Reflecting on Study Abroad
How Faculty Encourage Returnees to Reflect on their Experiences
Panelists:
Dr. Rycki Maltby, Professor of Nursing, University of Vermont
Dr. Kimberly Sultze, Associate Professor of Media Studies, Journalism and Digital Arts, St. Michael’s College
Kazuko Suzuki Carlson, Senior Lecturer, Japanese, University of Vermont

Facilitator:
Kim Howard, Director, Office of International Education, University of Vermont
“The whole object of travel is not to set foot on foreign land; it is at last to set foot on one’s own country as a foreign land.”

-- G.K. Chesterton
Re-entry:
3 dominant patterns

**Reverting** returnees
- Uncritically resume their pre-departure lifestyle

**Alienated** returnees
- Reject home culture altogether, or wage a campaign to change it in unrealistic ways

**Integrative** returnees
- Synthesize new world understandings and self-discoveries into a revised identity and lifestyle

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“We really haven't done much of anything regarding encouraging students to reflect on their experiences after they return (and would feel like "imposters" speaking about it).... One of the challenges of having run our semester-abroad program in the spring was that the students returned to the U.S.--but not to campus--in May after already receiving their grades for their courses. So although we spent time towards the end of the semester helping the students prepare to return, we never felt we could ‘require’ post-semester reflections and we weren't able to get together with the students again until the fall when we had a reunion dinner ... Other than that, we continue to meet one-on-one and in small groups with students when they reach out to us--often after they have graduated.”

– Faculty of semester program, social science focus
Public Health Nursing in Bangladesh

Dr. Rycki Maltby, PhD, RN, FACN
Professor of Nursing
University of Vermont
Reflection begins before we leave

Course overview

In-country reflections

Post-trip reflections and presentations

Integrating into Nursing
Course overview

- Application process
- Classes prior to departure
- IUBAT partnership
- Community assessment
- Institutional visits
- Daily classes
- Journaling daily (some prompts given)
- Exercises such as “the word”
Post trip reflections

Two weeks post trip

- Final paper
- Reactions of self
- Reactions of others

Reunion dinner

Presentations to:

- Sophomores and juniors
- Fellow seniors
- Nursing groups
- Student research day (UVM)

Photobook
Student comment:

“We went to Bangladesh with the intention of learning about the community and public health in a developing country. We discovered the common need for quality nursing care and access to resources and education. Visiting Bangladesh opened our eyes to the similarities of human health needs in that we all have common goals for our health. Our future nursing practice will be forever impacted by this experience.”
“Personally I feel that one of the areas where we need the most improvement (or at least I do) has been on post-trip student reflection. It's an area I'm interested in learning more about. Karen Sultze's course sounds like one we need at our institution.”

-- Faculty, social sciences
Travel Writing and the International Experience

Dr. Kimberly Sultze
Associate Professor of Media Studies, Journalism and Digital Arts
St. Michael’s College
Ideas behind the Re-entry Course

The motivation

Why it appeals to me

Pedagogical challenges: Students from all majors and abroad destinations

Writing-intensive class: Links travel writing and cross-cultural communication
Encountering the Other: Tourist vs. Traveler

Easy entry—how students define the terms

How travel writers discuss the terms

Cross-cultural communication—ideas of Edward Hall

Rolf Potts, Vagabonding
Culture Shock

Jamie Zeppa, *Beyond the Sky and Earth*

Arrival, Entrance, Complexity

Microsociologist Field Study—social situation analysis
Redefining the Self—Rethinking American Culture

Weiner, Geography of Bliss

Lonely Planet Guide to the USA

Travel Philosophies

The “generalized other” of the global citizen
“It is indeed no easy task to integrate students returning from study abroad into a classroom back here, providing these students with a sufficient challenge without overwhelming the others.”

-- Language faculty
Advanced Japanese
Kazuko Suzuki Carlson
Senior Lecturer, Japanese
University of Vermont
Classroom

“Ryugaku gumi”

Differentiated exams and assignments

Become group leaders

Perspectives on language learning and culture

Share study-abroad experiences
Outside of Classroom

“Life in Japan” discussion
Help prepare other students

Conversation hour
Interact with native speaker

Japanese club
Conversation circles
Homework help

Japanese House
Cultural activities
Community

Community-University Partnerships and Service Learning

Japan-America Society of Vermont
Future

Career
  interview
  advising

Japanese business culture
  session

Blog / website
Further Engagement

Use their strengths

Encourage Proficiency Tests

Create a community outside the classroom

Share experiences with presentations
“Faculty are, to very different degrees, incorporating study abroad into class discussion—but I think we could be doing a lot more, and it would require much more intentional collaboration between your office, mine, and willing faculty.”

-- Assistant academic dean
What can study abroad offices do?

What ...

- information
- resources
- tools

... can study abroad offices provide faculty that would make it easier to integrate study abroad reflection into the classroom and in your other work with students?
Resources
Collection of Syllabi

- Abilene Christian University (pdf)
- Azusa Pacific University (pdf)
- Carlton College (pdf)
- Duke University (pdf)
- Juniata College (pdf)
- Northwestern University (pdf)
- University of Notre Dame (pdf)
- Saint Louis University (pdf)
- Saint Mary's College (pdf)
- SEA (pdf)
- University of the Pacific Course
- "Maximizing Study Abroad"
Saint Mary’s College

ICS 490: Analysis of Study Abroad Learning
Elaine Meyer-Lee
From Personal Reflection to Social Investigation: Undergraduate Research as an Antidote to Autobiographical Cliché

Greg Downey
University of Notre Dame
gdowney@nd.edu
Questions and Discussion

Evaluations
General Re-Entry Resources

Completing the Cycle: Innovative Re-entry Models to Assess and Aid Student Development

Rebecca Pisano (Towson University), Jinous Kasravi (University of CA, San Diego), Katherine Yngve (American University of Beirut), Maria Flores (San Francisco State University)

Roundtable dialogue
The re-entry phase of an experience abroad is critical to student development yet is often part of the study abroad cycle not adequately addressed by international educators. Using student learning theories as a guide, this session examines innovative approaches to re-entry programming to facilitate effective processing of the overseas experience.

Additional session material - resource list and best practices list.
http://www.forumea.org/documents/Re-entryModelsresourceslistIsonetal.pdf
http://www.forumea.org/documents/Re-entryModelsbestpracticeslistIson.pdf

Collection of re-entry course syllabi
https://cwil.saintmarys.edu/international-and-intercultural-learning-/re-entry-course-resources/collection-syllabi

Conference presentations on Re-entry courses
https://cwil.saintmarys.edu/international-and-intercultural-learning-/re-entry-course-resources/conference-presentations

University of Kentucky Education Abroad Faculty Toolkit, Post-Study Abroad section
http://www.uky.edu/toolkit/taxonomy/term/4

Re-Entry Resources – Regional

VT/NH Study Abroad Re-entry Conference

Boston Area Study Abroad Re-entry Conference