

Facilitating Intercultural Development during Study Abroad:
A Case Study of CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad

A DISSERTATION
SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
BY

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IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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June 2013

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation is a result of my own experiences living, learning, and teaching abroad; advising international students at Texas A&M University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison; studying in the Comparative and International Development Education (CIDE) program and teaching intercultural courses at the University of Minnesota; and networking with amazing colleagues through various professional organizations, especially the Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication. I deeply appreciate all the people whose paths have crossed mine throughout the journey, many of whom had more of an impact on me than they probably know.

During the process of pursuing my PhD, I have had two especially influential and invaluable mentors. I enrolled at the University of Minnesota expressly to study under Dr. R. Michael Paige, and the experience did not disappoint. I cannot thank him enough for the wonderful opportunities he has given me, the countless hours he spent mentoring me through this entire process, and his invaluable editing advice. I feel incredibly fortunate to be one of the last people able to go through this experience with Dr. Paige before his retirement. As if that were not privilege enough, I met Dr. Michael (Mick) Vande Berg when I interned for him at the Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication in 2008. He too became a wonderful mentor and eventually a friend. He has been generous beyond belief with me, and I thank him from the bottom of my heart for all the doors he opened for me, the wisdom he imparted, and the laughs we shared. Furthermore, I deeply appreciate the confidence he has always demonstrated in my abilities and that he entrusted me to conduct outside research on something so near and dear to him, the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. I truly feel that I hit the mentor jackpot with these two men.

I also wish to express my gratitude to all of the amazing faculty members at the University of Minnesota who have served on my committee throughout this process, including Dr. Barbara Kappler, Dr. Jean King, Dr. Joan DeJaeghere, and Dr. Deanne Magnusson. I look up to them all, not only because they are wonderful teachers, mentors, and scholars, but because they are all of these things while also being committed mothers. There could be no better role models for someone pursuing a PhD while also raising two young children.

Thank you also to all of the individuals who participated in this study. I deeply appreciate their hospitality during my site visits and all that they shared with me about their experiences. I hope they feel I have represented them fairly and accurately.

Finally, although words cannot possibly express my gratitude to them, I would like to thank my family. I could not have done this without them. Thank you to my parents for their love, support, and babysitting services. Thank you to my amazing children, Emilia and Mateo, who both came into this world while I was pursuing my PhD; their smiles and hugs kept me sane even during the most challenging times. And to Agustín, the best partner in life a person could ask for, thank you! When I had the will, you found the way. I cannot thank you enough for all the sacrifices you have made and the heavy load you have carried. I only hope I can help you follow your dreams one day as you have helped me follow mine.

ABSTRACT

This study examines a relatively new phenomenon in study abroad: the practice of intervening in students' intercultural learning during their experience abroad. In this paper, I refer to this type of intentional and focused action taken by educators to facilitate student learning abroad as a 'study abroad intervention.' This study focuses specifically on a study abroad intervention that is taught on-site while students are participating in a semester abroad. Created and implemented by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE), the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad ('the Seminar') is a for-credit intercultural seminar that is offered at numerous CIEE sites around the world. It is one of the largest, if not the largest, study abroad interventions currently in existence.

This mixed-methods case study not only examines the outcomes of participation in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, but it also explores the process involved in facilitating students' intercultural development through such a course. The researcher visited two sites where the Seminar was being taught—one in Western Europe and one in Africa—in fall 2010, where she observed several sessions of the Seminar, interviewed the instructors multiple times, and interviewed the participants. The primary data sources include these observations and interviews, in addition to interviews with the Seminar administrators at CIEE's headquarters and students' pre-/post-test scores from the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI).

The findings demonstrate that the students participating in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad at these two sites made significantly greater gains in their intercultural sensitivity than would be expected if they were not participating in a study abroad intervention. Furthermore, the findings illustrate that the process of facilitating students' intercultural learning during study abroad can be highly complex, and they highlight the importance of having skilled facilitators teach such courses. This study also sheds light on the applicability of several pedagogical theories—including the Intercultural Development Continuum (Hammer, 2009, 2012), the challenge/support hypothesis (Sanford, 1966), and Experiential Learning Theory (Kolb, 1984)—to this process.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

According to the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program (2005), “What nations don’t know can hurt them. The stakes involved in study abroad are that simple, that straightforward, and that important. For their own future and that of the nation, college graduates today must be internationally competent” (p. ii). For this reason, the Commission set a goal to send one million U.S. college students abroad annually by the year 2016-2017. This would represent more than a fourfold increase from a decade earlier, when 241,791 U.S. students participated in study abroad during the 2006-2007 academic year (Institute of International Education, 2008). The implicit assumption made by the Commission, as well as by most educators, students, and their parents, is that participants will learn by virtue of spending time in another country. More specifically, it is commonly assumed that study abroad will improve participants’ intercultural competence, which can be defined as the “ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2008, p. 33).

While there is indeed evidence that study abroad can lead to numerous positive outcomes—increased intercultural competence among them—there are also reasons to believe that the desired outcomes are not as automatic as previously assumed. In fact, it is becoming increasingly apparent that, when left to their own devices, study abroad participants, on average, do not develop interculturally much more than they would at home (Vande Berg, Connor-Linton, & Paige, 2009). As a result, many leading study abroad professionals have begun intervening in students’ learning abroad. This study will examine a program that is doing just that.

A number of educators have created programs—primarily credit-bearing courses that are taught on site or online—that aim to facilitate students’ intercultural learning and development while they are abroad. Such programs are often referred to as ‘study abroad interventions’ due to the fact that they actively seek to intervene in the student learning process. At the outset of this study, research had been published on only three such interventions. Two, conducted by Willamette and Bellarmine universities and the University of Minnesota, are potentially wide-reaching interventions that are conducted through the use of technology (see Cohen, Paige, Shively, Emert, & Hoff, 2005; Lou & Bosley, 2008; Paige, Cohen, & Shively, 2004). The third, run by the American University Center of Provence, is conducted on a smaller scale, on site in a face-to-face format (see L. Engle & Engle, 2004). Pre-/post-test measures of students’ intercultural development suggest these efforts have been quite successful (L. Engle & Engle,

2004; Lou & Bosley, 2008). Such study abroad interventions, however, are still quite limited, as is the research on their effects.

The Research Problem

The study abroad interventions that currently exist draw on literature and theory from the fields of international education, intercultural communication, and student development, among others. They draw upon many of the same intercultural concepts and pedagogical theories, such as “the constructivist and developmental perspectives that inform the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (M. Bennett, 1993)” (Vande Berg & Paige, 2009, p. 433) and Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle. While these concepts and theories together provide a framework for facilitating students’ intercultural development while they are abroad, the process of their application has not been empirically examined. The research on study abroad interventions that does exist focuses primarily on *outcomes*. The need now is to better understand the *process* of facilitating students’ intercultural development during study abroad. How does a study abroad intervention contribute to the outcomes we are seeing? What is happening between the pre- and post-tests that is affecting students’ intercultural development? How are the concepts and theories that inform these interventions translating into practice?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is, therefore, to examine the *process* involved in facilitating students’ intercultural development during a study abroad experience. I look specifically at a study abroad intervention created by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) called the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad (‘the Seminar’). I focus on two sites where the Seminar was reported as having been successful in previous semesters. The point is not only to measure students’ intercultural development as an outcome, but also to examine the process involved in that development. How are facilitators engaging with and implementing the curriculum, including the pedagogical framework? How are students responding?

Proposed Research Questions

To better understand the process of intentionally facilitating students’ intercultural development during study abroad, the following broad questions guided my research:

1. In what ways does a study abroad intervention affect students' intercultural development?
 - a. What aspects of the intervention do the administrators, instructors, and students each consider the most supportive of intercultural development? What aspects do they consider the most challenging?
 - b. Regarding intercultural development, what are the administrators', instructors', and students' perceptions of the role of the following four specific aspects of the intervention: the milieu, the instructor, the students, and the curriculum?
2. Apart from the intervention itself, what other aspects of the experience do the students consider to be supportive of their intercultural development?

The Setting

The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) is one of the largest study abroad providers in the United States. Its Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad is one of the most significant study abroad interventions to date, as it combines the reach of interventions that have previously only been conducted from afar via technology with the depth provided by on-site, face-to-face interactions. It is an interactive, learner-centered seminar conducted on site over the course of the semester that students are abroad. The Seminar is taught by an on-site staff member, oftentimes the Resident Director. The curriculum was designed by staff at CIEE's headquarters in the United States and is available, along with trainer resources, to Seminar instructors abroad via a password-protected intranet website. The people who designed the curriculum also engage in continuous training efforts with the on-site instructors. The Seminar began as a pilot at approximately ten sites in spring 2008, with the intention to eventually expand it to the majority, if not all, of the 41 countries where CIEE has programs. Internal pre-/post-test data from the Seminar have been promising.

Overview of Methods

This research involves a mixed-methods case study of CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad during the fall 2010 semester at two sites, one in Western Europe and the other in Africa, where it was reported to be successful according to the lead administrator and based on past-semester pre-/post- IDI data. I visited both sites for approximately three weeks between mid-October and the end of November 2010. Primary data sources include my observations from these site visits, during which I sat in on the Seminar multiple times; interviews with Seminar instructors, students, and administrators; and IDI scores from the students and instructors.

Definition of Terms

Table 1. Definition of Terms

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Study Abroad	Study abroad refers to credit-bearing study that occurs outside cultural or political borders of the United States.
Intercultural Competence	Intercultural competence is “the ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations based on one’s intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Deardorff, 2008, p. 33). It includes “the ability to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways” (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003, p. 422).
Intercultural Sensitivity	Intercultural sensitivity refers to “the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences” (Hammer et al., 2003, p. 422). Furthermore, “greater intercultural sensitivity is associated with greater potential for exercising intercultural competence” (Hammer et al., 2003, p. 422).
Intercultural Development	The Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) posits a continuum of five worldviews of increasing sophistication in dealing with cultural difference, moving from more monocultural to more intercultural mindsets (Hammer, 2009). The five primary worldviews are Denial, Polarization, Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation. Intercultural development refers to movement along this continuum. In other words, “it is the construction of reality as increasingly capable of accommodating cultural difference that constitutes development” (M. Bennett, 1993, p. 24).
Intercultural Learning	Intercultural learning is “the acquisition of general (transferable) intercultural competence; that is, competence that can be applied to dealing with cross-cultural contact in general, not just skills useful only for dealing with a particular other culture” (M. Bennett, 2010). The terms intercultural learning and intercultural development are often used in conjunction in this paper; it is assumed that they go hand-in-hand. The basic intercultural learning goals are generally agreed upon, encompassing cultural self-awareness, other-culture awareness, and various skills in intercultural perception and communication (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1983; Paige & Martin, 1983).
Worldview	Worldview is defined as one’s orientation to cultural difference (J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004) and in this study refers specifically to one’s intercultural sensitivity level according to the IDC.
Study Abroad Intervention	A study abroad intervention is defined in this paper as intentional and focused action taken by educators before, during, or after study abroad that aims to facilitate student learning. This study focuses specifically on interventions that take place during students’ time abroad and primarily aim to facilitate intercultural learning and development.

<i>Term</i>	<i>Definition</i>
Facilitation	In this paper, facilitation refers to the process of trying to encourage students' intercultural learning and development through intentional program design and delivery.

Significance of Study

This study is significant for a number of reasons. First, it is the first empirical study to examine the facilitation of study abroad participants' intercultural development as a *process*. Like other research on study abroad interventions, this study includes pre-/post-test data using a tool called the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), which assesses students' intercultural development. Unlike previous studies, however, it will also include extensive qualitative data regarding what happens between those two points in time.

Second, this study is significant because of the magnitude of the study abroad intervention being researched. As mentioned previously, CIEE is one of the largest U.S. study abroad providers. It is anticipated that the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad could be offered at CIEE sites in more than 40 countries in the future. In other words, this intervention has the potential to affect the intercultural development of more study abroad participants in a face-to-face form than any other similar program currently in existence (and is likely already doing so). Therefore, even if the learning that comes from this study were not generalizable beyond this Seminar, its impact would still be significant.

However, I anticipate this study will also be significant because it will in fact be able to inform future research and practice. Its exploratory and descriptive nature will paint a picture of how the implementation of this particular study abroad intervention is affecting students' intercultural development. My intention is that with such information, study abroad practitioners will be able to make what Stake (1995) calls naturalistic generalizations. Stake explains, "People can learn much that is general from single cases. They do that partly because they are familiar with other cases and they add this one in, thus making a slightly new group from which to generalize, a new opportunity to modify old generalizations" (p. 85). In addition, the expanded understanding of the facilitation process will serve as a jumping off point for new research in the area.

Outline of Chapters

In the next chapter, I review the relevant literature and research and outline a conceptual framework for researching CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. In chapter three, I discuss the research methodology for this study. The findings are presented in chapters four and five. Lastly, in chapter six, I discuss those findings in light of recent research and offer some concluding thoughts.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review relevant literature, concepts and theories, and empirical research to create a conceptual framework for examining a study abroad intervention that aims to facilitate students' intercultural learning and development. To do so, I draw primarily on literature from the fields of intercultural communication and training, study abroad, and student development.

Introduction to the Issue

As mentioned in chapter one, there exists a widespread and long-held assumption that participation in study abroad leads to intercultural learning. This stems from an implicit belief that such learning results by virtue of being in contact with and immersed in another culture. However, study abroad scholars and practitioners are increasingly questioning that assumption. In this section, I examine the basis for that assumption and explain why it is under scrutiny. I then discuss how the maturation of the intercultural communication and training fields, as well as two broader trends in higher education, have provided the impetus and tools for integrating more intercultural training into study abroad. Lastly, I explain that the result of these trends is that increasing numbers of study abroad professionals advocate intervening in students' learning while they are abroad.

Changing Assumptions in Study Abroad

For years, the focus in study abroad programming has been on immersion. Study abroad practitioners have long believed that greater immersion leads to more learning. For this reason, they have extolled program components such as direct enrollment and homestays over "island programs," for example. The assumption is that if students are given the opportunity, they will immerse themselves in the local culture and develop meaningful relationships with people from the host culture. It is further assumed that students will reduce their prejudice, increase their tolerance, and become more interculturally competent as a result of these experiences. Unfortunately, the reality is not that simple. Many study abroad professionals now recognize not only that it is increasingly difficult for students to become truly immersed in the host culture, but also that doing so does not necessarily lead to intercultural development.

To begin with, despite all the focus on immersion, the amount of authentic contact students are having with people from the host culture may nonetheless be quite limited. First of

all, students abroad are able to remain connected to their home culture more than ever before. Email, blogs, Skype and other popular technologies mean students can—and oftentimes do—communicate more with friends and family back home than with people in the host culture. Not only are students connected with people back home, they also often spend much of their time with other U.S. Americans abroad, and study abroad programs are often designed in a way that inadvertently promotes this practice. As will be discussed later, tension and disequilibrium are necessary components of the learning abroad process (Adler, 1975; J. Engle & Engle, 2002; Savicki, 2008a). However, in an effort to attract more participants, many programs are accommodating students' needs and desires, as well as parental expectations, in ways that bleed the experience of such uncomfortable moments. In addition, U.S. American culture is becoming increasingly ubiquitous around the world, with McDonald's and Starbucks in almost all corners of the earth and U.S. American movies playing in their original format even where English is not the native language. These cultural comforts provide easy refuge for overwhelmed students. The result is a lack of authentic intercultural contact with people from the host culture. As Engle and Engle (2002) summarize:

While earlier study abroad offered a marked, desired break with the familiar, the pervasive effects of global economic, social, and technological homogenization have made the potentially rich and rewarding encounter with difference less easily accessible. Furthermore, against this background of superficial cultural sameness, our professional role as educators has too often, these last decades, morphed insidiously into that of consumer service providers. The result, with rare exceptions, is a foreign landscape increasingly strewn with on-site foreign study programs facilitating an international education which is neither significantly international nor truly educative. (p. 25)

In other words, students abroad may be having a largely U.S. experience while simply being in the vicinity of another culture.

To summarize, immersion and authentic intercultural contact can be difficult to achieve. To add to the challenge, it is becoming increasingly evident that these are necessary but insufficient conditions for student learning abroad. There is growing recognition that contact with other cultures in and of itself does not lead to the kind of deep learning it was previously assumed to produce. The Intergroup Contact Theory (Allport, 1979) argues against this common belief that contact between people from different cultures will lead to harmonious relations between them. While research on this theory has found that such contact can “reduce intergroup

prejudice” (Pettigrew, 2006), it has also identified a number of important conditions that must be present for that to happen (such as a safe, equal-power cross-cultural situation). Furthermore, as M. Bennett (2010) explains, reduced prejudice “does not constitute intercultural learning” (p. 433). As he states, “The goal of intercultural learning is empathy, not just tolerance” (M. Bennett, p. 432). Therefore, M. Bennett concludes:

For study abroad programs, insofar as they incorporate relatively equal-power immersion experiences, the payoff will be an increase of tolerance without much additional effort. [...] Turning a cross-cultural immersion experience into an intercultural learning experience *does* take an additional effort. (p. 433; original italics)

Therefore, study abroad professionals increasingly recognize that students not only need to have authentic intercultural experiences in the host culture, but they also need help processing and making meaning of those experiences if they are to benefit fully from the learning opportunity. The “sink or swim” method of providing immersion opportunities and leaving students to their own devices to take advantage of and learn from those experiences is no longer appropriate, if it ever was. As Engle and Engle (2002) explain:

Our students are, in the vast majority, insufficiently prepared to deal with the cultural weight they are bearing. In the sink-or-swim challenge of local integration, sink most do, into the foreign student bar, reassuringly anonymous traveling, parallel worlds furnished comfortably with familiar cultural symbols. The services we do provide are too rarely connected to mechanisms for meaningful, regular cultural contact and reflection upon that interaction by a philosophy informing all aspects of program design, and thus end up simply isolating our students further. (p. 34)

This realization has also been fueled by two broader trends in higher education: the assessment movement (Bolen, 2007; Vande Berg, 2007b) and a growing emphasis in higher education on learner-centered practices (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2005; Tagg, 2003; Vande Berg, 2007b). With regards to the first trend, colleges and universities in the past few decades have been increasingly required—by state legislatures, professional accrediting bodies, and even students’ parents—to demonstrate they are teaching useful knowledge and skills (Vande Berg, 2007b). Study abroad is no exception and research that measures the effectiveness of study abroad has increased dramatically over the past three decades (Comp, Gladding, Rhodes, Stephenson, & Vande Berg, 2007). Incorporating assessment into study abroad is especially

important because the extraordinary rise in enrollment has led to increased visibility of the field and, therefore, a greater need to demonstrate what students are learning.

