

CAS IP 101: The Global Learning Experience

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Phase I:	Getting ready to go	2 sessions	2-3 weeks pre-departure
Phase II:	I'm abroad!	6 sessions	Onsite-semester
Phase III:	Welcome home! Now what?	1 session	1-2 weeks post-semester

Grading: This course is graded on a **Pass/Fail** basis. Your final grade will be posted between 2 and 4 weeks after departure from your host country.

Course Description:

The main objectives of this 1-credit course are to enable you to enhance your learning in a study abroad location and to help you to better understand and reflect upon the experience. The course will provide you with tools for analyzing your learning process and identifying cultural patterns, differences, similarities and values. Ultimately it will navigate you towards perhaps becoming a global citizen while remaining an ambassador for your own culture. These topics will be approached in a non-site specific way; however, you will also need to complete exercises and assignments related to your host country/site.

The course will examine theoretical aspects of interacting with other cultures and methods of learning, as well as providing practical exercises in which you will need to observe, document, research and reflect upon assigned topics. It will require you to take stock of your experience, your personal growth and learning. It will also challenge you to think critically about the host country and your own identity. Ultimately, the course will impact upon your view of your experience abroad, but personal growth will depend on your own engagement in this process.

The readings and lectures are brief and assignments have been designed so that they should not feel onerous. Sessions may be completed over approximately a two-week period.

Finally, this course will not deal with logistics or practical issues about studying abroad (safety, money, packing, etc.). Please check with your program manager about these issues.

General Learning Outcomes

- Enhance students' preparation for studying abroad through i) learning basic information about the host culture, ii) setting goals for the study abroad experience, iii) developing an awareness of students' own cultural values, iv) developing an understanding of the concept of inter-cultural competence and, v) preparing students to interact with people in the host country and their own peers.
- Enable students to reflect upon and deepen the study abroad experience while it is happening through i) structured reflections, ii) the development of an awareness of cultural difference, iii) the development of an understanding of culture's role in shaping beliefs, practices and perceptions, iv) the development of new perspectives on students' own culture, v) provide intercultural

communication tools that will develop students' ability to communicate competently, and vi) explore the stages of cultural adaptation, especially focusing on culture shock.

- Prepare students for a successful re-entry into their home culture through i) enabling them to develop a recognition of possible issues connected to re-entering the home culture, and ii) encouraging practical application of their experiences in academic and professional goals.
- Support students in the reentry process by i) providing information on reverse culture shock and how to manage the re-adaptation process, ii) providing an outlet for student reflection on the personal impact of study abroad, and iii) presenting practical, on-campus involvement with international students and/or incoming study abroad students.

Materials used in the course

- Readings: either posted on the course platform or available via a link
- Links to existing videos
- Videos produced by BU Study Abroad

Assessment:

Each phase has a series of assignments all clearly posted online from the start of the course. In order to pass the course, you must complete all assignments on time. Although this is a pass/fail course, keep in mind that ultimately the more you invest, the more you will gain from this course and from your study abroad experience in general. All readings, materials, videos, and other necessary documents will be available on the platform, so you don't have to worry about locating sources.

You will have to set up an ePortfolio account which you will develop during the course. Your personal account will be used to record your experience abroad throughout the course and for your own future reference.

Visit <http://www.bu.edu/eportfolio/howto/create-an-eportfolio-2/> to learn how to set up your ePortfolio account.

Although most of the activities will be individual, there will be places to interact: e.g. edX Discussion Board.

Phase I: Getting ready to go

This initial phase of the course is introductory and will take one to two weeks to complete, depending on the amount of time devoted to it. It includes two sessions that will inform you about the importance of setting academic, cultural, personal, and professional goals for study abroad as well as asking you to complete some light research on the host culture in order to prepare for departure.

Session 1: What do you want to get out of this experience?

The purpose of this session is to welcome you to the course and to ask you to reflect - before you leave home - upon your objectives for this experience. You will be asked to set your goals in advance of arrival in the host culture, in order to take a clear set of objectives with you.

Video 1: Welcome.

Assignment 1: Setup. Set up your ePortfolio account.

Video 2: Darwin. This video uses the example of Charles Darwin to encourage you to take notes and reflect upon what you are experiencing while abroad.

Reading 1. “What do I want to get out of this experience?” <http://www.diversityabroad.com/article/study-abroad/four-things-you-should-ask-yourself-before-studying-abroad>

Assignment 2: Goals. Articulate your personal, professional, and academic goals for your study abroad experience.

Reading 2: Reading from Madalina Akli, ‘Study Abroad and Cultural Learning Through Fulbright and Other International Scholarships: A Holistic Student Development’, *Journal of International Students*, vol. 3 issue 1, Spring 2013. (extract: “The Global Citizen: From Philosophy to Practice”, pages 7-8).

Assignment 3: The purpose of this reading is to ask you to think about what is meant by the term ‘global citizen’ and to consider the competencies and skills a global citizen might be expected to have.

