledge regarding how to talk to students about academic and financial planning.
- Expand the comfort level of students, faculty and staff in discussing multicultural issues related to study abroad.
- Offer practical strategies for encouraging students to study abroad.
- Development of an action plan to integrate training concepts into practice.

1.) Multicultural Study Abroad Group (MSAG) Overview

- Formation and membership of the group.
- Mission
- Outcomes achieved

2.) Academic Planning (staying on track for graduation)

- Students can take courses to meet a variety of requirements (e.g. for their major, minor, Lib Eds, second language requirement).
- Consider program type (e.g. length, when is the best time to go).
- Encourage students to talk with faculty or department advisor early in their planning process.
- Use orientation to encourage early planning.
- Advertising—have materials visible and available to show support and spark conversations.
- Get to know the staff in the study abroad office on your campus for referrals.
- Undecided students still have many opportunities (e.g. liberal education requirements, second language, and electives).
- Utilize planning resources such as major planning sheets, interest advising sheets, etc.

2.) Financial Planning

- Discuss study abroad early and encourage financial planning.
- Remind students that financial aid and scholarships can be used to pay for study abroad.
- Encourage students to apply early so they are eligible for more scholarships.
 - Talk about what makes a strong essay.
 - University of Minnesota Study Abroad Diversity scholarship.

- Make sure to check with your college offices.
- Encourage students to have conversations with family regarding ways they can work together to save money.
- Discuss the spectrum of costs in programs (cost of programs varying).
- Discuss cost comparison with students.
 - Study abroad costs vs. in/out state tuition costs.
 - Package of costs may include more than just tuition (e.g. Room and board).
 - Cost of travel and experiences will never be this cheap!
 - Experience is worth the cost—could benefit career down the road.

3.) Workload for advisors

- Integrate study abroad into regular advising appointments and contacts with students→ don't view it as something extra.
- Talking with students about study abroad makes work interesting and fun, especially after they come back and share their experiences!
- It is not important to know about all of the specifics of each program or site, instead; know how to make good referrals.

4.) How to encourage study abroad

- Be Proactive!
 - Don't wait for the student to ask.
 - Mention study abroad during advising appointments or during class.
 - Have materials visible and available in your office (e.g. MSAG brochure).
 - Regularly send out e-mails regarding programs, first-step meetings etc.
- Different types of programs offer different levels of support depending on student's comfort level.
 - May term, faculty led.
 - Programs with support centers.
 - Programs with home stays.
 - Immersed within local university versus classes with only other American students.
- To encourage study abroad, use examples of other students who have done it.
 - Student panels
 - Student profiles (Learning Abroad Center website)
 - Connecting with peers in Learning Abroad Center or students you know who have studied abroad.
- Help students consider how they talk to their family and friends about study abroad.
 - Benefits to education and personal development.
 - Normalizing study abroad (it is part of the college experience).
 - Increases marketability for careers and development of transferable skills (prestige attached).
 - Use heritage seeking aspect as a sell for parents.

- Use multicultural study abroad brochure as conversation starter with parents.
- Discuss level of support students will experience abroad (e.g. home stay).

5.) Identity Issues

- Consider the student's comfort interacting with difference.
 - Racial identity development can influence this (professional & student).
 - Faculty, staff and advisors should be aware of their own comfort level discussing these issues.
 - Racial identity development models

References:

Atkinson, Donald R., Morten, George & Sue, Derald Wing. (Eds.) (1983). *Counseling American Minorities: A Cross Cultural Perspective*. Dubuque, Iowa: Wm. C. Brown Company Publishers.

Ponterotto, Joseph G., Casas, J. Manuel, Suzuki, Lisa A. & Alexander, Charlene M. (Eds.). (1995). *Handbook of Multicultural Counseling*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Helms, Janet E. (Ed.). (1990). *Black and White Racial Identity: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press.

- Fear
 - Advisors/faculty/staff are not in a position to eliminate a student's fear, but can help students acknowledge fear and realize fear is a normal experience.
- Strategies
 - Encourage research to learn more about the host country (see below).
 - Framing it as a learning experience.
 - Have you thought about how you will be perceived?
 - people will be looking at you from their worldview
 - Use examples if possible.

6.) Study Abroad Office as a Resource

- It is important to make a "good" referral (help students ask the right questions).
 - Have students consider writing specific questions before hand.
 - Encourage students to do research before appointments.
 - Encourage students to narrow their interests and goals.
 - Make personal referrals, if possible (get to know staff in the study abroad office on your campus).
- Diversity surveys
- Connecting with students who have been abroad
- Study abroad advisor referrals
- First-Step Meetings

- Website
- Binders