The increased attention to assessment is closely related to another relevant trend in higher education, which is a discernible movement from a focus on teaching to a greater focus on student learning. As Vande Berg (2007a) points out, “Cognitive psychologists and educational researchers have provided compelling evidence in support of the view that students learn by constructing, rather than simply passively absorbing, knowledge” (p. 5). As a result, centers for teaching and learning have sprung up at colleges and universities around the country to promote more learner-centered teaching. Faculty are lecturing less and incorporating more systematic use of active and collaborative pedagogies (Kuh et al., 2005). They are identifying and designing their courses around desired learning outcomes and encouraging students to write about and reflect on what they are learning and to apply their new knowledge outside the classroom (Vande Berg, 2007b).

These trends are causing educators, including study abroad professionals, to become more intentional about defining desired student learning outcomes and designing programs with a focus on achieving those goals, a process referred to as ‘reverse engineering.’ Since developing students’ intercultural competence is a primary—although oftentimes implicit—goal of study abroad, focus has turned to how to do so, stimulating numerous research studies that explore the relationship between specific program elements and participants’ intercultural development. Engle and Engle (2003; L. Engle, 2006) have identified seven defining components of study abroad programs that they believe are the most influential in student learning. These components are: (1) length of sojourn; (2) entry target-language competence; (3) language used in coursework; (4) context of academic work; (5) type of student housing; (6) provisions for guided/structured cultural interaction and experiential learning; (7) extent to which guided reflection is incorporated into the experience.

The identification of these program and learner characteristics has fueled research that seeks to better understand how these components affect various study abroad outcomes. Several such studies are discussed later in this chapter. Many of the findings of these studies challenge previously held assumptions about student learning during study abroad. Broadly speaking, research indicates that not all students learn and grow as much as we would hope simply by virtue of being abroad. In addition, several findings suggest that program elements that create the most immersive experiences may not necessarily lead to the most intercultural development if not coupled with adequate support measures (Vande Berg et al., 2009).

It is worth noting that CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad falls mostly within Engle and Engle's seventh component, guided reflection on the cultural experience, but also includes aspects of the sixth component, provisions for guided/structured cultural interaction and experiential learning. The role of these two components has received very little attention in the research.

Intercultural Training in Study Abroad

The growing realization that immersion alone is oftentimes insufficient to produce intercultural learning has been coupled with an increasing integration of intercultural training in study abroad. This has been made possible by the evolution and maturation of the intercultural communication and training fields. Edward T. Hall (1959, 1966) is widely recognized as the father of the intercultural communication field, and his work in the 1950s and beyond laid the foundation for intercultural training as we know it today (M. Bennett, 2010; Pusch, 2004). One of the first to use the term "intercultural communication," Hall changed the focus of intercultural training from studying other cultures to learning how to communicate with people from different cultures. He was also among the first to emphasize the importance of developing self-awareness of one's own cultural conditioning. It is important to note that Hall's contributions "did not grow from abstract intellectual inquiry," but "emerged from experience and was built on practical application" (Pusch, 2004, p. 15). Experiential learning techniques have played an important role in intercultural training ever since.

These advances in the intercultural communication and training fields set the backdrop for a change in the conception of 'culture shock.' Research in this area began after World War II, primarily in an effort to help individuals living and working overseas cope with the difficulties they encountered in adapting to their new surroundings. These difficulties and resulting frustrations came to be known as 'culture shock,' which was initially viewed as a *problem* that needed to be *managed* (Yershova, DeJaeghere, & Mestenhauser, 2000). Adler (1975) was one of the first scholars to suggest culture shock is not necessarily negative, but that cross-cultural encounters and the tension and disequilibrium they invoke offer opportunities for personal growth and development. In his seminal work about what he calls the 'transitional experience' (immersion in a new culture), Adler explains, "Although culture shock is most often associated with negative consequences, it can be an important aspect of cultural learning, self-development, and personal growth" (p. 14). He goes on to say, "The transitional experience is a movement from a state of low self- and cultural awareness to a state of high self- and cultural awareness" (p.

15). Since Adler's first reconceptualization of the term culture shock, it has become commonly recognized that the challenges posed by an intercultural experience offer great opportunities for learning and personal development.

Because culture shock was originally viewed as a process to be managed, most intercultural training for sojourners at that time focused on teaching participants how to adjust. Approaches were mostly didactic and culture-specific, often taking the form of a list of "do's and don'ts." Early work by Hall (1959, 1966), Adler (1975), and others, however, provided both the impetus and the tools for a new approach to emerge. As Vande Berg (2007b) explains, "The maturing of intercultural communication as a legitimate field of academic inquiry" means educators can "give students the intercultural tools, conceptual and behavioral, that will allow them to focus on their own learning in new and culturally challenging environments" (p. 397). There is now general agreement on the basic learning goals of intercultural communication; they include cultural self-awareness, other-culture awareness, and a variety of skills in intercultural perception and communication (Gudykunst & Hammer, 1983; Paige & Martin, 1983). As a result, training in study abroad has become more culture-general and focused on learning to communicate across cultures, rather than just learning about another culture. Approaches are more experiential and often focus on learning how to learn (McCaffery, 1993). The didactic approach and use of culture-specific content have not become obsolete, but experienced trainers now recognize the need to balance these with experiential approaches and culture-general material as well (J. Bennett, 1986; Fowler & Blohm, 2004; Gudykunst & Hammer, 1983; Paige, 1993c).

The maturation of the intercultural training field, in addition to the previously discussed developments in study abroad, has led practitioners to call for greater integration of training into the study abroad experience. This becomes even more important as participation in short-term programs increases. As Selby (2008) explains, "Curricular intentionality must increase as the period abroad decreases" (p. 8). Initially, the focus in study abroad was on training students prior to departure, with the incorporation of more culture-general, experiential training in pre-departure or one-shot, on-site orientations. More recently, practitioners have begun to emphasize the importance of providing more integrated training throughout the entire experience—including pre-departure, in-country, and re-entry training (Cushner & Karim, 2004; La Brack, 1993, 1999/2000; Martin, 1993; Martin & Harrell, 2004). One of the earliest, most successful, and long-standing programs (established in 1975) to do this is the intercultural training program started by Dr. Bruce La Brack at the University of the Pacific (La Brack, 1993, 1999/2000; Vande

Berg & Paige, 2009). La Brack developed two academic, credit-bearing intercultural training courses for study abroad participants—Cross-Cultural Training I and II—to be taken before and after the experience abroad. This strategically-designed training program “consciously builds [intercultural learning] into linked orientation and reentry exercises” (La Brack, 1993, p. 250).

Unfortunately, very few programs have been able to achieve the level of integrated training that the University of the Pacific has. Nonetheless, many institutions and study abroad providers now not only offer pre-departure orientations, but also incorporate some kind of re-entry training into the student experience, either by providing information to students just prior to their departure from the host country or through re-entry workshops and orientations upon their return home. The in-country piece, however, has been largely ignored until relatively recently.

The Need to Intervene in Student Learning Abroad

The changing assumptions about study abroad and the improved understanding surrounding intercultural training are fueling a shift within the field. Study abroad professionals increasingly argue that we need to intervene in students’ learning abroad if we want them to fully reap the benefits the opportunity presents. However, as is often the case in higher education, the field has been slow to react to changing times. According to Vande Berg (2007b), “There is a widening gulf between what U.S. study abroad professionals believe their students ought to learn through studying abroad and what many programs abroad aim to provide” (p. 392).

Nonetheless, numerous leading study abroad professionals are now advocating for and instituting intervention strategies meant to facilitate students’ development while abroad (Citron, 2002; Cohen et al., 2005; J. Engle & Engle, 2002; L. Engle & Engle, 2004; Lou & Bosley, 2008; Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard, 2006; Vande Berg, 2007b; Vande Berg, Balkcum, Scheid, & Whalen, 2004). As Engle and Engle (2002) explain:

For those students who set out to achieve a deeper cultural understanding of their new environments (...) sustained professional guidance is a necessity; without it, we cannot realistically entertain the hope that more than just a happy few will deal responsibly and successfully with their difficult day-to-day cultural (and often linguistic) interface. Unfortunately, only a small minority of programs today respond appropriately to this need. (p. 26)

Vande Berg (2007b) concurs, “I think a strong case can be made that in the absence of active intervention in their learning, most U.S. students just do not learn very effectively at all while abroad” (p. 394). In fact, it is paradoxical, as Selby (2008) notes, that on-campus curricula take a

building-up approach, moving from the introductory to the advanced, yet study abroad takes the opposite approach to developing intercultural competence by throwing students into the deep end with insufficient knowledge and skills.

Therefore, it is argued, we should not throw students into the deep end of the pool, but take them in at the shallow end and teach them how to swim before they are expected to survive alone in deeper intercultural waters. Study abroad professionals can do this by intervening in students' learning before, during, and after the sojourn, but where efforts are most lacking is during the program. Without such intervention, students may return with a rich experience, but with limited transferable skills (Selby, 2008). However, as Paige and Goode (2009) point out, although it is increasingly evident that facilitation can significantly enhance students' intercultural learning abroad, such facilitation is scarce and uneven.

Theoretical Framework of Study

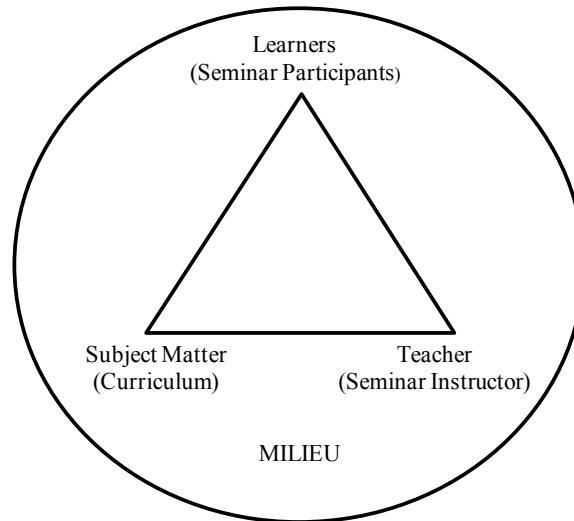
In this section, I outline the theoretical framework of this study. I first present Schwab's (1983) concept of the "four commonplaces of education" as an organizational framework for this research study. Second, I summarize Deardorff's (2004) model of intercultural competence and Paige's (2005) dimensions of intercultural learning, which both address *what* constitutes intercultural learning. Third, I discuss three theories that suggest *how* to facilitate intercultural learning, particularly during study abroad. These include the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) (Hammer, 2009), Sanford's (1966) challenge and support hypothesis, and Experiential Learning Theory (ELT). I also explain how the last three theories mentioned form the pedagogical framework of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad.

Four Commonplaces of Education

Schwab's (1983) concept of the "four commonplaces of education" provides an organizational framework through which to examine CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. Schwab's concept is useful because it recognizes the complexity involved in educational endeavors and identifies four interconnected and interdependent elements that could likely affect the extent to which a study abroad intervention is able to facilitate students' learning and development. Schwab's four commonplaces include what he calls the subject matter, the learner, the teacher, and the (sociocultural) milieu. Schwab says these are all of intrinsically equal importance. The relationship among these four commonplaces with respect to the Seminar is

depicted in Figure 1. This representation demonstrates how the subject matter, learner, and teacher all interact with one another within the milieu.

Figure 1. Schwab's Four Commonplaces of Education Applied to CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad



Adaptation based on Schwab, J. J. (1983). The practical 4: Something for curriculum professors to do. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 13, 239-265.

With regards to CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, the milieu refers to all that surrounds a student's experience abroad, including but not limited to the culture of the host country, the study abroad program itself, and the context in which the Seminar is taught. The learners are the students enrolled in the Seminar. The teacher refers to the Seminar instructor, who is an on-site staff member (in some cases two staff members co-teach), and oftentimes the Resident Director of the program. The subject matter is perhaps more appropriately referred to as the curriculum, which has been designed by the Seminar administrators at CIEE's headquarters in the United States.

Using Schwab's (1983) four commonplaces as an organizational framework for this study is meant to help understand the interrelationship among these four aspects of the Seminar. In an effort to facilitate students' intercultural development, CIEE has created this course that is then implemented at sites around the world. The curriculum is the one constant across sites, whereas the learners, the instructors, and the milieus at, and even within, each site are highly diverse. The success of the intervention, according to Schwab's commonplaces, depends upon all of these factors and their complex interrelationship. So the question becomes this: What is

necessary on the ground—with respect to the interaction between the students, the instructor, the curriculum, and the milieu—to effectively impart the Seminar in a way that helps participants learn and develop interculturally?

Intercultural Learning

Deardorff's (2004) model of intercultural competence and Paige's (2005) dimensions of intercultural learning offer a framework of what study abroad participants should ideally learn. In an effort to develop a consensual definition of intercultural competence, Deardorff conducted a Delphi study on the topic with 23 leading intercultural scholars. Her model of intercultural competence emerged from this research. In it, Deardorff identifies three key elements of intercultural competence: knowledge and comprehension, skills, and attitudes. Knowledge and comprehension consist of "cultural self-awareness, deep cultural knowledge, [and] sociolinguistic awareness" (Deardorff, 2008, p. 36). Relevant skills include listening, observing, evaluating, analyzing, interpreting, and relating. Attitudes related to intercultural competence include "respect (valuing other cultures), openness (withholding judgment), [and] curiosity and discovery (tolerating ambiguity)" (Deardorff, 2008, p. 36). Deardorff explains that these three elements interact to produce the desired internal and external outcomes. The primary desired internal outcome is an "informed frame of reference shift," in which "adaptability and flexibility play a central role" (Deardorff, 2008, pp. 36-38). The main desired external outcome is "effective and appropriate communication and behavior in intercultural situations" (Deardorff, 2008, p. 39). Deardorff emphasizes the fact that educators need to help study abroad participants develop and hone these competencies while they are abroad.

Similarly, Paige (2005) outlines five dimensions of culture learning, which pertain to both process and content, that provide more detail about what students abroad should learn. These dimensions are presented briefly here.

1. *Learning about the self as a cultural being.* Students need to become aware of how the culture(s) in which they are raised contribute to their identities, preferred patterns of behavior, values and beliefs, and ways of thinking. Cultural self-awareness is critical because it enables students to understand that culture influences all of their interactions and enables them to compare and contrast their culture(s) with others to predict possible culture clashes (Paige et al., 2006).
2. *Learning about the elements of culture.* "To be effective culture learners, people must understand culture" (Paige & Goode, 2009, p. 337). M. Bennett (1998) distinguishes

between objective culture, which includes the institutions and products of a cultural group, and subjective culture, which refers to “the learned and shared patterns of beliefs, behaviors, and values of groups of interacting people” (p. 3). Learning during study abroad should involve both, but the latter is most relevant to developing intercultural competence.

3. *Culture-specific learning.* For study abroad participants, culture-specific learning involves becoming knowledgeable about both objective and subjective culture in the host culture. Paige and Goode (2009) note that “this is the dimension of culture learning most commonly supported by international education professionals” (p. 337).
4. *Culture-general learning.* Culture-general learning refers to learning that could translate across cultural contexts. Key concepts include values and communication styles, and phenomena like intercultural adjustment, adaptation, culture shock, acculturation and assimilation (Paige et al., 2006, p. 40).
5. *Learning about learning.* The premise here is that “strategic learners are self-empowered and more effective language and culture learners” (Paige et al., 2006, p. 40). As Paige and Goode (2009) explain, “Effective culture learning includes testing and refining one’s understanding of the culture (Crawford-Lange & Lange, 1984), participating in the culture, and reflecting on one’s intercultural experiences (Kolb, 1984)” (p. 337).

Paige’s (2005) dimensions of intercultural learning and Deardorff’s (2004) model of intercultural competence outline what type of learning a study abroad intervention should endeavor to facilitate. The next section will introduce several theories that suggest how that might be done.

Facilitating Intercultural Learning

The primary theories presented here include Sanford’s (1966) challenge and support hypothesis, the Intercultural Development Continuum (Hammer, 2009), and Experiential Learning Theory, especially Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle. These theories outline means by which a study abroad intervention can facilitate students’ intercultural development. In addition to presenting these theories, I briefly discuss how they are used to inform the pedagogical framework of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad.

The Challenge and Support Hypothesis

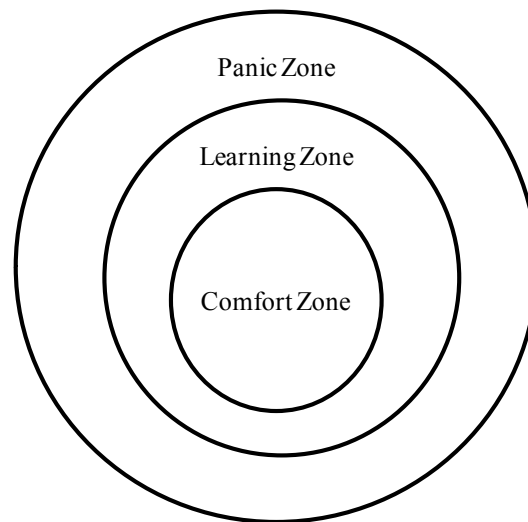
Sanford's (1966) challenge and support hypothesis contends that educators need to balance the level of challenge that learners face with the amount of support they receive in order to keep them engaged in the learning process. To promote student development, Sanford says, educators must "present [students] with strong challenges, appraise accurately [their] ability to cope with these challenges, and offer support when they become overwhelming" (p. 46). As Kegan (1994) says, "People grow best where they continuously experience an ingenious blend of challenge and support" (p. 42). Similar to Sanford's theory, and also highly relevant to the study abroad experience, the Yerkes-Dodson Law states that "maximum learning is promoted when the student's anxiety is at a moderate level. When anxiety is too low, motivation to learn is limited. When anxiety is too high, motivation is inhibited as well" (Citron & Kline, 2001, p. 23).

Drawing from Sanford (1966), as well as Senninger (2000), Vande Berg applies the idea of challenge/support to the study abroad context (see Vande Berg & Medina-López-Portillo, 2010). His representation is depicted in Figure 2. He explains that if study abroad participants are overly challenged, they will go into a "panic zone" and be unable to learn effectively as a result. For example, they may retreat from a challenging cultural situation by spending more time with other U.S. Americans and doing the types of things they would do back home. On the other hand, if students are not sufficiently challenged, they will become overly comfortable and their ability to learn will decrease as well. Vande Berg, like Sanford, says the level of challenge students experience must be "just right" for learning to result. This balance helps students move into and stay in the "learning zone." Similarly, J. Bennett (1993), who discusses how the challenge/support hypothesis can be used in intercultural training, states, "If the learner is overly supported, no learning takes place. If the learner is overly challenged, the learner flees the learning context" (p. 122). She explains that the right balance of challenge and support will be different for each individual. Therefore, "The educator needs to assess the needs of the participants and carefully balance challenge and support to maximize learning" (J. Bennett, 1993, p. 122).

