Cross-Cultural Experiential Learning Toolkit: Lessons Learned and Challenges Ahead

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Learning outcomes: Content

Faculty are typically comfortable in laying out learning outcomes for ‘course’ content:

- Discipline-based content
  - Factual content: What do they need to know
    - Definitions
    - Concepts
    - Theoretical frameworks
    - Historical context
Process or Skill outcomes assessment: Academic Content

- Academically relevant skills
  - Critical thinking
    - Evidence: where to find it
      - Sources
      - Review of literature
    - Analysis
    - Appropriate inferences based on evidence
  - Writing skills
    - General writing behavior
    - Discipline-based formats
  - Giving student contexts for carrying out course assignments
Assessment of academic content:

- **Assessment:** requires generating evidence of learning and change
- **Assignments:** vehicles for generating evidence for the building of knowledge base and skills
- **Formative assessment:** Developmental
  - Assignments during semester/course
    - Content
    - Skills
- **Summative assessment:** End product
  - Midterms
  - Finals
  - Papers/thesis
Cross cultural skills as behaviors

- Cross-cultural skills acquired as a result of experience in the cultural context
- Different types of experiences:
  - Faculty-led trips
  - Study abroad
  - Courses with cross cultural content
  - COIL courses
- Cross-cultural competencies are internal to the student:
  - Awareness of differences and similarities
  - Changes in their perspectives and world view etc.
  - In order to assess, we need to generate evidence
  - Evidence: Behavioral manifestation of competencies
  - Evidence of change
Cross cultural skills and competencies: behavioral

- Stimulate development of cross cultural skills and competencies
  - Identifying skills/competencies
- Rubric: Identifies 8 general skills
  - Openness
  - Cultural Worldview and Knowledge
  - General connection of Cultural Experience to Academic content
  - Cultural Self Awareness
  - General transfer of Knowledge and Skills
  - Understanding of Global content and Impact
  - Effective communication
Developing Skills

- **Assignments** as vehicles to generate evidence of skills and competencies
- **Outcomes** of assignments as behavioral manifestation of competencies
- Need to design assignments that will generate that type of data
- What type of behavior would be evidence of the skill?
- What type of assignment would generate that behavior?
Toolkit components: Rubric

- Rubric for Assessment of cross-cultural skills and competencies
  - **Identify** the international/global learning outcomes for their courses or experiential activities
  - **Use components** of the rubric to build assessments and activities to achieve identified learning outcomes
- Use the rubric to assess the degree to which those learning outcomes were achieved in the course or course components and experiential activities.
Other Toolkit components

- Faculty Handbook
- Technology Guide: e-portfolios
- Pre-and Post-experience Demographic Questionnaires
- http://www.crossculturetoolkit.org
Workshop Outlines: Main Objectives for each Workshop

- **Workshop I:**
  - Think about learning outcomes for their courses specifically related to experiential learning
  - Identify skills and competencies laid out in Rubric
  - Articulate skills and competencies in terms of Rubric elements

- **Workshop II:**
  - Identify activities/assignments already used in course/experience intended to teach/experience those skills competencies
  - Design new activities/assignments that map onto Learning Outcomes as defined by Rubric elements

- **Workshop III:**
  - What evidence constitutes having attained/learned those skills and competencies
  - How do you collect the data?
  - Scoring using the Rubric
Designing assignments: Workshops I and II

