CULTURAL AWARENESS OF TEACHER CANDIDATES: A SHORT-TERM STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE

Dr. Paula Griffin
Dr. Susan Reily

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INTRODUCTION

• Study Abroad in Higher Education
  • University of Delaware 1923
    • Promote cross-cultural understanding
    • Intellectual maturation through intensive cultural immersion
  • Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Commission 2000
    • Develop framework for collegiate international study abroad programs

Today’s realities, which are not all that pleasant, we can tolerate, but the fear of the unknown casts a shadow over today’s certainties. We sense a need to move beyond bandaging to healing our wounds. Is there a way for us as a people to bring more stability, peace, and harmony to our world?

Senator Richard Durbin 2006
RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. How does short-term study abroad affect the cultural awareness of pre-service teachers?
2. How does short-term study abroad affect the cultural identity of pre-service teachers?
3. How does short-term study abroad affect the ability of pre-service teachers to apply cultural competency?
CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

• Cultural Identity
  • ….continually evolving, a living breathing entity, created and redefined as lives and experiences interact……. Skulj (2000), Hall & du Gay (1996)

• Cultural Awareness
  • ….proficiency grounded in knowledge of self and their own culture and the ability to learn and experience other cultures……. Caraway (2009)

• Cultural Competence
  • …..using cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively. Gay (2002, 2013)
METHODOLOGY

• Participants
  • Junior and Senior Level
  • Females
  • 8 Caucasian, 3 Latina
  • Pre-Service Teachers – Secondary, Middle Level Grades, Early Childhood – 6 Grade

• Setting
  • 12 day study abroad program May 2015
  • Italy (Pontassieve, Reggio Emilia, Rome, Frascati)

• Mixed Methods Case Study
  • My Cultural Awareness Profile (MyCAP) Pre and Post
MY CULTURAL AWARENESS PROFILE

To access the complete MyCAP survey, use the QR Code below. You will need access to Dropbox.

REFLECT

The best way to come to know other cultural groups is through international travel.

My cultural identity will impact my teaching or professional work.

I am knowledgeable about global and international issues.
FINDINGS
RESEARCH QUESTION 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MyCAP Items Related to Cultural Awareness</th>
<th>Significant Change in Number of Responses ≥ 50%</th>
<th>Significant Shift in Level of Responses ≥ .5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forced-Choice Statements</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant Change/Shift</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I look for courses that focus on international and global issues and topics.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO .4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Globalization has not directly affected my life.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO &lt;-.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The best way to come to know other cultural groups is through international travel.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES .5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I go to cultural events on campus or in my community.</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES .5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum should be culturally neutral so it appeals to all children.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES .5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deep down, most people have similar ideas about what is good and right.</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES .5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowing and Understanding Diverse Cultures - ongoing process Necessary for future educators
FINDINGS
RESEARCH QUESTION 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MyCAP Items Related to Cultural Identity</th>
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<th>Significant Shift in Level of Responses ≥ .5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forced-Choice Statements Significant Change/Shift</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My cultural identity does not really influence how I perceive the world and how I behave.</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES -.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My cultural identity will impact my teaching or professional work.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO .2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I've been misunderstood because of cultural differences.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES .9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My cultural identity does not really impact how I communicate with most other people.</td>
<td>NO</td>
<td>YES -.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowing oneself as cultural reaches beyond holidays and belief systems. Global citizenship: an awareness of how one “fits” in the world and includes more than geography.
### FINDINGS

#### RESEARCH QUESTION 3

MyCAP Items Related to Cultural Competence
10 Total (9 Forced-Choice Statements and 1 Open-Ended Prompt)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Significant Shift in Level of Responses ≥ .5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am knowledgeable about global and international issues.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES .8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will teach and assess curricular units that explicitly address global issues.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>NO .2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get involved in activities/organizations concerned with global issues.</td>
<td>YES</td>
<td>YES .6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Introducing global/international issues
- Integrating economics of various cultures into math instruction
- Adding literature and music to teach about diverse cultures
- Authentic dialogue and age appropriate research
CONTACT INFORMATION

Dr. Paula Griffin
Assistant Professor
Department of Elementary Education
Stephen F. Austin State University
Nacogdoches, TX, 75962
griffinp@sfasu.edu

Dr. Susan Reily
Assistant Professor
Department of Elementary Education
Stephen F. Austin State University
Nacogdoches, TX, 75962
reilys@sfasu.edu