What the challenge and support hypothesis highlights is that educators working with study abroad participants need to be constantly aware of the level of challenge and anxiety each student is experiencing at any given moment and provide the support and/or challenge necessary to promote optimal learning. However, creating such an "ingenious blend" can be difficult. As discussed earlier, many study abroad programs are designed in ways that, often unwittingly,

“keep students in their comfort zones and, thus, deny them potential learning opportunities” (Citron & Kline, 2001, p. 23). Therefore, programs must be designed and implemented with the challenge/support hypothesis in mind, and interventions that seek to facilitate intercultural development must endeavor to achieve the necessary balance of challenge and support for each individual. Paige’s (1993b) intensity factors can help educators assess how challenging the experience may be for individuals; therefore, we turn to these now.

Figure 2. Vande Berg's Challenge/Support Representation



From Vande Berg, M., & Medina-López-Portillo, A. (2010). *Learner-centered study abroad: What students are learning over there, what they're not, and what we can do about it*. Portland, OR: Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication Workshop Materials.

Paige's Intensity Factors as Indicators of Challenge

Paige’s (1993b) intensity factors identify specific ways in which study abroad participants may or may not feel challenged by their experience. Paige identifies ten situational and personal variables that can affect the level of intensity of a sojourn abroad. These offer a lens through which educators, and students themselves, can gauge the level of challenge particular students may experience, which in turn suggests the level of support and/or additional challenge they might need. The ten factors (all summarized from Paige, 1993b) are briefly explained here.

1. *Cultural differences*. Paige suggests that students’ stress increases as the degree of cultural difference between their home and host cultures increases. In addition, the more negatively students evaluate the cultural differences between their home and host cultures, the more intense the experience will be.

2. *Ethnocentrism.* Ethnocentrism is relevant to a student's level of stress in two ways. First, students with more ethnocentric mindsets, particularly those who hold Denial and Polarization worldviews according to the Intercultural Development Continuum (see next section), will find intercultural experiences more threatening. Second, students who are studying abroad in cultures or communities that are more ethnocentric will also experience a greater degree of stress.
3. *Cultural immersion.* The more immersed a student is in the host culture, the more psychologically intense will be the experience.
4. *Cultural isolation.* The more isolated sojourners are from their own cultural group, the more stressful their experience may be.
5. *Language.* Students who do not speak the language of the host culture may likely experience more stress than those that do. In addition, the more critical language abilities are to host culture integration, the more stress students may experience.
6. *Prior intercultural experience.* Those who have little or no prior, in-depth intercultural experience will likely find the experience more stressful than those with such experience.
7. *Expectations.* Students who have positive but unrealistic expectations about the study abroad experience may feel let down when those expectations are not met. In addition, students who have high expectations of themselves may react negatively when they experience normal adjustment problems.
8. *Visibility and invisibility.* Students may experience stress if they are physically more visible in the host culture than they are accustomed to being in their home culture. Alternatively, they may feel stressed if an important aspect of their identity is either ignored by members of the host culture (e.g., religious beliefs) or must be kept hidden because it is not accepted in the host culture (e.g., sexual orientation).
9. *Status.* Status can affect a student's experience in several ways. Students may feel they are not getting the respect they deserve, or they may feel they are receiving undeserved attention and recognition. Also, they may not understand their own level of status in the host community. All of these issues can present students with challenges.
10. *Power and control.* The more study abroad participants feel a loss of power and control over events, the more stress they will likely experience.

As Paige and Goode (2009) contend, understanding these intensity factors can help educators facilitate student learning and development because they offer a means through which to assess

the level of challenge individual students may be experiencing and to therefore provide the necessary support and/or additional challenge they need.

The Intercultural Development Continuum

In this section, I outline the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) (Hammer, 2009, 2012), which is a model of intercultural competence grounded in the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) originally conceived by M. Bennett (1986, 1993). I first briefly summarize the theoretical foundations of the IDC and then explain the model.

Theoretical Foundations

The Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) is based, in part, on personal construct theory and its extension, radical constructivism (J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004). Personal construct theory posits that “experience is a function of our categorization, or construing, of events” (J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004, p. 153). According to George Kelly (1963):

A person can be a witness to a tremendous parade of episodes and yet, if he fails to keep making something out of them... he gains little in the way of experience from having been around when they happened. It is not what happens around him that makes a man experienced; it is the successive construing and reconstruing of what happens, as it happens, that enriches the experience of his life. (as quoted in J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004, p. 153)

In other words, how people experience events depends upon the categories they possess and use to describe them. The IDC focuses specifically on how people develop their ability to construe, and thereby experience, cultural difference.

The model also draws on cognitive-structural theories of student development, most notably Perry’s (1968) Scheme of Ethical and Cognitive Development (J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Pusch & Merrill, 2008). While a full explanation of the foundations of the IDC is beyond the scope of this paper, this is important to mention because it highlights the fact that the IDC “is one of the few theories that bridges the areas of intercultural communication and human development” (Endicott, Bock, & Narvaez, 2003, p. 405). In other words, facilitating students’ intercultural development involves a great deal of transferrable learning that will serve students well long after their study abroad experience ends.

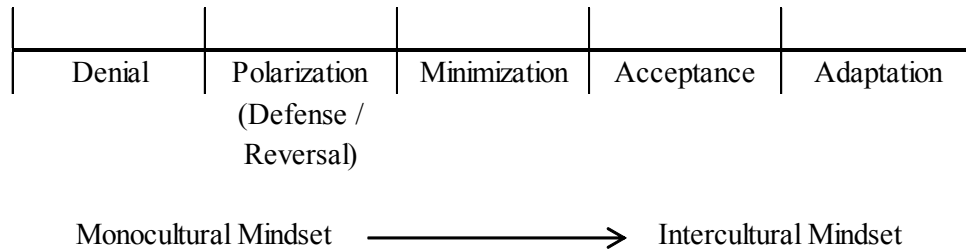
Explanation of the Intercultural Development Continuum

Drawing from the theories mentioned in the previous section, M. Bennett (1986, 1993) created the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) “as a framework to explain the observed and reported experiences of people in intercultural situations” (J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004). It was developed using a grounded theory approach, “which involves using theoretical concepts to explain a pattern that emerges from systematic observations” (M. Bennett, 2004, p. 72). In the DMIS, intercultural sensitivity is defined as “the ability to discriminate and experience relevant cultural differences,” whereas intercultural competence means “the ability to think and act in interculturally appropriate ways” (Hammer et al., 2003, p. 422). Intercultural competence involves culturally sensitive knowledge, attitudes, and behavior. The DMIS is based on the belief that “greater intercultural sensitivity is associated with greater potential for exercising intercultural competence” (Hammer et al., 2003, p. 422).

The Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) is an adaptation of the original DMIS. Based on the DMIS, Hammer and M. Bennett (1998) created a measurement tool—known as the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)—to assess one’s orientation toward cultural difference. Extensive research using the IDI has resulted in the adaptation of the DMIS into a more empirical measure of the constructs identified in the original theory (Hammer, 2007). The result is the IDC, which “represents a progression from a less complex perception of and consequently a less complex experience of culturally-based patterns of difference to a more complex experience around cultural diversity” (Hammer, 2009). This continuum includes five worldviews (also called orientations) of increasing complexity from a monocultural mindset to a more intercultural or global mindset. They are: Denial, Polarization (which can take the form of Defense or Reversal), Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation. Each worldview is briefly described here.

Denial. People in Denial simply ignore or are unaware of the existence of cultural difference. They believe “cultural diversity only occurs elsewhere” (M. Bennett, 1993, p. 30). Those in Denial “often have a limited, stereotypic set of perceptions of the cultural ‘other’” (Hammer, 2009, p. 248). While this worldview may seem rare in today’s increasingly globalized, heterogeneous world, it may be maintained through physical isolation or intentional separation from cultural difference.

Figure 3. The Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC)



From Hammer, M. R. (2009). The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI): An approach for assessing and building intercultural competence. In M. A. Moodian (Ed.), *Contemporary leadership and intercultural competence: Understanding and utilizing cultural diversity to build successful organizations* (pp. 245-261). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Polarization. Polarization is “a judgmental orientation grounded in a sense of ‘us’ and ‘them’” (Hammer, 2009, p. 249). It can take two forms: Defense or Reversal. In Defense, people recognize the existence of cultural difference and find such difference threatening. “The threat is to one’s sense of reality and thus to one’s identity, which at this point is a function of that one cultural reality” (M. Bennett, 1993, pp. 34-35). People in Defense may try to fight the differences in order to preserve the sanctity of their own worldview either by denigrating other cultures through stereotyping, by claiming the superiority of their own culture, or both. The other variation of Polarization is Reversal, in which cultural differences are also polarized into ‘us’ and ‘them,’ however that polarization is reversed. That is, “the cultural practices and values of the ‘other cultural group’ are viewed as superior to one’s own culture” (Hammer, 2009, p. 249). Most commonly found in long-time sojourners such as Peace Corps volunteers, this has also been called “going native.”

Minimization. People in Minimization may be familiar with other cultures and aware of differences between cultures, but they tend to focus more on similarities. Hammer (2012) describes Minimization as “a transitional mindset” that “highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that can mask a deeper understanding and consideration of cultural differences” (p. 122). M. Bennett (1993) explains that the challenge with this worldview:

...is the naïve assertion that, despite differences, all people share some basic characteristics, such as individual motivation for achievement. These assumed universal characteristic are almost always derived from the native culture of the person making the assertion, who is usually a member of the dominant culture of a society. (p. 42)

Dominant group members in Minimization tend to take this focus-on-similarities approach due to limited cultural self-awareness. Non-dominant group members who hold this worldview may be focusing on similarities in an attempt to “go along to get along.”

Acceptance. In Acceptance, “an appreciation of the complexity of cultural differences arises” (Hammer, 2009, p. 250). Cultural differences are acknowledged and seen as viable alternative solutions for organizing human existence. The existence of difference is not evaluated as negative or positive, but accepted as necessary. People in Acceptance are beginning to understand the importance of context. This worldview is typically manifest first through respect for cultural differences in behavior, then through respect for cultural differences in values. In Acceptance, “one’s own ethical position becomes one of several possible positions, depending on cultural context” (J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004, p. 156). The drawback is that “the temporary effect of this relativity is to make all positions seem equally valid and therefore to preclude a choice of position based on the old dualistic criterion of absolute truth” (J. Bennett & Bennett, p. 156). Or, as Hammer explains, although individuals in Acceptance “recognize and acknowledge the relevance of culture and cultural context, they are unclear on how to appropriately adapt to cultural difference” (p. 250).

Adaptation. People in Adaptation possess a level of self-reflective consciousness that enables a perceptual shift into different cultural contexts, which allows them to experience different organizations of reality and construct appropriate alternative forms of behavior (J. Bennett & Bennett, n.d.). In Adaptation, “skills for relating to and communicating with people of other cultures are enhanced” (M. Bennett, 1993, p. 51). It is important to note that these skills “are acquired in an *additive* process,” meaning that they “extend, rather than replace one’s native skills” (M. Bennett, 1993, p. 52, original italics). Initially this takes the form of cognitive frame-shifting, which is “the attempt to organize experience through a set of constructs that are more characteristic of another culture than of one’s own” (J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004). People engaging in cognitive frame-shifting are learning to shift their cultural frame of reference in an intentional and temporary way. Later they may learn to do so in a more unintentional and permanent way. This is known as behavioral code-shifting, where “the feeling of some aspect of another culture is given form in appropriate behavior”(J. Bennett & Bennett, 2004, p. 156).

Training for Intercultural Development

In this section, I discuss how the IDC, in conjunction with the challenge/support hypothesis, can be used to train for intercultural development. The idea to incorporate these two

to guide intercultural training was first explored by J. Bennett (1993, 2003, 2009; J. Bennett & Bennett, n.d.; J. Bennett, Bennett, & Allen, 2003). The development and evolution of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer, 2007; Hammer & Bennett, 1998)—the assessment tool mentioned previously that is based on the DMIS—has led to an improved ability to tailor intercultural training efforts to individuals based on their level of intercultural sensitivity. The idea is that trainers should assess where students are on the IDC—either informally or, ideally, through more formal means such as the IDI—at the beginning of the program, then tailor their training to purposefully facilitate development. The way to do so differs according to the learners’ intercultural worldview. For each worldview, there are different developmental tasks the learners face, stage-appropriate competencies they need to develop, and challenge and support patterns the trainer must consider. These are briefly outlined here, focusing on the developmental tasks of each worldview and the type of challenge learners—particularly study abroad participants—may experience. This information is also summarized in a table in Appendix 1.

Denial. The developmental task of learners in Denial is “to recognize the existence of cultural differences” (J. Bennett & Bennett, n.d., p. DEN3). Learners’ experience of difference presents a high degree of challenge, so educators should emphasize a high level of support. Discussing objective culture can provide this support, and the concept of subjective culture can be introduced to pique students’ curiosity and challenge them to begin to move to the next level. It is unlikely, however, that many people who self-select to participate in study abroad will be in Denial.

Polarization. Because learners in Polarization feel threatened by cultural difference, the developmental task here is to “mitigate polarization by emphasizing ‘common humanity’” (J. Bennett & Bennett, n.d., p. DEF3). The level of challenge learners experience is at a maximum here, so educators must provide an equally high level of support. Students abroad who are in Defense, the more common form of Polarization, will likely find the experience of immersion quite challenging, which further emphasizes their need for support. J. Bennett (2003) explains that with learners in this stage, the educator’s task “is thus one of avoiding cultural contrasts and of providing a safe context for exploring human similarities. For this stage, and this stage only, the emphasis can be placed on characteristics the students share with other cultures” (p. 162). One way for educators to support learners in Polarization that is particularly relevant to the study abroad experience is to allow structured opportunities for students to share their concerns. To challenge students to move to the next level, J. Bennett (2003) suggests emphasizing basic intercultural competencies, such as tolerance, patience, and self-discipline.

Minimization. The developmental task for students in Minimization is to develop cultural self-awareness. “Building on cultural self-awareness, the learners can examine the contrast between their own cultures and other cultures” (J. Bennett, 2003, p. 163), such as the one in which they are studying. Educators need to help students in Minimization begin to call into question their assumptions about similarity by examining their own culture. The experience of difference presents only a moderate challenge to students with this orientation, so educators can begin to de-emphasize support and introduce more challenge, for example by presenting theoretical frameworks to help students analyze and understand cultures, especially their own. J. Bennett (2003; J. Bennett & Bennett, n.d.) suggests more sophisticated intercultural competencies should be emphasized for learners in Minimization; these include cultural-general knowledge, open-mindedness, cultural self-awareness, listening skills, the ability to withhold judgment, and the ability to perceive others accurately. It is quite common for study abroad participants to hold a Minimization worldview; without someone challenging them a bit further to acquire these more sophisticated intercultural skills, they may not be able to see beyond the superficial cultural sameness that is most readily apparent, especially if they are unable to engage in much authentic intercultural contact.

Acceptance. When learners have reached Acceptance, the developmental goal “is to systematically increase the complexity of categories they use for analyzing difference and to begin to develop their skills for frame-of-reference shifting” (J. Bennett, 2003, p. 164). With regards to moving from Acceptance to Adaptation, M. Bennett (2004) explains, “To accept the relativity of values to cultural context (...) [learners] need to figure out how to maintain ethical commitment in the face of such relativity” (p. 69). Instead of trying to avoid cultural difference, people in Acceptance seek it out, which means their experience of difference is non-threatening and rather low-challenge. Therefore, educators can introduce more challenging content and riskier processes, such as experiential activities.

Adaptation. In Adaptation, the developmental task is to continue developing learners’ frame-of-reference shifting skills (J. Bennett & Bennett, n.d.). The experience of difference presents low challenge for these students, so educators can incorporate higher levels of challenge. Students in Adaptation need to master ethnographic techniques, such as cultural observation and intercultural interviewing skills. J. Bennett (2003) explains, “It is these learning-to-learn strategies that support lifelong learning during their professional careers” (p. 165). Learners should also practice frame-of-reference shifting and intercultural empathy by examining critical incidents and more complex case studies.

Of course, group settings such as a study abroad intervention will typically include students with various different intercultural worldviews. When this is the case, J. Bennett (2003) suggests instructors use the IDI or some form of informal assessment to judge where the majority of learners fall on the developmental continuum. The curriculum should then be designed to address the learning needs of the two or three worldviews around which the participants cluster, and facilitators can provide challenge and support to individuals as they see fit.

Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), like the IDC and challenge/support hypothesis, suggests a means by which a study abroad intervention can help facilitate student development and it is part of the framework upon which CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad is designed and implemented. While the IDC focuses specifically on intercultural development, ELT is more broadly about learning and developing through experience. It is highly relevant to the study abroad context because of the obvious experiential nature of study abroad. I first present the theoretical foundations and main propositions of the theory, then specifically discuss Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle, and finally relate experiential learning to study abroad and intercultural development.

Foundations of Experiential Learning Theory

Numerous scholars have emphasized the role of experience in their theories of human learning and development. Most notable among these are John Dewey, Kurt Lewin, Jean Piaget, William James, Carl Jung, Paulo Freire, William Perry (whose theories also influenced the development of the IDC), and Carl Rogers, among others. The basic premise of ELT is that experience provides a rich foundation for learning, but experience alone does not necessarily produce learning. Dewey (1997) explains:

Activity that is not checked by observation of what follows from it may be temporarily enjoyed. But intellectually it leads nowhere. It does not provide knowledge about the situations in which action occurs nor does it lead to clarification and expansion of ideas. (p. 87)

According to ELT, "learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 38). The key to transforming experience is focused reflection, which is a skill that can be learned (Savicki, 2008b). As Joplin (1995) explains, "Experience alone is insufficient to be called experiential education, and it is the reflection

process which turns experience into experiential education” (as quoted in Citron & Kline, 2001, p. 20). Itin (1999) adds that experiential education involves “carefully chosen experiences supported by reflection, critical analysis, and synthesis,” which “are structured to require the learner to take initiative, make decisions, and be accountable for the results” (as cited in Citron & Kline, 2001, p. 20). Thus, experiential education is defined by the Association for Experiential Education (n.d.) as both “a philosophy and methodology in which educators purposefully engage with learners in direct experience and focused reflection in order to increase knowledge, develop skills, and clarify values.”

Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle

CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, and thus this study, draws heavily on Kolb's (1984) model of experiential learning, which brings together and builds on Lewin's, Dewey's, and Piaget's models. Kolb says learners need to have four different kinds of abilities: *concrete experience* abilities (CE), *reflective observation* abilities (RO), *abstract conceptualization* abilities (AC), and *active experimentation* abilities (AE). He explains:

That is, they must be able to involve themselves fully, openly, and without bias in new experiences (CE). They must be able to reflect on and observe their experiences from many perspectives (RO). They must be able to create concepts that integrate their observations into logically sound theories (AC), and they must be able to use these theories to make decisions and solve problems (AE). (Kolb, 1984, p. 30)

While learners tend to prefer using one or two kinds of these abilities (known as their ‘preferred learning style’), Kolb explains that it is necessary to engage all four types of abilities for optimal learning to occur.

Kolb (1984) describes the experiential learning process as a four-stage cycle involving these different abilities. Savicki (2008b) explains:

According to this model, experiential learning occurs as a cycle starting with concrete experience, which is then processed by observation and reflection about that experience, leading to new understandings, skills, and affective reactions, which are, in turn, tested for effectiveness, thus generating a new concrete experience.

In other words, experiential learning must involve not just having an experience, but also reflecting on that experience, drawing meaning from it, and using that new understanding.

Savicki (2008b) further explains that “learning is seen as not only a single cycle (...) but a repetition of cycles that move the learner along a trajectory of more complete and sophisticated thought, feeling, and behavior” (p. 77). This cyclical process can be viewed as a spiral in which learners bring to each new experience the learning of the previous cycle, “so the new experience is perceived through changed lenses and a more sophisticated understanding” (Pusch & Merrill, 2008, pp. 303-304). Students encounter each new experience, then, from a more advanced starting point.

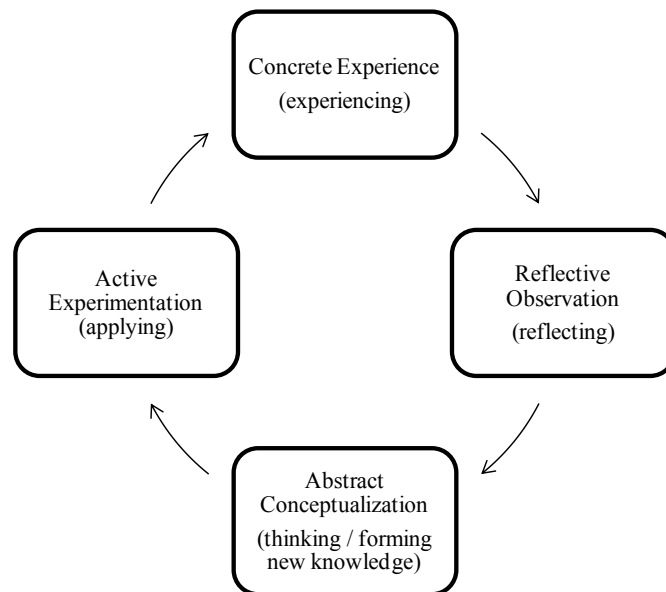
Experiential Learning and Study Abroad

Viewed through the lens of Experiential Learning Theory (ELT), many study abroad programs—perhaps the majority—lack the essential ingredients for turning these international experiences into true experiential learning opportunities. Most programs are designed to provide students with a concrete experience, but the assumption is that the experience itself will be sufficient to generate intercultural learning. ELT, however, stipulates that more is needed for the experience to result in learning. As Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich (2001) explain, “Any educational endeavor, including study abroad, that does not structure reflection and critical analysis of the international experience itself into the curriculum is not engaging in experiential education” (p. 45).

Several scholars have written about how educators can facilitate sojourners’ movement through the experiential learning cycle and what intercultural training activities are most relevant to each of the different kinds of learning abilities (see, for example, Hughes-Weiner, 1986; Lucas, 2003; Pusch & Merrill, 2008; Savicki, 2008b). The following is a brief review of that literature by learning type.

Concrete experience. Study abroad provides a rich opportunity for students to engage in concrete experience. However, as discussed previously, opportunities for authentic intercultural contact may be limited due to numerous factors. Therefore, educators ought to design their programs to purposefully create opportunities for authentic contact with the host culture to increase the experiences from which students can learn.

Figure 4. The Experiential Learning Cycle



Adapted from Kolb, D. A. (1984). *Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Reflective observation. According to ELT, reflective observation is necessary to move students from concrete experience to abstract conceptualization, or a higher level of understanding. As will be discussed in more depth later in this paper, Laubscher (1994) found that study abroad participants had difficulties progressing beyond the concrete experience stage on their own. The majority were not able to translate their culture-specific observations to more culture-general learning, which suggests students need more help reflecting on and trying to understand their experiences.

At the reflective observation stage, a key goal “is to slow down and disaggregate student reactions to concrete experience in whatever form it takes” (Savicki, 2008b, p. 78). Pusch and Merrill (2008) emphasize that in intercultural contexts, it is particularly important that the reflective stage does not turn into a judgment phase. Having a cultural mentor or facilitator to help students learn to attribute to a behavior the same cause or reason that someone in the host culture would (which Triandis (1990) calls *isomorphic attribution*), rather than judging that behavior based on their own cultural lens, can be particularly helpful at this point. J. Bennett’s (J. Bennett & Bennett, n.d.) popular Describe–Interpret–Evaluate activity is one example of an exercise that can help facilitate this process. Hughes-Weiner (1986) suggests that introducing

students to relevant intercultural concepts and theories can provide appropriate “cognitive maps” to help them move through reflective observation.

Abstract conceptualization. Savicki (2008b) refers to this stage of the cycle as the “forming new knowledge node” (p. 79). Students need to be able to connect their observations and reflections to content and theories in order to form new knowledge. As Hughes-Weiner (1986) argues, to move into abstract conceptualization sojourners must have more than “static cognitive maps.” They must “learn to identify and test their implicitly-held cognitive theories, and make modifications or even construct new ones when necessary” (Hughes-Weiner, p. 491). This type of cognitive-shift can be quite difficult because it challenges students’ long-held beliefs and values and “it entails a period of uncomfortable disorientation and ambiguity, requiring self-awareness and intellectual openness in addition to highly-developed analytical skills” (Hughes-Weiner, p. 491).

Active experimentation. Finally, in order to respond appropriately in a given intercultural situation, students must be able to correctly diagnose the situation. Doing so depends on “having an accurate interpretation of the situation” (from the abstract conceptualization stage of the model) (Hughes-Weiner, 1986, p. 491). Educators may want to encourage students to “try on” new ways of thinking, feeling, or behaving, while emphasizing that doing so “does not mean that they are not true to themselves,” but instead “demonstrates the openness and flexibility necessary to wring the most benefit out of their time studying abroad” (Savicki, 2008b, p. 80).

Hughes-Weiner (1986) emphasizes that applying the experiential learning model to intercultural learning can help students learn how to learn. “Participants will go beyond both the culture-specific and the culture-general information, to acquire the procedures, skills and strategies required to learn about culture and intercultural interaction” (Hughes-Weiner, p. 501). In this way, applying the experiential learning model to study abroad can help students acquire skills that will benefit them long after their sojourn ends.

The Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad: Theoretical Framework

The three main theories outlined in this section—the challenge/support hypothesis (Sanford, 1966), the Intercultural Development Continuum (Hammer, 2009), and the Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984)—are included in the theoretical framework of this study because of their relevance to the process of facilitating intercultural learning during study abroad. However, they are also fundamental to this study because they form the pedagogical framework of the study abroad intervention in question, CIEE’s Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. That is, these

theories helped shape the curriculum and are also meant to guide the way instructors teach the Seminar. The idea is that the instructors will (1) tailor their teaching approach to participants according to the students' intercultural orientations, (2) try to balance the level of challenge and support each student experiences, and (3) teach around the Experiential Learning Cycle and push participants to learn in new and different ways. In other words, these should be important aspects of the process involved in facilitating students' intercultural learning and development through the Seminar, which is what this study examines.

Summary

This section has presented several concepts and theories that, taken together, provide a framework for examining CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. Schwab's (1971, 1973, 1983) concept of the four commonplaces of education serves as an organizational framework. It highlights the importance of examining the complex interrelationship among the students, the instructors, the curriculum, and the milieu.

Deardorff's (2008) model of intercultural competence and Paige's (2005) dimensions of intercultural learning outline what participants ought to learn. Deardorff says intercultural competence involves knowledge and comprehension, skills, and attitudes. Paige suggests students should learn about the elements of culture and that they are cultural beings. Furthermore, the process should include both culture-general and culture-specific learning and seek to empower students with tools to become effective independent intercultural learners.

The Intercultural Development Continuum (Hammer, 2009), the challenge and support hypothesis (Sanford, 1966), and Experiential Learning Theory suggest means by which a study abroad intervention can facilitate students' intercultural development, and they are at the heart of CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. Taken together, the IDC and challenge/support hypothesis emphasize that the instructors of such an intervention need to understand students' level of intercultural sensitivity and provide the appropriate balance of challenge and support each individual needs to experience optimal learning. J. Bennett (1993, 2003, 2009) provides a framework for educators to try to achieve this balance for students in each of the IDC orientations. ELT and Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle emphasize the importance of incorporating reflection and critical analysis into the study abroad experience in order to transform experience into learning.

A Review of the Research

In this section, I review the research related to study abroad interventions and the need to facilitate participants' intercultural development. First, I discuss several studies that demonstrate intercultural learning during study abroad is inconsistent; that is, it is not an automatic or equally-distributed outcome. Second, I summarize research findings that actively call for intervening in students' intercultural learning while abroad. Finally, I discuss three study abroad interventions and the research that has been conducted on them. The research findings support the development of programs that intervene in students' intercultural learning while they are abroad and suggest we are now at a point where we need to begin looking at the process by which those programs attempt to facilitate said learning to better understand how to maximize their impact.

Intercultural Learning is Inconsistent

Several research studies indicate that the effects study abroad has on students' intercultural learning and development are inconsistent and are affected by factors such as the duration of the program, students' initial levels of intercultural sensitivity, their previous experience abroad, the levels of challenge and support they experience, and whether they have a cultural mentor or 'coach' to help them process the experience.

As participation in short-term study abroad programs has increased, so have the number of studies examining the relationship between duration of sojourn and various outcomes (see Dwyer, 2004; Kehl & Morris, 2007-2008; Medina-López-Portillo, 2004). Medina-López-Portillo (2004) specifically compared the development of intercultural sensitivity of students on a seven-week ($n = 18$) and a 16-week program ($n = 10$) in Mexico. She used a questionnaire, interviewed students, and administered the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) both prior to students' departure and after the completion of their program. The primary finding was that both quantitative and qualitative data demonstrated greater intercultural development among the students on the longer program than those on the shorter program (Medina-López-Portillo, 2004). In her analysis of the qualitative data gathered from the two groups, Medina-López-Portillo explains how the reflections of the students on the short-term program (in Taxco, Mexico) compare to those of the students on the longer program (in Mexico City):

Their comments and descriptions convey the impression that for them, study abroad provided a pleasant vacation in beautiful and historic Taxco; they had relatively little time to examine and reflect upon cultural, socio-economic and

political issues. The opportunities they had for significant intercultural development were cut short. By contrast, the Mexico City students, exposed to cultural differences for sixteen rather than seven weeks, had greater opportunities for developing intercultural sensitivity. (p. 190)

In addition to Medina-López-Portillo's (2004) research, several other studies have found a correlation between length of study and various positive outcomes (Dwyer, 2004; Kehl & Morris, 2007-2008). Nonetheless, short-term study abroad has become the new norm. Despite the fact that the length of the average program has drastically decreased and the climate in which students are studying abroad has dramatically changed, it is still commonly expected that students will become more intercultural competent simply by being abroad, even if for as little as a few weeks. What this highlights is the importance of developing and implementing programs that are very intentional in facilitating participants' intercultural learning.

In another study, Hammer (n.d.) conducted an independent assessment of the impact that a ten-month AFS (American Field Service) study abroad experience had on high school students in 2002-2003 (n = 1,500). The study examined students' intercultural development through use of a pre-/post-test design (using the IDI) and a control group (n = 600). While the study found that the AFS experience was effective in increasing students' intercultural sensitivity, it also revealed that it was not equally effective in doing so with all students. Hammer explains, "The overall result is that the AFS program has a significant impact with students that begin the program in more Ethnocentric (less intercultural competent) stages and *has little impact* on students who begin the program in the more developed stage of Minimization" (p. 4; italics added). As discussed previously, the experience of difference presents only moderate challenge to individuals in Minimization (J. Bennett, 2003; J. Bennett & Bennett, n.d.; M. Bennett, 2004), so if students are not encouraged to acquire more sophisticated intercultural skills, they will likely not see beyond the superficial cultural sameness. Hammer's findings support this idea.

In another study, McKeown (2009) examined whether participation in study abroad affected students' intellectual development. He also sought to determine whether certain variables—gender, language of the study abroad country (English or non-English), structure of the study abroad program (direct immersion or study center), and previous international travel experience—had an impact on students' intellectual development during their time abroad. McKeown measured intellectual development by administering an instrument called the Measure of Intellectual Development (MID), which is based on Perry's (1968) categories of intellectual development (from which the IDC draws), pre- and post-sojourn to 226 students who participated

in a semester study abroad program. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, although the concepts of intellectual and intercultural development are different, they are interrelated in some ways (for example, they both involve the development of frame-shifting abilities) and are both important aspects of human development that we would hope students could gain while studying abroad.

Overall changes in MID scores, however, showed no evidence that mean scores for the post-group were higher than the pre-group. One possible explanation McKeown (2009) cites is the short duration of the program (one semester), and he suggests that without intentional components such as reflective journals, group discussions, and integrative activities, “the short duration of the one-semester study abroad program may be insufficient for most students to realize gains in their intellectual development” (p. 108). He also suggests that students may not be sufficiently challenged because such a large number choose to study in Western countries and cultures that are relatively similar to their own, especially on the surface level. McKeown explains, “Intellectual development occurs in interaction with the environment (King, 1990; Perry, 1968), therefore, it is possible that if the environmental factors of the treatment are not of sufficient intensity, then the student will not develop to the next stage” (p. 110). He suggests structuring study abroad programs to more intentionally foster the intellectual development of participants.

Regarding the relationship between intellectual development and the independent variables previously cited, the McKeown (2009) study produced only one statistically significant finding:

Students who had traveled abroad previously for 2 weeks or longer still had significantly higher pre-scores than their less-traveled peers, but their post-scores were not statistically different. In other words, students for whom study abroad was their first meaningful international experience caught up to their more experienced peers after one semester abroad. (pp. 91-92)

This is what McKeown refers to as “the first time effect.” He suggests that those for whom study abroad is their first significant experience abroad are more challenged by the experience and thus make greater strides in intellectual development, since challenge is necessary to produce growth. With regards to the students for whom it is not their first experience abroad, he writes, “It may be necessary (...) to build in other programmatic components to studying abroad that will challenge this group of students” (109).

In essence, the findings of McKeown’s (2009) study suggest too few students are sufficiently challenged during their time abroad to make significant gains in their intellectual

development. This supports a need for intervening in students' learning to ensure they are being sufficiently challenged, although not so much that they disengage.

A study by Citron (2002) sheds some light on why students may not be sufficiently challenged. In a case study meant to help understand the cultural adjustment experiences of 16 U.S. undergraduate students studying in Madrid, Spain, Citron found that most of the students did not acculturate to Spanish norms and they interacted significantly more with their U.S. peers than with Spaniards. In fact, Citron found that the student group formed what he refers to as a "third culture," which was neither Spanish nor U.S. American, but unique to the group. He summarizes:

As a result of having no family members in Spain, knowing they were staying in Spain for only 14 weeks, and knowing that their U.S. classmates would all be returning to [their U.S. school] with them when the program ended, the group members often turned to each other for the support they could not find elsewhere.

This furthered the development of the third culture. (Citron, 2002, p. 47)

Citron's study found that even students who intended and expected to integrate into the host culture had difficulties breaking out of their U.S. American bubble and getting beyond superficial levels of communication with host nationals. He quotes one such student:

To be honest, I thought before I came that I would want to [spend more time with Spaniards], but I really didn't once I got here, which is, like, kind of sad, but I really thought that I would like totally want to hang out with them. And I did want to hang out with Spanish people, but it just turned out to be so much harder.

It was, I don't know, it was too hard, so I wimped out. (Citron, p. 51)

In contrast to McKeown's (2009) suggestion that students who study in Western countries may not be sufficiently challenged by their experience, this student's comment indicates that she was perhaps *overly* challenged, and therefore retreated from the host culture rather than continue to attempt to engage in it. Taken together, what these findings demonstrate is a need to better understand when, how, and the extent to which students are challenged and to try to balance the challenge and support they experience to optimize their learning. To discourage the creation of a "third culture" among study abroad participants, Citron (2002) emphasizes the importance of having an on-site cultural orientation and hiring on-site staff with bicultural experience "who can serve as 'culture coaches,' encouraging students to explore the host culture, live on its terms, and find meaning in its ways" (p. 53).

Like Citron (2002), Wilkinson (1998) also found that the students she tracked—a group of seven U.S. American summer study abroad participants in France—“tended to band together in the face of unexpected frustrations with cross-cultural contacts” (p. 25). She explains:

[P]articipants often viewed the immersion setting as a complex and frustrating environment, where even a simple greeting could result in misunderstanding. Faced with such unexpected and cryptic difficulties, the students tended to turn to each other and the security of a shared native language and culture to process their experiences. (Wilkinson, p. 30)

Although this in many ways prevented students from achieving a deep cultural understanding because they had only their own cultural perspective with which to make sense of actions motivated by another culture’s set of invisible rules, Wilkinson also found there were some positive aspects to the group’s tendency to stick together. She explains, “American peer group cliques seemed to represent a concerted effort on the part of the students to process collectively the barrage of cultural and linguistic differences” (Wilkinson, p. 30). They “provided a vital cultural refuge (...) out of which the process of adaptation could begin” (Wilkinson, p. 31).

Taken together, Wilkinson (1998) and Citron’s (2002) findings suggest that study abroad participants need to find a balance between challenge and support with regards to their interactions with their U.S. American peers versus host country nationals. While it is important to have a group of supportive, empathetic peers with whom to process the experience abroad, it is critical that this group not become the primary community with which the students interact. In addition, their research suggests students’ attempts to process their experiences could benefit from a knowledgeable cultural mentor.

Bacon’s (2002) research further supports the idea of using a cultural mentor. She conducted an ethnographic case study of one student’s language development and cultural and academic adjustment during the first semester of a year-long program in Mexico. She describes the student’s evolution:

When Lily arrived in Mexico, she committed her cultural *faux pas* innocently: her way of dress, her behavior with men, her independence. As she became aware of Mexican values through class discussions and readings, she rebelled against what she perceived as culturally wrong: she paid for her own drinks; she danced by herself; she traveled alone. In the academic context, she habitually arrived late to class and turned in assignments after they were due. She disparaged the academic system, student affluence, and parental control.