- What types of assignments?
- Identified Rubric components
  - What evidence supports identified skill
- Assignments built into course
  - Old assignments re-purposed (re-framed)
  - New assignments
    - Faculty Handbook
- Evidence can be qualitative or quantitative
- Example:
1.0 Openness
Definition: Open to new perspectives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>Benchmark 1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>Milestone 3</th>
<th>Capstone 4</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Unaware. Not Receptive</td>
<td>Unaware of own judgement, but receptive</td>
<td>Receptive, aware of judgment, but not initiating interactions and opportunities</td>
<td>Initiates interaction to try to learn other cultural perspectives</td>
<td>Seeks out, assesses, and accepts as valid, other cultural perspectives</td>
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<td>Example</td>
<td>I do not feel that this project will change me personally or professionally because it does not seem like there will be anything that could cause me to change within these projects.</td>
<td>I am looking forward to meeting new people from another country. I am sure that they will have very strong opinions about Americans.</td>
<td>I am looking forward to going to France. However, I really don’t like French food very much, so I’ll probably go out to eat at McDonalds or KFC whenever possible.</td>
<td>I am hoping to have an opportunity to observe consumer and business trade processes and practices, as well as possibly be immersed in cultural traditions that are interwoven into everyday scenarios in Turkey yet possibly taken for granted by the ‘locals.’</td>
<td>I believe I became more open minded and more open to new experiences. I tried all these different foods that I would have never tried if the Turkish students hadn’t pushed me and reassured me I would like them. I also want to travel more, and learn about more new cultures and people and everything else! I find these experiences completely amazing!</td>
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Example Activity

- **Skill Element 1.0 Openness**
- **Skill Definition: Open to new perspectives**
- **Sample Assignment**

**Between the Lines**

To begin your thinking about culture, read carefully the following statement that describes a classroom in a developing country as seen by an American observer:

*Teachers’ frequent use of corporal punishment discourages students from actively participating in the classroom. Students are expected to sit rigidly in their seats and speak only when spoken to. Conditioned in this way, it's not surprising they don’t feel free to speak out in the classroom; their shyness, however, should not be mistaken for lack of interest.*

If you read between the lines, you see that the writer makes a number of assumptions about children, students, teachers, and the way people learn.

Before reading further, list as many of these beliefs or assumptions as you can below.

- **Training Question:** How does this assignment build Openness?
FRAMING ASSIGNMENTS

- How would you ‘frame’ the assignment?
  - **Internal** to the student
    - **Recognize** information in the context
    - **Internalize** information
    - **Use** new information to develop new perspective or ‘world view’
  - This new internalization generates:
    - **Externalized** behavior
      - What behavior would give you evidence that some change has taken place?
Collecting data

- Framing or contextualizing: instructions to students
- Setting up ways in which students will ‘collect’ information
  - Student output
- Using Rubric to assess
Sample Assignment: Marketing in Costa Rica
Connection of Cultural Experience to Academic Context

- Agricultural Business class in Costa Rican context
- Choose an agricultural product that is popularly marketed in the U.S. (milk, for example)
- Observe and interact with Costa Rican agricultural enterprises
- Note how agricultural products are marketed in Costa Rican communities
- Rebrand a U.S. agricultural product for the Costa Rican context so it would be marketable in that country
Steps for designing training

- Get faculty to articulate specific skills and competencies
- What constitutes evidence for those skills to exist? In other words, what data could be interpreted so that you could infer the skills had been developed
- What activities would generate that kind of data?
  - **Reflective activities:** journals, e-portfolios, blogs, etc.
  - **Behavioral indices:** observable interactions with people from other cultures/contexts
  - **Photographs, or interviews, or other types of projects students could design**
- **Major focus for the Instructor:** evaluating the competency
EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES AND OUTCOMES:

b. Describe your expected outcome(s) from planned assignments relating to experiential learning abroad (or across cultures).
c. Prepare assignments that involve reflection and will elicit responses that demonstrate skill development.
   (The office of International Education (OIE) is available to assist with assignment development)

d. The cross-cultural skill this faculty-led/COIL program will focus on:
   
   _____ Openness
   _____ Cultural Self Awareness
   _____ Cultural Worldview and Knowledge
   _____ General Transfer of Knowledge and Skills
   _____ General Connection of Experience to Personal Growth
   _____ Understanding of Global Context and Impact
   _____ Connection of Cultural Experience to Academic Context
   _____ Effective Communication

The expected outcome will be:
The assignment(s) reflection(s) students will complete will be:
Professional Development of Teachers

- How do we engage teachers in the conversations to develop cross-cultural experiential learning competencies in students?

- When we observe students' learning, what do we observe? How do we know if the teacher is helping students develop competencies? How do the teachers know that the student is exhibiting these skills when doing an activity?

- What are some important teacher competencies that would need to be developed in order to observe student requisition of these skills?