Session 2: What I should know before I go

The purpose of this session is to have you begin to prepare yourself in a more culture-specific way, both in terms of the host culture and self-reflection. As you are not yet abroad, the session will not explore topics related to culture shock or adaptation, but rather the idea of diversity and therefore, the value of knowledge and being prepared. Later, you will learn about the importance of pre-departure investigation related to the host countries. The session begins with a short video about the exercises and readings that need to be done.

Video 1: Welcome.

Reading 1: Nadine Dolby, ‘Encountering an American Self: Study Abroad and National Identity’, *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 48, No. 2, May 2004, pp 150-173. Read the section ‘National Identities in Global Context’, which begins on page 156 and ends on page 161.

Assignment 1: The purpose of this reading is to consider the idea of national identity and to ask you to think about and articulate your own national identity.

Assignment 2: “Host Country Facts.” Do some more detailed research on the host culture before going abroad using the CIA World Factbook and other online resources.

Video 2: Conclusion.

Phase II: I'm abroad!

Session 1: Arrival

In this first on-site session, students are introduced to some basic theoretical elements related to intercultural differences and communication.

Video 1: “What do we mean by *culture*?”

Reading 1: Richard Lewis, *When Cultures Collide: Leading Across Cultures*, 3rd Edition, Nicholas Brealey Publishing, Boston and London, 2006. Extracts from pages 4-7.

Assignment 1: Idioms and Silences

Consider idiomatic expressions in your host culture's language and to think about how silence within a conversation is considered within the host culture.

Reading 2: Alina Simone, 'The "How Are You?" Culture Clash', *New York Times*, 19 January 2014

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/20/opinion/the-how-are-you-culture-clash.html>

http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/24/opinion/greetings-from-around-the-world.html?_r=0

Assignment 2: Greetings and Leave-Taking Expressions in your host country

Think about greeting and leave-taking expression and how these might differ according to age.

Reading 3: 10 Common Hand Gestures That Are Easily Misunderstood Abroad

<http://www.businessinsider.com/10-hand-gestures-misunderstood-abroad-2014-5>

Assignment 3: Create an inventory of important hand gestures in your host culture.

Reading 4: Bill Bryson, *Notes from A Small Country*, Random House, London, 1996. Extract from Chapter 2

Assignment 4: (Optional but Recommended): Use mapping software such as Google Maps to create a personalized map of your host city. This activity will help you understand the interplay between your personal engagement with the space of the host city with that of locals and other students.

Session 2: Culture shock?

The second session focuses on Culture Shock, a well-known phenomenon that you may experience at some point after arriving in your host country.

Reading 1: This reading introduces the concept of and theories about Culture Shock.

Assignment 1: Multiple choice questions based on the reading to check for comprehension.

Reading 2: *Understanding the Sounds of Istanbul*, March 20, 2014, by Daniele Volante

<http://thisbigcity.net/understanding-the-sounds-of-istanbul/>

Assignment 2: (Optional but Recommended) This exercise deals with the soundscape of the host country. A soundscape is the result of the combination of natural sounds (weather, animals, etc.) and environmental sounds created by humans (conversation, work and sounds resulting from industrial technology. Students are encouraged to record characteristic sounds around their host city and upload them to their personal map.

Videos 1a and 1b: Two videos documenting the difficult adjustment of the Lost Boys of Sudan into American culture.

<http://video.nationalgeographic.com/video/movies/cultural-differences-ggtu/>

Assignment 3: This assignment asks you to reflect upon cultural difference by identifying various behaviors as *Cultural*, *Personal*, and *Universal*. In conjunction with the Lost Boys videos, this assignment aims to show you that your own behaviors might be more cultural and less universal than you may realize.

Session 3: Coping and Adjusting

The third session is concerned with developing skills to help you adjust to life in your host country as you learn new social and cultural rules for interactions with locals. You will also explore emotional resources, such as motivation, stress management capacity and self-care ability, including staying in touch with family and friends to cope with the pressure that the phase of adjustment may involve. Recognizing the impact of cultural diversity on your life, you'll become able to appreciate both your native culture and the host culture, and to negotiate between the two when needed.

Reading 1: Extract from Enrique Banus, *Intercultural Dialogue and Citizenship*, pp. 104-105

Assignment 1: Observe people acting in three different situations: (i) on the bus/train/underground, (ii) at the restaurant/bar/coffee shop, (iii) buying food at local shops/market, and compare their observed behaviors to what they would expect to see at home.

Reading 2: Cecile Jensen, "The world is your oyster"
<http://glasgowguardian.co.uk/2013/11/26/the-world-is-your-oyster/>

Assignment 2: Rate your emotional responses to your study abroad experience so far.

Reading 3: E T Hall, *The Silent Language*, Anchor Books, 1990, pp. 6-9

Assignment 3: Reflect upon your conception and use of time abroad *versus* at home.

Session 4: Immersion

We ask you now to look more objectively at the cultural diversity offered by your host country.

Video 1: Introduction to Session 4.

Assignment 1: Food. Build your own visual dictionary of their host country's cuisine.

Assignment 2: Architecture. Outline the architectural profile of your city.