Consonant with Furnham and Bochner's (1986) treatise, there was a dissonance between competence and performance. (Bacon, pp. 644-645)

Bacon emphasizes, therefore, that competence in an area is not sufficient to guarantee success. She suggests students could benefit from trying to actively process the challenges they face with a cultural mentor, explaining:

The normal, open-minded, intelligent student may well meet all the qualifications for study abroad and yet still have to experience conflict in order to adjust. Because of this contradiction, the ideal would be for students to have a correspondent, mentor, or 'confessor' listen to their trials and doubts, even without attempting to solve their problems. (Bacon, p. 645)

Taken together, these studies indicate several things. The first is that not all study abroad participants experience the intercultural learning and development that has often been assumed (or at least hoped) to be an automatic result of such a sojourn. The second is that the extent to which students are challenged by their experience abroad is not adequately understood, but that this can have a significant impact on their learning and growth. The third, which is a direct outgrowth of the first two, is the idea that intervening in students' learning abroad—by providing them with a cultural mentor or similar—would be beneficial. The next section discusses research that supports this conclusion more explicitly.

The Case for Intervention

One of the first researchers to suggest that educators intervene in student learning during study abroad was Laubscher (1994), who interviewed 30 study abroad participants in order to identify and categorize the out-of-class learning activities that they found to be "the most salient in promoting their education while abroad" (p. 97). A secondary objective was to determine "how those activities helped the students develop a greater awareness and understanding of cultural differences" (p. 97).

Laubscher (1994) found that there were three general ways in which the students went about culture learning outside the classroom: participant observation, personal interaction, and travel. He notes that the first two categories—the ones given the most emphasis by students—are both common forms of ethnographic methodology, which confirms his hypothesis that "students use ethnographic methods to develop an awareness of cultural differences" (p. 97). Students' ability to use ethnographic methods as an approach to their out-of-class learning activities contributed significantly to the experiential learning process. Laubscher found, however, that

students had difficulties progressing beyond the first step in the experiential learning process on their own. They were ill-equipped to engage in reflective observation and abstract conceptualization without assistance. As a result, most students were unable to translate their culture-specific observations to more culture-general learning. While they could cite differences between their host and home cultures, very few discussed what they thought those observations revealed about the host culture. Laubscher concludes:

Acquiring the data through the use of ethnographic methods is therefore a *sine qua non* for cross-cultural learning. But simply having the data available is no assurance that substantial learning will take place. The students must be able to use that data for reflective observation in order to reach the level of abstract conceptualization. (p. 106)

Because they were unable to do so on their own, Laubscher (1994) says students need help moving from *awareness* of cultural differences to *understanding* of those differences. As mentioned previously, study abroad participants need to learn to make isomorphic attributions, or to attribute to another behavior the same cause or reasons someone in the host culture would (Triandis, 1990). This is especially important because “human beings tend to interpret new experience in the light of past experience unless there is a decisive intervention in the interpretive process” (Spindler, 1974, quoted in Laubscher, 1994, p. 450). Laubscher cites an example of a case where a group of students experienced a confusing, embarrassing situation; only one of the students made a conscious effort to understand what happened, and he did so by consulting an informed authority in the host culture.

As a result of his findings, Laubscher (1994) recommends that educators take action to ensure students have the tools necessary to take full advantage of the learning opportunities study abroad presents. Referring to Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle, Laubscher argues that some type of intervention is needed to promote reflective observation and move students from their observations to abstract conceptualization. He explains:

Once students have been provided with the opportunities for experiential learning, the skills to take advantage of those opportunities, and the cognitive frame of reference on which to base the application of those skills, they will need a pedagogical mechanism to facilitate their efforts to bring all three components together in a productive fashion. The key to reflective observation as a step toward abstract conceptualization is the ability to think critically and to analyze the newly acquired data within the context of the preexisting ‘furniture’ of the

mind. If such a mechanism is not made an integral part of the education abroad program, students will tend not to take the time to exercise their critical skills: The avalanche of sensory stimuli and the allure of new adventures can be powerful distractions to a student attempting to make the most of a limited amount of time. (Laubscher, p. 112)

Laubscher (1994) concludes by proposing future research avenues. He suggests examining how study abroad participants move from concrete experience to abstract conceptualization, and emphasizes the need to better understand the role of reflective observation in contributing to study abroad participants' intercultural development. He points out that prior research on study abroad has focused on outcomes and suggests future studies examine "the processes that generate those outcomes" (p. 117). Noting that his study relies on data from post-program interviews, Laubscher also suggests future research include on-site discussions with students, faculty, and staff.

More recent support for intervening in students' learning during study abroad comes from the Georgetown Consortium Project (GCP) (Vande Berg et al., 2004; Vande Berg et al., 2009). The GCP was a large-scale, multi-year study of U.S. student learning abroad that sought (1) to document target language, intercultural, and disciplinary learning of U.S. students abroad and compare their learning to that of a control group; (2) to identify the extent to which a relationship existed between student learning, specific program components and learner characteristics; and (3) to explore the extent to which target language gains were related to intercultural learning (Vande Berg et al., 2009). To measure intercultural learning, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was administered to 1,297 students (1,159 participants in 61 programs abroad and 138 control students on three U.S. campuses) at the beginning and end of the semester. As they relate to this research, the findings from the GCP study can be classified in three broad categories, all of which demonstrate significant support for the argument that educators should intervene in students' intercultural learning during study abroad.

The first lesson learned from the GCP is similar to one discussed in the previous section, which is that some students learn more effectively than others during study abroad. The researchers found that study abroad participants made significantly greater gains in intercultural sensitivity (averaging a 2.37 gain) than did control students (whose scores decreased, on average, .07) (Vande Berg et al., 2009). However, a considerable number of students abroad did not learn more than those in the control group. For example, while females abroad, on average, made statistically significant gains in their intercultural development, males did not. Males' IDI scores

actually decreased slightly mathematically (Vande Berg et al., 2009), suggesting that males may have regressed. A similar gender discrepancy was found with regards to language proficiency gains. The researchers conclude that “these particular data strongly suggest that in designing and delivering programs, both before departure and on site, study abroad professionals need to be attentive to the specific intercultural learning needs of males” (Vande Berg et al., 2009, p. 18). However, it is not yet understood how those learning needs differ. In addition, more than a third (34.8%) of females abroad showed statistically insignificant intercultural gains or actual decline from pre- to post-IDI (Vande Berg et al., 2009). Vande Berg et al. (2009) summarize:

In short, many of these students, when left to their own devices, failed to learn well even when ‘immersed’ in another culture. Being exposed to cultures different from their home cultures turned out to be a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition for their intercultural learning. (p. 25)

Similar to the Hammer (n.d.) study discussed previously, the GCP found that study abroad participants who had the furthest to go in terms of their intercultural learning did indeed experience the greatest gains. Overall, previous experience living, traveling, or studying in another culture was not meaningfully associated with intercultural competence in the GCP study, although those with the least prior experience abroad had the lowest initial IDI scores and demonstrated the greatest gains (Vande Berg et al., 2009). Vande Berg et al. conclude that “prior exposure to environments of cultural difference in the past, in and of themselves, did not predict intercultural proficiency,” which “supports the study’s hypothesis that many students do not learn interculturally simply through being physically present in another culture” (p. 20).

The second category of relevant GCP findings directly links cultural mentoring with intercultural development. Although the samples are relatively small, students who reported receiving mentoring “often” to “very often” showed “dramatically greater gains in intercultural development”; the “very often” category showed the largest effect size, and “often” showed the second largest (Vande Berg et al., 2009, p. 59). A cultural mentor could help students overcome some of the hurdles mentioned previously, for example, by helping students reflect on and make sense of their experiences. Vande Berg et al. state, “One of the single most important steps we can take in working to maximize students’ intercultural learning is to design, or enroll students in, programs that feature intercultural mentors at the site” (p. 22).

The third important lesson from the GCP findings is that there is substantial evidence of the relevance of the challenge/support hypothesis to study abroad. Several findings indicate that students who were challenged, but not so much that they disengaged, were the ones who made the

most progress in their intercultural development. For example, students abroad who reported that the host culture was “somewhat dissimilar” or “dissimilar” from their home culture showed statistically significant gains on the IDI, and the largest gain was made in “dissimilar” cultures. On the other hand, those who found their host culture to be “very similar,” “similar,” or “very dissimilar” did not experience a statistically significant change in IDI scores (Vande Berg et al., 2009). This suggests that those with the greatest and least degree of cultural challenge did not benefit as much as those who felt more of a mid-level degree of cultural challenge.

Similarly, students who took courses with other U.S. students or in mixed classes (with U.S., host culture, and international students) made greater gains on the IDI than those who studied in classes with only host country students (Vande Berg et al., 2009). This directly contradicts the assumption that greater immersion leads to more learning. Like the previous finding, this demonstrates that too much challenge without the proper support can be detrimental. According to Vande Berg et al. (2009), “This finding challenges the view that U.S. students normally learn abroad when left to their own devices. It underlines the significance of interventions for student learning” (p. 21).

The challenge/support hypothesis is also helpful in interpreting several findings regarding student interaction in the host culture. The IDI scores of students who spent the most time (76-100% of their free time) with other U.S. nationals decreased from pre- to post-test. Students who reported spending 26-50% of their free time with host nationals had the greatest intercultural gains, whereas those who spent 51-100% of their free time with host nationals actually regressed (Vande Berg et al., 2009). Vande Berg et al. explain how these findings reveal the upper and lower boundaries of the challenge/support hypothesis:

Students, at one extreme, those who spent much of their free time with other U.S. nationals were interculturally under-challenged and actually became slightly more ethnocentric while abroad. Students at the other extreme spent so much time with host country nationals that they became interculturally overwhelmed, lost ground in their IDI scores, becoming more ethnocentric. (p. 24)

This again supports the idea that balance must be found between challenge and support, and the authors suggest mentors or trained on-site staff can help students achieve such balance. Of course, these findings assume correlation to some extent, and the relationship between students’ experiences of challenge and support and their intercultural development needs to be further explored.

Vande Berg et al. (2009) conclude by noting they have identified numerous intercultural needs that could be addressed abroad “through the intervention of a well-trained cultural mentor who meets with students frequently and who designs and delivers those interventions within Sanford’s challenge/support hypothesis” (p. 30).

Research on Study Abroad Interventions

In this section, I outline several study abroad interventions currently being implemented and discuss the research regarding those interventions. The interventions discussed here include the University of Minnesota’s Maximizing Study Abroad project, the American University Center of Provence program, and an online course at Willamette and Bellarmine universities.

The University of Minnesota’s Maximizing Study Abroad Project

The first intervention is based on the *Maximizing Study Abroad* series, which is a set of three guides—one for students, one for program professionals, and one for language instructors—that were created to help students improve their language- and culture-learning strategies in order to maximize their study abroad experience (Cohen et al., 2003; Paige, Cohen, Kappler, Chi, & Lassegard, 2002; Paige et al., 2006). Several research studies have examined the use of these guides.

The first study explored the impact of the study abroad experience in general and, in particular, the impact of an intervention that used the *Maximizing Study Abroad Student Guide* (‘the *Guide*’) on students’ intercultural development, second language acquisition, and use of learning strategies related to language and culture (Cohen et al., 2005; Paige et al., 2004). The sample consisted of 86 students from seven Minnesota colleges and universities who were studying abroad in a Spanish-speaking or French-speaking country during the spring or fall semester of 2003. Students were randomly assigned to a control group or the experimental group. Students in the experimental group attended a pre-departure orientation to the *Guide*, were assigned weekly readings from the *Guide*, and were asked to e-mail reflective journal entries to a designated research assistant on a biweekly basis. Three data sources were used to evaluate students’ intercultural development—analysis of the e-journals, pre- and post-sojourn IDI scores, and one-on-one follow-up interviews with the students from the experimental group.

Results of the pre-/post-IDI found the participants as a whole (including the experimental and control groups) increased their intercultural sensitivity (Paige et al., 2004). However, there were not statistically significant differences between the two groups. Analysis of the e-journals,

however, demonstrates that the *Guide* helped students in the experimental group by giving them perspective on their experiences and providing them with the terminology necessary to more precisely describe their experiences. In addition, students reported in their e-journals and interviews that they felt the *Guide* helped them improve their intercultural skills. One limitation of this study is that the control group students may have had other sources of support for intercultural learning; this was later found to be the case in a follow-up study (Hoff, 2005).

In addition to the IDI, researchers administered the *Strategies Inventory for Learning Culture (SILC)*, an instrument that examines the extent to which the students used culture learning strategies (Cohen et al., 2005). Researchers examined the relationship between culture strategy use and changes in IDI scores to better understand whether being more strategic about learning culture could help students develop their intercultural sensitivity. Several statistically significant relationships were found between SILC items and IDI scores for the experimental group, indicating that as students increased their use of certain culture learning strategies, their intercultural sensitivity improved (Cohen et al., 2005). Similar correlations were not found for the control group.

Another interesting finding was that while experimental group students who took classes with native speakers of the target language made greater gains on the IDI than experimental group students who took courses intended for study abroad students, that was not the case for the control group (Cohen et al., 2005). Along with the Georgetown Consortium Project findings, this further suggests an intervention might provide the necessary support to facilitate intercultural development when students are placed in particularly challenging situations.

Based on the e-journals and follow-up interviews, it was clear that students in the experimental group used many of the language and culture strategies from the *Guide*; in fact, all the students reported using at least some of the strategies (Cohen et al., 2005). Several students indicated that the *Guide* reminded them to put into practice concepts and strategies of which they were already aware, but had not thought about actively applying to their experiences. This highlights the importance of giving students these tools—or at least reminding them of them—while they are in-country, not simply during a pre-departure orientation. This is reinforced by the fact that many students in the experimental group said they found the *Guide* particularly helpful because they received little or no guidance or on-site support from their study abroad program beyond logistical matters (Cohen et al., 2005).

Analysis of the e-journals indicates timing of readings and activities is an important factor in such an intervention (Cohen et al., 2005). Material needs to be presented when it is most

relevant to the students' experience. Cohen et al. explain, "The issue of relevancy concurs with Bennett, Bennett, and Allen (1999) who argued that when training occurs at the right time—meaning that students are being challenged and supported sufficiently at the necessary time—then skill development is possible" (p. 173). This supports the need to intervene in student learning during study abroad, not just before and after the experience.

In a follow-up study to the initial *Maximizing Study Abroad* research, Hoff (2005) examined the perceptions of the culture learning process of study abroad participants and compared the culture learning process of students who used the *Guide* with a control group. In addition to using the IDI and e-journal data from the original study, Hoff interviewed students upon return from their experience abroad and also asked them to respond to a critical incident. The findings indicate that students in both groups perceived they had gained culture-general skills during their experience abroad. Those in the experimental group reported that use of the *Guide* contributed to their culture learning. Control group students reported other resources that helped them with their culture learning, including cultural informants and formal courses.

Although both groups felt they had gained culture-general skills, Hoff (2005) found the experimental group students discussed their culture learning process in a more descriptive and articulate manner than the control group. In addition, analysis of students' responses to the critical incident indicates that students in the experimental group "gained a greater intercultural capacity for understanding and analyzing underlying intercultural issues than those in the control group" (Hoff, p. 145). Hoff concludes, "The results of this study as seen in the interview responses, the IDI results and the result of the critical incident suggest that a curricular intervention such as the *Maximizing Study Abroad* guide may cause study abroad students to reflect more on their experiences, advance the amount of culture learning that occurs and develop greater intercultural sensitivity" (Hoff, p. 151).

In discussing directions for future research, Hoff (2005) mentions that most studies have focused on the outcomes of study abroad and suggests that future research examine what affects the development of such outcomes. He recommends, "Future studies should focus on the process of learning during the study abroad experience" (Hoff, p. 149). One question he says should be addressed is whether more intercultural training and reflection could cause greater culture learning to occur.

In a related, smaller-scale study, Yngve (in Yngve, Ziegler, & Harvey, 2010) found that the online medium may be somewhat of a barrier in study abroad interventions. As a result of the two studies previously mentioned, the *Maximizing Study Abroad Student Guide* became the basis

for a for-credit course for all students participating in University of Minnesota study abroad programs. Students were assigned readings from the *Guide* and had to e-mail written reflections to their designated teaching assistant from the University of Minnesota. Yngve conducted a two-tiered ethnography on the experience of these teaching assistants and found that they felt the lack of opportunity to meet or interact face-to-face with the students prior to or during the semester abroad was a barrier to effective teaching. Many of the teaching assistants viewed their ideal role as that of an intercultural mentor, but they expressed frustration that the medium made it difficult to foster the type of relationship they hoped to have with the students (Yngve et al., 2010).

The American University Center of Provence Program

Another example of a study abroad intervention that aims to facilitate students' intercultural development is being implemented by the American University Center of Provence (AUCP). In response to decreasing levels of pre-departure foreign language competence, a trend toward shorter program duration, and an increasing tendency for programs to create conditions enhancing students' comfort, Engle and Engle (2004) decided to redesign the AUCP program with a greater focus on maximizing students' foreign language acquisition and intercultural development.

AUCP is a small, independent immersion program in Provence, France, for advanced French learners. Based on their direct experience with AUCP participants, Engle and Engle (2004) found that "two factors lead to the clear development of cross-cultural competence in the American student group: as much direct, authentic contact with the host culture as possible, and skillful mentoring which guides, informs, inspires, and stimulates the experiential learning process" (p. 232). Thus, this is what the redesigned AUCP program seeks to achieve. Courses are taught in French, either in-house by French faculty or at the local university. The primary program components include consistent use of French, coursework, required intercultural contact, guided cultural reflection, and individual homestays. The program makes concerted efforts to link in-class and out-of-class learning. The central program component is a required 15-week course called 'French Cultural Patterns.' Engle and Engle explain what the course entails:

Intended to bring to light the dynamic relationship between hidden cultural values and assumptions and the visible characteristics of culture and society, this required course addresses the central concepts of cultural awareness (e.g., time, space, high- and low-text context communication, etc.) as well as the concrete particulars of daily life as they occur, with their adversarial tensions and rewards.

