OFFICE OF INSTITUTIONAL ASSESSMENT

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Enhancing & Assessing Intercultural Learning at Purdue 2014-2016: Capacity-Building

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Enhancing & Assessing Intercultural Learning at Purdue Part I: Capacity-Building, Instruments, Methodologies

Introduction

Since its inception in July 2014, the Intercultural Learning Initiative has worked to create a culture of evidence-based intercultural learning as part of the embedded learning outcomes requirement of the Purdue undergraduate core curriculum.

Efforts to date have focused on three things: building the capacity of faculty to model, teach and mentor intercultural effectiveness, finding valid assessment methods which support the varying desired intercultural learning outcomes of Purdue's disparate Colleges, and assisting selected faculty in the assessment of intercultural learning programs. This account describes **capacity building** efforts and reports on instruments. For a meta-analysis of <u>findings</u> during this capacity building period, see Part II of this report.

Capacity Building

Much of the recent research on international education suggests that college students do not reliably acquire intercultural effectiveness simply by virtue of spending classroom or cocurricular time in the vicinity of persons from another culture, <u>without effective mentoring</u>¹. To put this in even plainer terms: proximity alone does not equal prejudice-reduction².

At Purdue, results from two multi-year studies (of a cross-national first-year learning community on campus³ and a recurring service-learning study abroad program⁴) show strong evidence that even highly teaching-adept Purdue faculty can, through mentoring in experiential pedagogy and assessment, take their student's attainment of intercultural effectiveness to much higher levels than they had previously attained.

Therefore, one of our main efforts has been to help Purdue faculty to become more proficient in facilitating, mentoring and assessing students' intercultural learning. Our first efforts at capacity-building were modest: building a repository of formative & summative assessment tools for advancing intercultural learning, and requiring all proposals for faculty-led departmental programs to include at least one assessment of intercultural learning outcomes.

As interest in intercultural learning and the assessment thereof has grown, efforts have ramped up. To date, 32 additional faculty and staff members have become certified in the use of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI); which allows them to quantify the baseline abilities

¹ Paige, R. M. & Vande Berg, M. (2012). Why students are and are not learning abroad. In M. Vandeberg, R.M.Paige, and K.H. Lou (Eds.), *Student Learning Abroad: What Our Students Are Learning, What They're Not and What We Can Do About It* (pp.29-60). Sterling, Va: Stylus.

² Pettigrew, T. F, Tropp, L.R., Wagner, U. & Christ, O. (2011). Recent Advances in Intergroup Theory. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 35, 271-280.

³ Yngve, Katherine & Starr, Laura. "Creating a Global Learning "Compass" for STEM Students via Outcomes-based Reflection and Feedback." Fort Lauderdale, FLA. AAC&U Global Learning in College Conference. October 9, 2015.

⁴ Krishnan, L., Richards, K.A.R. & Simpson, J.M. (2016). Outcomes of an International Audiology Service-Learning Study Abroad Program. American Journal of Audiology 25(1):1 · March 2016

of their students, tailor instructional methods according to the developmental stage of a group or individual, and acquire publishable data about student learning outcomes.

In addition, more than half of the above program leaders have completed an intensive 10-week training program to allow them to more effectively teach intercultural competence to students at differing stages of the developmental model and to serve as pedagogy mentors to other faculty and staff within their home college or unit. This pilot program will soon be offered as mandatory preparation for study abroad program leaders in two Purdue colleges, and will be incentivized for all Purdue faculty via a system of internal grant support.

Identifying Valid Assessment Tools and Methods

It is a cornerstone of assessment best-practice that you must define your desired outcome(s) before you can successfully select and deploy a measurement tool. Since beginning the Intercultural Learning Initiative we have found that Purdue professors who propose to lead study abroad often define disparate learning objectives for their intercultural teaching endeavors. Although individuals vary depending on their personal blend of disciplinary affiliation, research interests and experiences across cultures, broadly speaking, at Purdue:

- Engineering professors are more likely than their non-engineering colleagues to be interested in the interpersonal skills of teamwork in culturally diverse groups;
- Social scientists are more likely to have an interest in creating graduates who understand the practical and ethical aspects of power, privilege and social injustice; and
- Health professions faculty are driven to focus more on developing students' empathetic & communication skills (both verbal and non-verbal).

From a practical standpoint, this suggests that there is no one best method or instrument to assess the intercultural effectiveness 'output' of a Purdue undergraduate education. *Quantitative Instruments*

The most widely known and extensively validated survey instrument in the intercultural competence realm is the IDI (referred to above), which measures 5 developmental stages between the poles of ethnocentricity and ethno-relativism. Unfortunately, although very useful for creating stage-appropriate programs of intercultural learning and individualized mentoring, the IDI does not map well onto the Purdue rubric for Intercultural Effectiveness and typically does not capture small-scale changes such as may occur during short-term study abroad).

Validated pre-existing survey instruments which have been trialed over the last two years and yielded useful information about Purdue students' intercultural learning include the following:

- The Miville-Guzman Universality-Diversity Scale (MGUDS)
- The Intercultural Effectiveness Scale (IES)
- The Cultural Intelligence Scale (CQS)
- The Public Affairs Scale (PAS)
- The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)

In addition to the above, in-house survey instruments have been developed which attempt to quantify the conceptual models of the Purdue/AAC&U rubrics for valid assessment of *Global Awareness*, *Intercultural Effectiveness*, and *Teamwork*. In general, regardless of the survey instrument used or the individual student's demographic profile, it appears that:

- Purdue students often over-estimate their own intercultural effectiveness prior to study abroad; *even, or perhaps particularly, if they have travelled abroad before*.
- A significant proportion of Purdue participants find short-term study abroad to be more challenging than expected; this can easily lead to a regression in their self-reported intercultural effectiveness if a survey instrument is implemented in the traditional pre/post methodology.

In the intercultural learning literature this "false-positive" syndrome in the pre-test followed by perceived regression in effectiveness is becoming recognized as the development of *cultural humility*, an important outcome in its own right. A methodological approach which offers a promise of addressing this initial overestimation of competence is the "retrospective pre-test", which asks the participant to think back and compare his/her intercultural beliefs and abilities before study abroad to his/her abilities after the learning experience. This methodology has the added benefit of reducing survey fatigue for both instructors and students.

Non-Survey Tools

It is also worth noting that a fair number of Purdue professors (and students!) express skepticism about self-report surveys that attempt to measure intercultural attitudes, preferring instead to think about what the learner will 'do' rather than 'feel' as a result of an intercultural learning opportunity.

Non-survey tools which are currently in use to assess intercultural learning outcomes of Purdue study abroad include both self-awareness inventories and grading rubrics, as follows:

- Culture-Learning Strategies Inventory
- Cultural Values Inventory
- Critical Reflection Rubric
- Purdue/AAC&U Intercultural Competence Rubric

- Purdue/AAC&U Global Awareness Rubric
- Purdue/AAC&U Teamwork Rubric
- Cross-Cultural Content Analysis Rubric for Blogs & Journals

In closing, it is worth noting that many Purdue faculty understand that regular reflection increases intercultural learning outcomes. OIA hopes to encourage more faculty to feel comfortable using rubrics for analysis of direct evidence of learning as may be observed in journaling, capstone essays and other forms of reflective practice.