Assignment 3: Public Art. Observe graffiti, artisans, and street musicians to get a better idea of the role of public art in your host city.

Reading 1: 'The trashing of the iconic red phone box is one bad call', Cristina Odone, *Daily Telegraph*
<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/9921689/The-trashing-of-the-iconic-red-phone-box-is-one-bad-call.html>

Assignment 4: Cultural Objects. What can your host city's cultural objects teach you about your host culture?

Assignment 5: Literature and Music. For this assignment, you'll engage with the current musical and literary trends of your host city / country.

Session 5: Stereotypes

This session introduces concepts such as stereotyping, cultural and national identity, and changing attitudes towards one's home or host culture. You will read texts and complete activities which will help you to both confront stereotypes and to challenge stereotypes you yourself may hold.

Video 1: Introduction

Reading 1a: Kohls, L. R. (2001). *Survival Kit for Overseas Living*. Boston, MA: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, Chapter 2 “Others have gone before” p. 5-8. This chapter explores the idea that people from other countries hold stereotypes about people from the U.S.

Reading 1b: Kohl’s *Survival Kit for Overseas Living* Chapter 3, “The Stereotyped American” p.9-12, gives a list of the most commonly held stereotypes other people have of Americans.

Assignment 1: Stereotypes. You will answer some questions regarding your opinions on the list of stereotypes you have read.

Reading 2: Responding. You will read a short text from Cohen, A.D., et al, *Maximizing Study Abroad*, (Minneapolis, MN: Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota, 2006) about how to respond to stereotypes while abroad.

Assignment 2: Responding. You will be asked to recall a time when you were stereotyped and how you reacted.

Reading 3a: You will read Chapter 9 ‘To See Ourselves’ from Kohls, L. R, *Survival Kit for Overseas Living* (Boston, MA: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2011) which describes foreign visitors’ impressions of American culture.

Reading 3b: Read an excerpt from Cohen, A.D., et al, *Maximizing Study Abroad*, that includes foreign students’ surprised reactions to specific elements of American culture.

Assignment 3: Cultural Values. You will consider a stereotype you held about your host culture prior to arrival.

Assignment 4: Ambassador You. You will write a short letter to an imaginary international student from the host culture who will be arriving in Boston soon. Introduce yourself and tell the student what he or she can expect, possibly responding to some of the stereotypes given in the readings.

Session 6: Looking Back, Moving Forward

This session ends Phase 2 and is the last on-site session. Its purpose is to bring the course full-circle, by asking you to review the goals you set for yourself before leaving for your host country, as well as asking you to reflect on your time abroad. You will begin to reflect on the last several months as well as prepare for the re-entry process.

Video 1: Introduction.

Reading 1: You will read a Time Magazine online article about how study/work abroad may make people smarter. <http://time.com/79937/how-studying-or-working-abroad-makes-you-smarter/>

Assignment 1: Goal Re-evaluation. You will be asked to revisit the goals you set during the pre-departure phase.

Reading 2: Hunter, V. L. (1989). “Closure and Commencement: The Stress of Finding Home.” In Austin, C. N., *Cross-Cultural Reentry: A Book of Readings* (pp. 179-189). Albilene, Texas: ACU Press.

Reading 3: Moy, Rebecca. “On the Eve of my Departure.” <https://www.marist.edu/international/moy.html>

Assignment 2: Journal Entries. You will be asked reflect upon the readings and on your semester in order to prepare for re-entry into the home culture.

Video 2: Conclusion. This video sums up the session and bids students farewell until Phase 3.

Phase III: Welcome home! Now put your experience to work

Session 1: Putting your Experience to Work

The purpose of this session is firstly to bring the course to a conclusion and secondly to aid you in thinking of ways in which it may be possible to use study abroad experience personally, academically and professionally. You will reflect upon how the experience has benefitted you in terms of new skills and perspectives, create an inventory of abilities and skills, and think of ways in which you can “market” your study abroad experience on your resume, in cover letters, and in interviews. Additionally, you will learn tips for continuing with your international education and experience and using your experience within your own community.

Video 1: Introduction.

Reading 1: You will read an article from the Chicago Tribune about how your study abroad experience may help them to stand out from your peers in applying for jobs. http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2013-10-18/business/sc-cons-1017-started-20131018_1_college-students-double-majors-study-abroad.

Reading 2: You will read an excerpt from Cohen, A.D., et al, *Maximizing Study Abroad* about a few people’s experiences post-study abroad.

Assignment 1: You will reflect upon what you have learned from the study abroad experience.

Assignment 2: The New You. You will complete a checklist of attributes and skills you they may have acquired while abroad (without realizing it!).

Assignment: 3: Moving Forward (Optional but Recommended) You will review a list of options for continuing on with your international experience and will be presented with the idea of ‘shoeboxing.’

Video 2: Closing. This video concludes the session and the course.

This course was developed and designed by Boston University Study Abroad faculty Amalia Perez Juez, Elisabetta Convento and Michael Peplar with assistance from research and teaching assistants Rebecca Moy and Mariachiara Berizzi.