Experiential learning components such as the individual home stay and required community service provide students with lived situations, conflicts, misunderstandings, fears which become rich topics of discussion and collective analysis. (L. Engle & Engle, 2004, p. 222)

In other words, the entire program has been structured intentionally to promote intercultural learning and development. In that sense, the entire program is a study abroad intervention to some degree. In addition, a core component of the program is a curricular intervention focused on facilitating students' intercultural learning.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the program, Engle and Engle (2004) administered two standardized instruments—the *Test d'Evaluation de Français (TEF)* to measure language acquisition, and the IDI—to participants pre- and post-semester. They examined IDI results from six semesters from a total of 187 one-semester AUCP participants. They measured results in terms of each individual student's achievable progress (the extent to which each student bridged the gap between his or her entry-level intercultural competence and a "perfect" IDI score) and found that student groups attained, on average, 33% of collective achievable progress. While a closer look reveals that 14% of students regressed in their intercultural sensitivity, 52% of students tested achieved between 30% and 100% of achievable progress on the IDI (L. Engle & Engle, 2004). It is noteworthy that males and females on the AUCP program made similar gains on the IDI (L. Engle, personal communication, March 4, 2010), which suggests an intervention such as this one could help reduce or even eliminate the gender gap in intercultural development found by the GCP study.

The IDI was also administered a third time to a small number of AUCP students ($n = 25$) who continued for a full year (they took the test at the beginning, middle, and end of the year), although participants in the year-long program do not take the 'French Cultural Patterns' course in their second semester. The results indicate that "full-year program participants make significantly more progress than others in areas of cultural understanding and cross-cultural communication and that their rate of progress increases significantly in the second term" (L. Engle & Engle, 2004, p. 235). This finding is particularly significant because it contradicts previous findings that indicated intercultural learning levels off after the first semester (Vande Berg et al., 2009). What this contradiction suggests is that a curricular intervention may provide students with tools to help them continue developing their intercultural sensitivity on their own. In other words, students learn how to learn.

One limitation of the AUCP study is the absence of a control group. It is not possible to assess whether students developed more as a result of the program redesign than they would have had the changes not been made. It is also not possible to attribute gains in intercultural development purely to the implementation of the ‘French Cultural Patterns’ course because the various program components act as a system on student development.

Willamette University and Bellarmine University Intercultural Learning Courses

In another study, Lou and Bosley (2008) report that IDI data from their study abroad programs indicated that students tended to gain very little in the way of intercultural development when left to their own devices. They argue that there is a “need to strike a balance between effective, multifaceted immersion and providing the space and time for reflection and guided discussion with one’s home culture peers and/or instructors” (p. 276).

Therefore, Lou and Bosley (2008), faculty at Willamette and Bellarmine universities respectively, designed a course that uses Blackboard software to connect study abroad participants to home culture peers in cultural immersion programs in other countries, as well as to international students attending the home university and home university instructors. In addition to interacting online throughout the semester, the group meets in person during a pre-departure and a post-program workshop. The course is designed as “a blend of ethnographic and interculturalist-constructivist methods, focusing on a progression of critical analysis: moving from the examination of the *self* to the *other* and then to the synthesis or integration of the two” (Lou & Bosley, pp. 279-280; original italics). Another interesting feature of this intervention is that the IDI is not simply used as a measurement tool, but also as an assessment tool to help inform teaching. The instructor is aware of students’ initial intercultural worldviews and uses this information to try to help foster their development. In addition, students are put into small groups with other participants with similar IDI scores, with whom they interact throughout the semester. Overall, the intent of the course “is for students to develop intercultural skills while immersed in another culture and thereby capitalize on the transformative experiential learning potential of study abroad” (Lou & Bosley, p. 277).

Although the data sets are too small to be conclusive, the initial “postprogram IDI data indicate the potential for significant developmental growth, in contrast to the postprogram IDI data of their study abroad peers who did not have the benefit of intervention” (Lou & Bosley, 2008, p. 288). Lou and Bosley report that careful review of the semester’s assignments supports this claim. In addition, the authors have observed during the re-entry workshop that participants

are more effective at understanding and communicating the developmental growth they have achieved, and at recognizing the transferability of the lessons they have learned, than the typical study abroad student.

Summary of the Research

To summarize, the research indicates that intercultural development is not an automatic outcome of study abroad and some participants learn more effectively than others. Quite notable and perplexing is the finding that males do not develop their intercultural sensitivity nearly as much as females do; yet in one study this gap disappeared when educators took a more intentional, interventionist approach to facilitating students' intercultural development. Also significant are the somewhat contradictory findings regarding the relationship between length of time abroad and intercultural development. The research suggests length of study may be positively correlated to intercultural development up to a semester, but that development plateaus after a semester unless educators actively intervene to help students learn how to continue learning from their experience. Understanding how to help students make the most of whatever amount of time they are spending abroad is fundamental, especially given the proliferation and growing popularity of short-term programs.

Research also indicates that without sufficient guidance and facilitation, study abroad participants may have problems reflecting on and analyzing their experience and, as a result, are often unable to translate their experience abroad into more culture-general learning. Numerous studies suggest that study abroad interventions can help facilitate this process and that Sanford's (1966) challenge/support hypothesis may be a helpful framework for doing so.

With regards to future research avenues, many of the studies reviewed here point to the importance of studying intercultural learning as a process, not simply an outcome. In other words, what affects the development of the outcomes and how? The research reviewed on current study abroad interventions further highlights this need. Several study abroad interventions are currently being implemented and research on them indicates the outcomes are positive. However, that research is limited and focuses primarily on pre-/post-test design using quantitative measurement tools, especially the IDI. The only interviews conducted took place after the conclusion of the intervention, once students had returned to the United States. In addition, the only observational data on these interventions are primarily anecdotal.

The study abroad intervention that is the focus of this research is unique from the ones previously studied because it combines the potential reach of the interventions conducted online

with the depth of the face-to-face format used in the AUCP intervention. The question remains whether it is feasible to effectively implement an on-site intervention on such a large scale. One of the major barriers in doing so is likely finding and/or training a cadre of skilled intercultural facilitators who could make such an intervention successful at study abroad sites around the world. Therefore, I now turn to that issue.

The Role of the Facilitator

No discussion about facilitating intercultural development would be complete without addressing the role of the facilitator. For that reason, I now review the literature about intercultural trainer competencies and also discuss the limited research on the role of study abroad staff in facilitating students' intercultural development.

Intercultural Trainer Competencies

Paige (1993b, 1993c; Paige & Goode, 2009; Paige & Martin, 1983) has written extensively on intercultural training and the competencies required of intercultural trainers or facilitators. Paige and Martin (1983) summarize the multifaceted nature of the job:

The complexities and demands of culture learning require exceptional competencies of the trainer. These include a high degree of self-awareness and a recognition of one's skills limitations, sensitivity to the needs of the learners, the ability to respond to the problems that culture learners encounter, an awareness of the ethical issues involved in cross-cultural training, conceptual/theoretical understanding, program-design skills, and research/evaluation skills. (p. 57)

As discussed earlier, culture shock occurs as part of a broader culture-learning process that "challenges one's sense of self, cultural identity, and worldview" (Paige, 1993a, p. 2). As a result, the experience can be quite intense, and intercultural learning can (and should) be psychologically challenging. Trainers must be able to provide learners with opportunities that challenge them in such ways and also with conceptual frameworks that will help them understand this aspect of intercultural learning. Yet facilitating intercultural development is more complex than simply transmitting curricular content. According to Paige (1993c), "The experienced trainer, above all else, will have the ability to provide personal support to the learner by means of effective listening, advising, and counseling" (p. 174).

Paige (1993c) has compiled an extensive list of 32 trainer competencies, which include cognitive knowledge, behavioral skills, and personal attributes. He classifies these into the

following eight categories: (1) intercultural phenomena, (2) intercultural training, (3) trainer-learner issues, (4) ethical issues, (5) culture-specific content, (6) trainer issues, (7) international issues, and (8) multicultural issues (Paige, 1993c, pp. 178-190). Paige recognizes no trainer will possess all of the competencies across all of these categories, but says ethical trainers should constantly strive to improve in all three areas (knowledge, behavioral skills, and personal attributes) and will recognize their strengths and weaknesses.

Although a discussion of all these competencies is beyond the scope of this paper, it is worth highlighting some of the most important and relevant points. For example, trainers must know how to help students cope with the pressures of intercultural learning, and they should be personally and culturally self-aware (Levy, 1995; Paige, 1993c). In addition, Paige (1993c) says it is critical that trainers understand the principles of ‘debriefing’ or “processing (discussing and interpreting) a learning experience in a way which enables the learners to better understand the meaning of what they have experienced and to integrate it into the structure of knowledge and skills they currently possess” (p. 182). Trainers should also understand that their role is not to serve as experts—which could create dependency in students—but rather to promote learner independence by emphasizing “learning how to learn” skills. As Renwick (2004) says, exploration, not explanation, should be the primary method. Renwick also emphasizes the role of the group and says trainers must help the group engage in real dialogue and access a “pool of common meaning” in order to produce collective learning. M. Bennett (1993) suggests trainers should be operating in one IDC orientation beyond that which is being trained for; in other words, if the goal is for students to reach Acceptance, the trainer should ideally be operating in Adaptation. Paige (1993c) summarizes:

Intercultural training demands of its practitioners the command of a large body of knowledge, a wide range of behavioral competencies, and a number of special personal qualities. This author would submit that it takes extensive exposure to another culture, relevant academic training, years of experience, and exposure to skilled professionals to become an authentically competent trainer. This requires considerable commitment to this field and an ability, indeed a sense of delight, in discovering ways to achieve one’s own intercultural effectiveness and competency as a trainer. (p. 196)

In other words, being an effective intercultural trainer is not easy, which suggests that anyone given the task of facilitating study abroad participants’ intercultural development must have extensive preparation.

Study Abroad Staff's Role in Facilitating Intercultural Development

Despite the importance of the trainer's role in participants' intercultural learning and growth, there is very little research that explicitly examines the role of on-site study abroad staff in facilitating students' intercultural development. In a related study, Rasch (2001) examined faculty perception of their role as on-site directors of study abroad. She interviewed 15 faculty members at a private, Research I institution located in the southern United States who had led home institution-sponsored programs abroad. Faculty in the study said their primary goal was to "facilitate and foster student growth/change; that is, broaden student intellectual interests with the hopes that independence would be a byproduct" (Rasch, p. 104). However, they did not appear to know how to do this effectively. Rasch framed her study according to theories of cognitive development and maturity and found it was not clear whether faculty directors were cognizant of the challenge of assisting students as they moved from lower levels of maturity to a more mature level of behavior. She found that they seemed to focus more on intellectual development and expanded international perspectives than on students' personal learning. Rasch recommends that future research examine the role faculty study abroad leaders play in student learning outcomes.

Similarly, Goode (2007-2008) explored the role of study abroad faculty directors at one U.S. undergraduate, liberal arts college, focusing specifically on their role in facilitating students' intercultural development. He administered the IDI and interviewed faculty regarding their role in study abroad. Faculty directors participating in the study described four dimensions of their role: (a) the "Dean of Students" dimension, (b) the logistical dimension, (c) the intercultural dimension, and (d) the academic dimension (Goode, 2007-2008). However, the faculty emphasized their "Dean of Students" role the most and said the least about the intercultural dimension of their job. This is perhaps not surprising given that participants lacked formal preparation for serving as faculty directors, and the "Dean of Students" and logistical dimensions demanded much of their attention.

Faculty directors' overall IDI developmental score was found to be "in transition" on both the Minimization and Reversal scales. Goode (2007-2008) explains, "These results located the faculty in the *minimization* stage—characterized by 'an effort to bury difference under the weight of cultural similarities' (Bennett, 1993, 41)" (p. 159). In addition, participants were just beyond "in transition" status for the "cognitive frame-shifting" and "behavioral code-shifting" aspects of Acceptance/Adaptation, which implies that their "skill in adjusting their thinking and behavior from one culture to the next was not optimal" (Goode, p. 160). These findings are

important because faculty directors' limited degree of intercultural development likely affects their ability to foster intercultural development in their students.

Goode (2007-2008) also found that although faculty directors were able to talk about the intercultural challenges their students faced and the intercultural development outcomes they hoped their students would achieve, they "were considerably more abstract when discussing the role they played in their students' intercultural development *process*" (p. 163; original italics). Most of them focused on culture-specific rather than more transferable culture-general knowledge and skills. In fact, none of the faculty in this study were able to articulate concrete ways in which they actively supported students in their intercultural development process. Goode concludes by recommending that faculty directors receive "consistent, significant, and explicit content that supports them in examining their own intercultural development and exploring how they can help facilitate their study abroad students' intercultural development" (p. 167).

In another study, Ziegler (2006) examined study abroad on-site staff's perception of the culture learning process and their role in that process. She interviewed 17 study abroad professionals from 15 programs in five cities in France and two cities in Senegal. Participants, who included eight host nationals and nine expatriate U.S. Americans, also took the IDI. Staff were asked how they believed culture learning occurs on site, and their responses fell under two main categories: direct encounter with difference, and reflection on experience. Ziegler notes that these coincide with the first two stages in Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle—concrete experience and reflective observation. However, while every interviewee mentioned direct encounter, only some discussed the reflection aspect, and it was evident that the extent to which structured reflection is incorporated into the study abroad programs varied widely. Ziegler thus concludes, "While the experiential learning model is almost assumed to be universally used in study abroad programs, the reality shows us that most programs do not bring students through the entire learning cycle, potentially leaving concrete experiences unprocessed" (p. 164).

Ziegler (2006) also found that the amount of formal intercultural training on-site staff had varied widely and that this influenced training practice. "Those with little to no training rely primarily on their own experience or consultation with colleagues, while those with extensive training have a wide repertoire of models and theories to draw on in assessing the situation at hand and intervening appropriately" (Ziegler, pp. 162-163). In addition, staff members' own intercultural sensitivity levels were related to the strategies they used to facilitate culture learning. Ziegler interprets the differences she found between the strategies used by staff in Minimization versus those in Acceptance/Adaptation:

This is an interesting pattern because it suggests that people who function in an acceptance/adaptation worldview spend their energy conceptualizing, assessing, and facilitating their students' intercultural development needs. They focus on coordinating a rigorous academic program, blending culture learning with other content areas, and guiding students along in their intercultural learning experience. Those operating in a minimization framework tend to see themselves as interpreters, devoting significant energy to explaining cultural differences, and helping people to prevent or overcome culturally-based misunderstandings. They tend to focus on culture-specific learning and adaptation. They spend less time teaching and helping students to develop a culture-general conceptual framework from which to approach questions of cultural difference that may occur in any setting. (p. 151)

These findings suggest that to be successful in facilitating students' intercultural development during study abroad, on-site staff needs to have significant training and should ideally be in one of the more intercultural mindsets of Acceptance or, preferably, Adaptation according to the IDC.

Summary

In summary, the literature recognizes the importance and complexity of the trainer's role in facilitating learners' intercultural development, and specifies numerous cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies trainers ought to possess. Yet research regarding the role of study abroad staff in facilitating students' development during their time abroad is limited. Several studies (Goode, 2007-2008; Rasch, 2001) on faculty's role in study abroad suggest they lack adequate preparation for the complex task of facilitating intercultural development. The one study I identified that addresses on-site staff's role in this process (Ziegler, 2006) similarly found that the amount of formal intercultural training staff had varied widely and that this influenced their own practice. On-site staff with more training and a higher level of intercultural sensitivity implemented more sophisticated training practices with students than their peers with less training and lower levels of intercultural sensitivity. In addition, all of these studies reveal that study abroad leaders—whether they be faculty or on-site staff—have multiple responsibilities, and facilitating students' intercultural development often takes a backseat to more pressing, immediate aspects of their job. These findings suggest future research on study abroad interventions should not only examine the facilitation of students' intercultural development as a process, but also pay particular attention to study abroad staff's role in that process.

Conclusion

As I have discussed, intercultural learning has long been a primary, although often implicit, goal of study abroad. However, research demonstrates that not all study abroad participants are experiencing the type of intercultural development that has often been assumed (or at least hoped) to be an automatic result of such a sojourn. Study abroad professionals now know too much to be content with providing immersion experiences for students and leaving them to their own devices to make the most of their time abroad. Therefore, many leading study abroad scholars and practitioners are now advocating for and practicing more interventionist strategies that aim to facilitate students' intercultural learning. Although the research on such interventions is limited, the findings are quite promising.

What is missing, however, is a better understanding—a richer picture—of the complex process involved in facilitating students' intercultural learning and development during study abroad. Facilitating intercultural learning is not as simple as presenting relevant material to the students. This complexity is magnified in a study abroad intervention by the dynamic, experiential nature of study abroad; the fact that intercultural learning involves cognitive, affective and behavioral domains; and the importance of incorporating in-class and out-of-class learning. However, as mentioned previously, research on current study abroad interventions has relied primarily on quantitative data about the outcomes, while the process involved in achieving those outcomes has remained relatively unexamined.

In addition, the research on study abroad interventions that existed at the outset of this study was limited to two interventions that are facilitated virtually from abroad and one that is conducted on-site but on a small scale, at only one location. The study abroad intervention that is the subject of this research combines the face-to-face, on-site format of the AUCP program with the broad reach that has only previously been achieved via technology, which has its limitations. The Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad was created and is administered by CIEE, one of the largest U.S. study abroad providers. Initial pre-/post-IDI data from this intervention are promising, although gains across sites are uneven. I am researching two sites that have been successful in past semesters in order to explore what is involved in this complex process.

I have presented a theoretical framework that outlines the areas that are important to examine in researching the process of facilitating students' intercultural development during a study abroad intervention. Schwab's (1983) concept of the four commonplaces of education offers an organizational framework through which to study such an intervention; it takes into

account the complex interrelationships among the learners, the instructor, the curriculum, and the milieu. Deardorff's (2004, 2008) model of intercultural competence and Paige's (2005) culture learning dimensions highlight what such learning entails. The Intercultural Development Continuum (Hammer, 2009), the challenge/support hypothesis (Sanford, 1966), and Experiential Learning Theory and Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb, 1984) suggest how this might be facilitated and in fact provide the framework for several study abroad interventions that are currently offered, including CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. In following this theoretical framework, I seek to address the following research questions:

1. In what ways does a study abroad intervention affect students' intercultural development?
 - a. What aspects of the intervention do the administrators, instructors, and students each consider the most supportive of intercultural development? What aspects do they consider the most challenging?
 - b. Regarding intercultural development, what are the administrators', instructors', and students' perceptions of the role of the following four specific aspects of the intervention: the milieu, the instructor, the students, and the curriculum?
2. Apart from the intervention itself, what other aspects of the experience do the students consider to be supportive of their intercultural development?

In the next chapter, I explain the methodology used to address these research questions.

CHAPTER III: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

As mentioned previously, the purpose of this study is to examine the *process* involved in facilitating students' intercultural development during a study abroad experience. To do this, I conducted a case study of the Council on International Educational Exchange's (CIEE) Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad at two sites where students had previously demonstrated positive gains on the Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer & Bennett, 1998). In this chapter, I present the research design and methodology.

Background on the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad

This study examines the process of facilitating students' intercultural development as it takes place in the context of a particularly innovative study abroad intervention created by CIEE, one of the largest U.S. study abroad providers. Although a full description of the cases and their contexts is included in the analysis section, I wish to provide some background information about the Seminar and the sites at this point.

CIEE

The Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization. Its mission is "to help people gain understanding, acquire knowledge, and develop skills for living in a globally interdependent and culturally diverse world" (Council on International Educational Exchange, n.d.-a). For more than half a century, CIEE has been a leader in study abroad and played an important role in advancing and shaping the field of international education (see Sideli, 2010). CIEE has been sending students abroad since 1947 and has been developing its own study abroad programs since the late 1960s. Today, the organization offers more than 150 programs in 41 countries throughout Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, Latin America and the Middle East (Council on International Educational Exchange, n.d.-b).

The Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad

The Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad was created for many of the reasons cited in chapter two. That is, it is a response to the findings that many study abroad participants are not gaining the type of intercultural knowledge and skills abroad that educators previously assumed.

It is rooted in the belief and the research findings that suggest intervening in students' learning while they are abroad can help facilitate their intercultural learning and development.

Origins

In fall of 2005, Dr. Michael Vande Berg, CIEE's Chief Academic Officer at the time, began a series of projects that would eventually lead to the creation of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad (see Vande Berg, Quinn, & Menyhart, 2012 for full history of the project), a credit-bearing, semester-long elective course offered to students on many of CIEE's programs around the world. Through these projects, the Portland-based staff began to recognize that:

[I]f students enrolling in CIEE programs were to learn and develop effectively and appropriately, resident staff and faculty were going to need to train them to develop the intercultural capacities that would allow them to meet their particular program's learning outcomes. And because few resident staff members or faculty were familiar with the basics of intercultural teaching and learning, Portland staff would have to develop an intercultural course curriculum for that purpose. (Vande Berg, Quinn et al., 2012, p. 388)

Curriculum and Pedagogy

This realization eventually led Vande Berg to hire Meghan Quinn, and together they developed the first version of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad curriculum. The curriculum draws from pedagogical theory, experiential learning theory, developmental learning theory, intercultural communication, and social psychology (Vande Berg, Quinn et al., 2012). Using this framework, the Seminar is meant to be developmental, experiential, and holistic. With regards to the first point, students take the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) at the beginning of the semester, and instructors are supposed to teach to the group and to the individual in ways that are developmentally appropriate for their intercultural worldview(s). Second, the curriculum is designed to guide students around Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle, "helping students reflect on what they had experienced through an activity, become aware of how they made meaning of these experiences, and focus on the extent to which the meanings that they attached to the experiences were allowing them to interact effectively and appropriately with others" (Vande Berg, Quinn et al., 2012, p. 391). Third, the Seminar is holistic—meant to engage students in learning through affective and behavioral dimensions, in addition to the more typical cognitive ways of learning.

The overarching goal of the Seminar is “to help students abroad learn to shift cultural perspective and to interact more effectively and appropriately with culturally different others” (Vande Berg, Quinn et al., 2012, p. 383). This is broken down into three desired learning outcomes. First, Seminar participants will become more culturally self-aware. Second, they will increase their cultural literacy; that is, they will become more aware of others within their own cultural contexts. Third, as students become aware of the differences between themselves and culturally different others, they will develop the skills to bridge that gap. The curriculum is designed around these different desired learning outcomes.

Originally, the curriculum was almost entirely culture-general, with the expectation that instructors would incorporate more culture-specific material by connecting the concepts and theories to their own and students’ examples (Vande Berg, Quinn et al., 2012). This proved more difficult than expected. In addition, student feedback indicated they were hungry for more culture-specific material. As a result, Vande Berg decided to incorporate more culture-specific materials through the use of the Cultural Detective series (Hofner Saphiere, 2004).

Logistics

The Seminar’s curriculum consists of a series of lessons that are available to instructors through a password-protected intranet site. This course intranet site also includes instructor guidelines and additional resources. The Seminar meets once per week over the course of the semester and is typically, although not always, taught by the Resident Director. Originally offered as a one-credit course, the Seminar had been increased to two credits at most sites (including those in this study) by fall 2010. Although the online materials and student readings are in English, the instructors may choose whether to teach the Seminar in English or in the local language, depending upon which is most appropriate for their program and students.

The first version of the Seminar curriculum was piloted at ten CIEE program sites in spring 2008. At the time, all students on program at these ten sites were required to enroll in the Seminar. After significant pushback from students for various reasons (see Vande Berg, Quinn et al., 2012), the Seminar was later changed to an elective course (and was an elective at the time I conducted my research). The curriculum has undergone several revisions since and was on its fourth version when I conducted my research in fall 2010 (M. Vande Berg, personal communication, April 28, 2012).

Instructor Coaching

Over time, it became increasingly apparent to Dr. Vande Berg and his staff that, for most of the instructors, teaching the Seminar was more challenging than anyone had anticipated (Vande Berg, Quinn et al., 2012). Initially they had assumed that instructors could learn to teach the Seminar effectively by attending workshops at the headquarters in Portland, at annual conferences, or through occasional workshops at CIEE Study Centers abroad. As the limits of such training became more obvious, in spring 2009 instructors began to also receive individual coaching (via telephone or Skype). This coaching is intended to help instructors improve their abilities in teaching developmentally, experientially, and holistically.

The Sites

In this section, I provide some background about each of the two sites where I conducted my research, specifically as it relates to the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad and students' intercultural learning. The organizational framework of the study, Schwab's (1983) four commonplaces of education, serves as a helpful lens for examining the two sites. While the curriculum is generally the same at the various locations where the Seminar is taught (with different culture-specific material incorporated at each site as instructors see fit), the milieu and the instructors will obviously differ in some ways, and the students may as well. The sites include a program in Western Europe and one in Africa.

Site #1: Western Europe

The first site is in Western Europe, which obviously provides a much different milieu than the second site in Africa. Generally speaking, this area of the world tends to be considered more culturally similar to the U.S. English is not the native language at this site; however, the target language is one that is widely available for students to study in U.S. high schools and colleges. The Western Europe site is located in a medium-sized city. While it is in a country that is a very popular study abroad destination, the city itself does not typically boast a large number of U.S. study abroad participants.

There are three different programs of study offered at this site. The Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad was offered only to students in the Liberal Arts program during fall 2010. The Liberal Arts program is considered the most intensive of the three programs, and students must have studied the target language for several semesters in order to be eligible for the

program. Liberal Arts students may choose to participate in an optional language commitment program in which they voluntarily pledge to communicate in the local language at all times, with limited exceptions. All of the students in the Liberal Arts program (and thus all of those in the Seminar) live with host families and enroll in at least one direct enrollment course at the local university in addition to taking several CIEE courses with other U.S. students from their program. All of their courses are taught in the target language. The instructors of the Seminar have also chosen to teach it in the target language.

Not only is the milieu different across locations, so are the Seminar instructors. At the Western Europe site, the Seminar is co-facilitated by the Resident Director and another staff member. Both are males and were born and raised in the town where they work. The Resident Director, who acts as the lead instructor, has been teaching the Seminar since his program served as one of the first pilot sites in spring 2008, whereas his co-instructor only recently became involved with the Seminar. Both instructors have been working with U.S. students for many years, and the Resident Director lived in and attended graduate school in the U.S. for approximately two years.

With regards to the students, the possible ways in which they differ between sites is not as obvious from the outset, but I want to acknowledge that differences may exist in the type of students who choose to study in Western Europe versus Africa. Also, it is important to note that different marketing techniques are used at the two sites to encourage students to enroll in the Seminar, which could also make the students who choose to participate at these two sites different in some way. At the site in Western Europe, the instructors invited all students to attend the first session of the Seminar to try it out. They then automatically enrolled anyone who came to that session in the Seminar, and the students had to drop the course if they decided they did not want to continue. When I visited the site in fall of 2010, there were six students enrolled in the Seminar out of approximately 25 in the Liberal Arts program.

Site #2: Africa

As stated previously, the milieu surrounding the student experience is obviously different in Africa compared to Western Europe. At the country level, site #2 is considered a “developing” country, whereas site #1 is considered “developed.” CIEE’s program is based in the nation’s capital, a large city. The level of cultural difference between this location and the U.S. is greater than the level of difference between the U.S. and Western Europe. For example, the Africa site boasts a large percentage of Muslims. In addition, this is a country where the majority of the

people are Black African, which means many of the study abroad participants are in the racial minority. Locally, people speak several languages. While many people living in the area speak French, there are numerous other local languages spoken that students are unlikely to have encountered or studied previously. One local language predominates, however; most host families speak that local language among themselves and the students on program in Africa are all required to take a course in this language in addition to their French classes.

At the site in Africa, there is just one study abroad program, and the Seminar is open to anyone on the program. All of the CIEE students live with a local host family, most of whom speak a local language at home, as mentioned previously. In addition, each student participates in a week-long visit to a more rural area where some form of development work is taking place (for example, several students stayed with Peace Corps volunteers). The students had just returned from these visits when I arrived to conduct my research. At this site, students take all of their classes with other U.S. American students on their program. However, the CIEE program is housed in a school where there are also programs for local students. Many of the CIEE classes are taught in English, although students also take a French language course as well as a class in the most commonly spoken local language. Given the various languages spoken in the country and the variety of the students' language levels, the instructor at the Africa site has chosen to teach the Seminar in English. All students on program are required to take a course, taught by CIEE staff, in which they discuss issues relevant in the local culture ('Society and Culture').

At this site the Resident Director teaches the Seminar on his own, although a new staff member was sitting in to observe the course during the semester in which I conducted my research. The instructor in Africa is a male who, although not originally from that particular city, is a native of the country in which he works. He spent several years in the United States, where he earned his PhD, and has worked with U.S. students for many years. Like the Resident Director at the Western Europe site, he has been teaching the Seminar since it was piloted in spring 2008.

With regards to the students, a note must be made again about the marketing/recruitment strategy for the Seminar at this location. At this site, the instructor requires students to write a short application essay if they would like to enroll in the Seminar. During the semester when I conducted this research, eleven students completed the Seminar out of approximately 50 enrolled in the entire program.

Use of Mixed Methods

This is a mixed-methods case study that employs qualitative as well as quantitative data. The use of mixed-methods research is becoming increasingly more common, particularly in the intercultural field. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods have their strengths and weaknesses, and their suitability depends upon the research question. When appropriate, however, combining the two methods can help compensate for the weakness of each and draw on their different strengths (Bryman, 2006). In social science research involving human behavior, using quantitative and qualitative data in conjunction can help improve the depth and rigor of results (Bogdan & Bicklen, 2007; Creswell, 2009).

Previous research on study abroad interventions has focused on the outcomes, and therefore relied primarily on quantitative measures (Cohen et al., 2005; L. Engle & Engle, 2004; Lou & Bosley, 2008; Vande Berg, 2007c), particularly the Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer, 2007). Qualitative research is generally considered more appropriate when process, rather than outcomes, is the primary issue of interest, as it is in this study. However, an examination of the process of intervening in students' learning abroad would be greatly enriched if there are also data on the outcomes. Therefore, this study takes a mixed-methods approach, relying primarily on qualitative data, but also incorporating quantitative data regarding outcomes. Doing so provides a better picture of the beginning, middle, and end of the story, so to speak.

The Case Study Approach

Given the line of inquiry of this study and the fact that it focuses on a particular program, the case study approach is the most appropriate. This approach is becoming increasingly popular in the field of study abroad because of the depth of understanding it can provide. Case studies have been used in study abroad research, for example, to better understand the experience of individual participants (Bacon, 2002; Citron, 2002) and faculty directors' perceptions of their role in study abroad (Goode, 2007-2008).

The case study approach is the most appropriate for several reasons. First, case studies focus on "bounded systems," which makes the approach particularly applicable since I examined a specific intervention. Second, the case study approach offers a holistic examination of a complex system in context, recognizing that multiple factors are at play in the unit of analysis. As Patton (2002) explains, "Case studies examine most or all the potential aspects of a particular distinctly bounded unit or case" (p. 93). In Yin's (2009) words, "The case study method allows

investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events” (p. 4). This is especially important in the given study because, as mentioned previously, educational endeavors such as this one are likely to involve complex interrelationships among the students, the instructor, the curriculum, and the milieu. A case study can help understand the complexities involved in the implementation of the Seminar in the given contexts. Third, the case study approach is particularly relevant for research questions that focus on “how” or “why” (Yin, 2009, p. 13). Recall that the primary research question in this study is: In what ways does a study abroad intervention affect students’ intercultural development? This is essentially a “how” question. Fourth, the case study approach is ideal when examining contemporary events over which the investigator has little or no control (Yin, 2009), which applies to the study at hand.

This research study employed a multi-case approach, examining the Seminar at two sites that were perceived as successful in past semesters. One of the most fundamental first steps in conducting a case study is to define the case (or cases), or unit(s) of analysis. In this study, Stake’s (2006) concept of the “quintain” is particularly helpful in conceptualizing the units of analysis. Stake explains:

A quintain... is an object or phenomenon or condition to be studied—a target, but not a bull’s eye. [...] For multi-case study...we have needed a word representing the collective target, whether it is a program, a phenomenon, or a condition. This quintain is the arena or holding company or umbrella for the cases we will study. (Stake, 2006, p. 6)

Stake explains that multi-case studies seek to better understand the quintain and that the means for doing so can take various forms. The approach taken in this study was the following: “[I]f the study is designed as a qualitative multi-case study, then the individual cases should be studied to learn about their self-centering, complexity, and situational uniqueness. Thus each case is to be understood in depth, giving little immediate attention to the quintain” (Stake, 2006, p. 6).

Stake goes on to say, “A multi-case study of a program is not so much a study of the quintain as it is a study of cases for what they tell us about the quintain” (p. 7). In this study, the quintain—the object to be studied—was this particular study abroad intervention, the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. This is what I sought to understand more fully. However, I tried to do so primarily by examining two specific cases. The cases—or particular units of analysis—included a semester-long session of the Seminar at a site in Western Europe and a site in Africa. My goal was to better understand the uniqueness and complexity of each of these cases, and consider how each informs the understanding of the Seminar more broadly.

There are numerous factors that may guide the selection of cases, and the choice depends heavily on the research questions. One of the main purposes of the present study was to learn more about how the facilitation of this particular study abroad intervention affects students' intercultural development. Therefore, it made the most sense to purposefully sample cases that had been successful in doing so. Stake (2006) endorses this approach, suggesting the most important factor is to choose "cases that seem to offer the opportunity to learn a lot" (p. 25).

For that reason, I spoke with Dr. Michael Vande Berg, CIEE's Vice President of Academic Affairs at the time, who oversaw the creation and implementation of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. He identified four sites from which he thought the most could be learned. These sites, he said, had recorded strong pre-/post-IDI gains in past semesters, and he found the instructors at these sites to be especially adept, particularly in comparison with their peers, at implementing the Seminar. Three of the sites he identified were in Western Europe, and the fourth was in Africa. Dr. Vande Berg contacted the Seminar instructors at these sites and asked if they would be willing to participate in my study. Three of the four volunteered. One of the instructors had just begun teaching the Seminar and said he did not feel comfortable participating at that time. It was later determined that the responsibility for teaching the Seminar at one of the remaining sites might change, so that site was ruled out as well. As a result, the cases chosen for this study include a site in Western Europe and one in Africa. Choice of these cases also provided the diversity between sites that I had sought to achieve. The cases are temporally-bound by examining the Seminar in these two sites during one cycle of implementation, the fall 2010 semester.

Research Design and Instruments

One of the major strengths of case studies is that they employ multiple, complementary sources of data. This mixed-methods case study includes quantitative data from pre-/post-test assessments using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), and qualitative data from observations and interviews. In addition, a number of secondary data sources were collected to give background to this study. In this section, I discuss each of the data sources.

The Intercultural Development Inventory

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was used in this study to assess the extent to which students' intercultural sensitivity developed during the course of the semester in which they studied abroad and participated in CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad.

Developed by Hammer and M. Bennett (Hammer & Bennett, 1998) and based on the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), the IDI is a psychometric instrument meant to assess one’s orientation toward cultural difference. It includes 50 statements to which respondents must choose among a five-point answer set ranging from “agree” to “disagree.” It has been extensively tested and validated (Hammer et al., 2003; Paige, Jacobs-Cassuto, Yershova, & DeJaeghere, 2003) and is now used in a wide variety of contexts.

As discussed in the previous chapter, use of the IDI in research has led to the adaptation of the original DMIS, resulting in what is now called the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC). The IDC identifies five orientations, also referred to as ‘worldviews,’ that range from more monocultural to more intercultural or global mindsets. These orientations are Denial, Polarization (which includes Defense and Reversal), Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation. The IDI produces a Developmental Orientation (DO), which identifies a person’s primary orientation toward cultural differences and commonalities. Table 2 provides a brief description of each of the orientations and the corresponding numerical IDI score; additional information about each of these orientations is provided in chapter two. The IDI also includes a short section with demographic questions.

Table 2. Scoring and Description of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) Orientations

Orientation	Score	Description
Denial	55 – 69.9	People in Denial ignore or are unaware of the existence of cultural difference.
Polarization (Defense & Reversal)	70 – 84.9	In Polarization, people have a polarized sense of ‘us’ and ‘them.’ This worldview can take the form of Defense, in which people view their own culture as superior, or Reversal, in which they hold the ‘other’ cultural group in higher regard.
Minimization	85 – 114.9	Minimization is considered a transitional worldview in which people may be aware of cultural differences, but tend to focus on similarities. The assumed similarities, however, are typically derived from one’s own culture.
Acceptance	115 – 129.9	In Acceptance, people recognize and appreciate the complexity of cultural differences. However, they are often unclear on how to adapt to such differences.
Adaptation	130 - 145	People in Adaptation are able to shift perspective and adapt to different cultural contexts.

Observations

Observations of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad and the surrounding context were another important source of data. I visited both of the sites involved in this case study for just under three weeks each in late October and November 2010.

I observed three sessions of the Seminar during my visit to the Western Europe site and two sessions in Africa. When sitting in on the Seminar, my main purpose was to observe the interactions between the instructors and the students—both as a group and as individuals—to get a sense of what the instructors did to try to facilitate intercultural development, as well as how students responded. In other words, I observed how the curriculum was being enacted and how it appeared to be experienced. In general, I sought to take the role of an “observer as participant,” which means my observer activities were known to the group and “more or less publicly sponsored by [the] people in the situation [being] studied (Junker, 1960, p. 37)” (quoted in Merriam, 1988, p. 93). However, my participation was secondary to my role as information gatherer. As will be elaborated on shortly, much of what I observed in the Seminar was later explored in more depth in interviews with the instructors and students.

During my site visits, I also spent a good deal of time in and around the CIEE offices and other areas where program participants congregated, which gave me an opportunity for informal observation. In addition, I interacted with students and staff outside the office when I accompanied a group from the Western Europe site on a day trip and when I participated in two holiday celebrations in Africa. Observations outside of the Seminar were more informal in nature and focused primarily on better understanding the context surrounding each case.

Interviews

In-depth interviews were one of the primary means for gathering data. I interviewed Seminar students, instructors, and administrators. Interviews were semi-structured and open-ended in nature in order to allow interviewees the freedom to talk in depth about their experiences related to the Seminar. The interview protocols are included in Appendix 2.

I interviewed each of the Seminar instructors multiple times. The first interview was intended to be more general in scope; questions focused on exploring how, in practice, the instructors implement the Seminar. I asked the instructors about how they perceived their own role, as well as the role of the students, the context, and the curriculum in the process of developing participants' intercultural competence. The other instructor interviews took place as

soon as possible after each of the Seminar sessions I observed and focused specifically on what occurred during that particular class. Questions in those interviews were aimed at better understanding the instructor's actions and thinking during that particular class. Many of these questions were formulated after observing that particular class session.

The interviews with the students focused primarily on their personal experience with the Seminar. Questions addressed how the students perceived their own role, as well as the role of the Seminar instructor(s), the curriculum, and the milieu in their intercultural learning and development. As with the instructors, I asked specific questions about the students' perceptions of what occurred during the Seminar sessions that I observed.

Lastly, the interviews with the Seminar's administrators focused on their perceptions of the Seminar in general and at these two particular locations, and the train-the-trainers aspect of the Seminar, particularly in regards to the instructors at the two sites being studied.

Secondary Data Sources

Several secondary data sources were also used in this study. They included curriculum materials, student and instructor Learning Styles Inventories (LSI), and the instructors' Intercultural Development Inventories (IDI). These were used primarily for informational purposes.

As mentioned previously, the Seminar curriculum is available to instructors on a password-protected intranet website. I was given access to this website and examined the curricular materials primarily to give background to the study.

The Kolb's (2005) Learning Style Inventory is a tool used to assess one's preferred learning style according to his model of experiential learning. Students take the inventory at the beginning of the semester and this information is supposed to be used by Seminar instructors, in conjunction with students' IDI scores, in order to tailor their teaching to the class and help the students more effectively learn around Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Cycle. Therefore, I also collected the students' LSI information (from the instructors) as background information. In addition, all Seminar instructors have taken the LSI and the IDI and have been debriefed on their preferred learning style and intercultural worldview and how these may affect their teaching. Therefore, I also collected the instructors' LSI and IDI data, which served as a backdrop for understanding the facilitation process.

Participants

There were three types of participants in this study: Seminar instructors, student participants, and administrators. With regards to the first two groups, both the instructors and students provided demographic information about themselves when they took the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). This information is outlined in tables 3, 4, and 5.

In total, there were three Seminar instructors—two in Western Europe and one in Africa—who participated in this study. More information about them can be found in the previous sections on the site backgrounds and in Table 3.

Table 3. Instructor Demographics as Reported on the IDI

Site	Gender	Nationality and/or Ethnic Background	Member of Ethnic Minority in Home Country?	Age Category	Where Instructor Primarily Grew Up	Previous Time Spent Living in Another Country
Western Europe	Male	[Host Country National]	No	31 – 40	Western Europe	1 – 2 years
Western Europe	Male	[Host Country National]	No	31 – 40	Western Europe	Never lived in another country
Africa	Male	African	Yes	41 – 50	Africa	6 – 10 years

Student participants were all traditional age college students from a variety of colleges and universities across the United States. At the site in Western Europe (Table 4), six students were enrolled in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad when I arrived (two had dropped the course earlier in the semester due to conflicts). All six of the students volunteered to participate in my study and were subsequently interviewed. One of them was unable to take the IDI, however, so only qualitative data exists for her. Five of the six students were female, one male. In the demographic section of the IDI, one student answered ‘yes’ to the question ‘Are you a member of an ethnic minority in your country?’ She listed her ethnic background as Hispanic. All students reported having grown up in the United States.

Table 4. Student Demographics as Reported on the IDI: Western Europe

Gender	Nationality and/or Ethnic Background*	Ethnic Minority in Home Country?	Age Category	Where Student Primarily Grew Up	Previous Time Spent Living in Another Country
Female	Russian, Norwegian	No	18 – 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	American Jew	No	18 - 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	Caucasian	No	18 - 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	Hispanic	Yes	18 - 21	United States	< 3 months
Male	White	No	18 - 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	Caucasian	No	18 - 21	United States	N/A

* Nationality and/or Ethnic Background is an open-ended question on the IDI which students fill in as they choose.

Table 5. Student Demographics as Reported on the IDI: Africa

Gender	Nationality and/or Ethnic Background*	Ethnic Minority in Home Country?	Age Category	Where Student Primarily Grew Up	Previous Time Spent Living in Another Country
Female	American	No	18 – 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	American	No	18 - 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	Citizen of the United States	No	18 - 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	American	No	18 - 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	United States; Russian background	No	18 - 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	Scandinavian American	No	18 - 21	United States	< 3 months
Male	American with Irish and Norwegian roots	No	18 – 21	United States	< 3 months
Female	First Generation African; Eritrean-American	Yes	18 -21	United States	< 3 months

* Nationality and/or Ethnic Background is an open-ended question on the IDI which students fill in as they choose.

At the Africa site, 11 students were enrolled in the Seminar during fall 2010. Two were male and the rest female. All 11 took the IDI at both the beginning and end of the semester. Nine of the 11 students volunteered to participate in the qualitative aspect of this study, including one male and eight females. The demographic information for those nine students is listed in Table 5. One of the study participants in Africa identified as being from an ethnic minority in her home country; she listed her ethnic background as “First-generation African; Eritrean-American.” Again, all of the students said they grew up in the United States.

With regards to the administrators, all three CIEE staff members involved in the administration of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad participated in this study (including one male and two females). Together they were the people who created and/or were in charge of overseeing the implementation of the Seminar. They also engage in on-going coaching and training with the staff members who teach the Seminar at the various sites around the world.

Data Collection Procedures

In October and November 2010, I traveled first to the site in Western Europe, then to the site in Africa. I spent just under three weeks at each location and collected the majority of my data during these visits. The data collection timeline is outlined in Appendix 3.

Intercultural Development Inventory

As mentioned previously, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is administered to students participating in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad on their first day of class, as well as at the end of the semester. Once students take the IDI at the beginning of the semester, the scores are analyzed by the CIEE administrators at headquarters, who then discuss the information and its implications for teaching with the Seminar instructors. I asked each of the instructors to provide me with students’ IDI scores when I first arrived at each site. The instructors in Western Europe, however, informed me that they did not yet have the students’ IDI scores (I immediately e-mailed one of the Seminar administrators after learning this and received the students’ scores from her). The instructor in Africa showed me a diagram that depicted each of his students’ initial IDI orientations as well as their preferred learning style (from the Learning Styles Inventory). I collected all of the pre-/post- IDI data from the Seminar administrators (electronically) shortly after the end of the semester.

Not only do students take the IDI when they begin the Seminar, instructors also take it when they first start teaching the Seminar. That means the instructor in Africa and the lead

instructor in Western Europe first took the IDI (version 2) in 2007. The co-instructor in Western Europe took the IDI (version 2) when he started helping with the Seminar in 2009. The CIEE administrators sent me the three instructors' original IDI profiles prior to my visit in fall 2010. At that time I also learned that one of the instructors had recently retaken the IDI (version 3) and there were plans for the others to soon do so as well (shortly after my visit). So I not only obtained the instructors' IDI scores from when they first started teaching the course, but also more recent scores. Therefore, I was able to compare the original and more current scores to see how the instructors' intercultural worldviews had changed (or not changed) over the course of the time they had been teaching the Seminar.

Observations

Initially I hoped to observe at least two, preferably three, sessions of the Seminar at each location. In Western Europe, I was able to sit in on the Seminar three times. Scheduling was a little more challenging at the Africa site because after arranging my visit, I learned that the Seminar instructor had to attend a conference during the first several days I was in town, which required him to reschedule one session of the Seminar. In addition, one of the major Muslim holidays fell in the middle of the second week I was in town, which meant most classes that week were cancelled. This was impossible to know ahead of time due to the fact that the exact date of the holiday depends on the lunar calendar. However, I was still able to observe two sessions of the Seminar in Africa, both held during the final week of my visit.

As mentioned previously, I tried to take the role of an "observer as participant" (Merriam, 1988), focusing on gathering information while also participating enough to make others comfortable with my presence. In an effort to blend in, I took limited notes during the sessions, and then went back as soon as possible after the Seminar to fill in my notes more extensively. I generated follow-up questions and observation-specific questions for the next interview with the instructor(s), as well as for upcoming student interviews, within a few hours of observing the Seminar.

Interviews

All of the interviews with the Seminar instructors and students took place on site, during my visit. I reviewed the consent form (see Appendix 4) with all of the interviewees at the beginning of the interview, addressed any questions they had, and asked for permission to tape the interview.

At each of the sites, I conducted a general interview, as explained previously, with each of the instructors as soon as possible after I arrived. I had previously sent consent forms to the instructors via e-mail, which we then reviewed during that first interview. I also interviewed each instructor again within 24 hours of each of the sessions of the Seminar I observed. These interviews included follow-up and observation-specific questions. Questions were aimed at trying to understand the instructor's thinking during the Seminar, reactions to student actions and comments, and general perceptions of how the session went. In total, then, I interviewed the lead instructor in Western Europe four times. I interviewed the other instructor in Western Europe, as well as the instructor in Africa, a total of three times each (since I observed each of them teaching the Seminar twice). These interviews ranged in length from approximately 20 to 90 minutes.

Seminar participants at each site received an e-mail from me, forwarded to them from their instructor, prior to my site visit. In that e-mail, which also included the consent form, I introduced myself and my research, and encouraged students to participate in the study. Once on site, I distributed a sign-up form and, with the help of the instructors, had more students volunteer to participate than I had expected.

I interviewed each of the student participants once during my visit (except for one student in Africa who I invited to participate in a follow-up interview; more on that later). Coordinating these interviews with the observations was somewhat challenging, particularly at the Africa site. I wanted to observe as many sessions of the Seminar as possible before interviewing students so that I could ask them observation-specific questions in addition to the more general questions. Furthermore, the students all had busy schedules, so I had to be flexible around their availability. In Western Europe, I had observed at least one session of the Seminar before I interviewed any students; in the case of most student interviews, I was able to observe two sessions beforehand.

This was more difficult to do in Africa where, due to the scheduling challenges mentioned previously, all of the Seminar observations and student interviews had to be condensed into the final week of my site visit. This meant I interviewed a few students before observing the Seminar and all of the student interviews had to be conducted before I observed the second session. In the case of one student who I interviewed prior to observing the Seminar, I e-mailed her to invite her to participate in a follow-up interview after the first session I observed because she was at the center of a critical incident that happened during that class (see the 'Critical Incident' section at the end of chapter four). She agreed and we conducted a brief follow-up interview the next day. In addition, the two sessions of the Seminar I observed in Africa were very different in nature; because I was unable to interview any students after the second session, I

sent an e-mail to all of the study participants asking if they had any further comments after that session and also which of the two sessions that I observed did they think was most representative of the typical Seminar session. One student responded, and her response was included with the interview transcripts in the qualitative data analysis.

Lastly, I interviewed the three Seminar administrators over the phone or via Skype within two weeks of returning from the site visits. They all received the consent forms electronically and signed and returned them prior to the interview.

I began transcribing the interviews while on site in Western Europe and completed all of the transcriptions by spring 2011. All of the transcriptions and audio of the interviews are stored on a password-protected computer, in accordance with IRB regulations.

Confidentiality

I have been very cognizant throughout this study of the need to take careful measures to protect the confidentiality of participants. For this reason, I do not specify the sites where I conducted the investigation. In some instances, specific information that might reveal the location has been deleted or changed in the written reports; when this is done in quotes it is indicated with brackets. In addition, all participants have been given pseudonyms, except for Dr. Michael Vande Berg, who consented to be identified in this study.

I was also very aware of the fact that the administrators and instructors each knew the others were participating in the study, the instructors knew for the most part which students were participating, and the students obviously knew their instructors were participating. This was at the forefront of my mind throughout the design, data collection, and reporting phases of the study. For example, I brought this fact up with all of the participants, especially the instructors and administrators, when reviewing the consent forms so that they understood that while their name and location would not be included in the report, their identity could perhaps be deduced by other study participants. In addition, I took extra precautions when reporting the data, especially when dealing with references that referred directly to specific individuals. For example, some references were either not included or were paraphrased if they contained information that would make it obvious to other study participants either who was speaking or being spoken about, especially if those comments were in any way sensitive.

A similar issue arose due to the fact that I asked the administrators specifically about each of the instructors involved in this study. If the instructors were to read the final report, they could identify which quotations are about them. In the case of the quotations from Dr. Vande

Berg, the instructors will know that he was the one speaking about them since he chose to be identified in this study. As mentioned earlier, I discussed this fact with both the instructors and administrators before getting their consent. As an additional precaution, I sent each of the administrators a copy of their quotations that I planned to include in this study that referred directly to individual instructors. While I explained that the final decision whether or not to include these quotations would be mine, I emphasized that I was sensitive to issues of confidentiality and invited their feedback on any quotations that made them uncomfortable. Based on their feedback, I deleted a couple of sentences that did not alter the main idea of the quotations in question.

Data Analysis

In this section, I explain how I conducted the analysis of the IDI data, the observations, and the interviews.

Quantitative Analysis

In total, there were 16 students who took the IDI at the beginning (Time 1) and end (Time 2) of the semester. These include all 11 students enrolled in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad at the Africa site, and five out of the six students in the Seminar at the site in Western Europe. One student in Western Europe did not complete the IDI, but did participate in the qualitative aspect of this study. It is important to note that the IDI data therefore represent the actual population, not sample values (Hirschi & Selvin, 1973). Due to the small number of total participants and mixed-methods nature of this study, the quantitative analysis is for heuristic purposes and to generate insights and understanding. It does not imply statistical generalization (Hirschi & Selvin, 1973).

I analyzed the students' IDI scores using SPSS software. Since this study uses a relatively small number of participants and the quantitative data are meant to be used for heuristic purposes only, I first examined the data using numerous types of descriptive statistics. In addition, I ran t-tests on the pre- and post-semester scores to test for statistical significance.

Qualitative Analysis

According to Merriam (1988), case studies can involve up to three levels of analysis and the final product will reflect the level of analysis chosen. The first level is descriptive, the second

level involves developing categories and themes, and the third level moves toward developing theory. My study is intended to be descriptive and exploratory, rather than explanatory; therefore, the analysis focuses on the first two of these levels. The primary sources of qualitative data include interview transcripts and observation notes. The observations are used primarily to provide the descriptive analysis, while the interviews are used to develop the categories and themes.

Descriptive Analysis of the Observations

The observation data are used to first provide a rich description of each of the cases and their contexts. As Patton (2002) explains, “[T]he analyst’s first and foremost responsibility consists of doing justice to each individual case. All else depends on that” (p. 449). More specifically, for each of the sites, I describe the context, then discuss in detail each of the sessions I observed, and lastly provide a few important observations.

Thematic Analysis of the Interviews

The thematic analysis of the interview data was informed by Stake (2006), Rubin and Rubin (2005), and Orcher (2005). I followed Stake’s idea of the “case–quintain dialectic” in my approach to the multi-case analysis. Stake explains, “For grand strategy, I think it is desirable for the analyst to set up a ‘case–quintain dialectic’—a rhetorical, adversarial procedure, wherein attention to the local situations and attention to the program or phenomenon as a whole contend with each other for emphasis” (p. 46). In addition, I followed Rubin and Rubin’s suggestions for recognizing, refining, defining and elaborating themes.

I separately analyzed the interview transcripts from the three different types of interviewees: the students, the instructors, and the administrators. In other words, I went through the following process first with the student interviews, then with the instructor interviews, and lastly with the administrator interviews. With each of these three groups, I first read through each of the interviews, underlining important points and organizing ideas, and writing summaries of the core ideas in the margins. Then I compared my notes across interviews, grouping similar and sometimes contrasting ideas into a list of higher-level themes and categories. In some cases, I noted obvious repetition of ideas and listed these as possible themes. In other cases, themes did not immediately jump out from a review of the interviews, so I noted primary categories or topics frequently discussed by the interviewees in order to code these and later analyze them for more specific themes. I then reviewed and refined this list, going back to the original interviews

frequently. I made note of when these ideas or concepts cut across sites and when they were site-specific. In some cases, contrasts across sites suggested new themes. As themes emerged, I worked on creating consistent and refined definitions by considering Rubin and Rubin's (2005) questions about each theme: How am I defining it? How am I going to recognize it? What do I want to exclude? What is an example? By reviewing the interviews extensively in this way, I came up with a solid list of categories and themes with which to begin coding my data.

It was only once I had these general categories and themes that I then imported the interview transcripts into the NVIVO software and began coding the data. As described, in some cases very specific themes had already clearly emerged and I coded for them at that point. In other cases, I coded the data into more general themes that I knew would need to be further reviewed and coded in the future. For example, at that point in coding the student interviews, I had the theme 'Role of Seminar in student learning,' but knew that once I coded all the references about how students thought the Seminar was affecting their learning, I would then need to review that theme to flesh out more specific sub-themes. Therefore, once all of the interviews were coded into the already-established categories and themes, I reviewed the references within each theme to further refine that theme if needed. Lastly, I returned to the original interviews to double check that everything of significance was appropriately coded.

Throughout this process I engaged regularly in peer debriefing with an outside intercultural and international education expert. "Peer debriefing consists of having a qualified researcher who is not directly involved in the data collection or the analysis of the results consult with the researcher" (Orcher, 2005). I used this expert's feedback and questions to further refine the themes and thematic structure. I reviewed the references in each theme numerous times, restructuring and refining the overall organization and each individual theme until I felt the thematic structure was as solid as possible.

In some instances, certain references could have been coded in more than one theme and I had to make a decision about where to put them. For example, a student may have been talking about a conversation with his or her host mother, who served as a Cultural Partner for the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, and discussing what he or she learned through that conversation. This reference could have possibly been coded in 'Homestay,' 'Cultural Partner,' or 'Role of the Seminar in student learning.' In such instances, I had to make an executive decision, and I chose to code the references where they had the strongest fit. In the few instances where a reference fit very strongly in two areas, I coded it in both. In addition, some themes could have been classified in different categories and I had to make a decision, based on the

content of the references, where they best fit best. For example, it could be argued that the theme ‘Curriculum-driven’ could be categorized in ‘Curriculum.’ However, I chose to place it within ‘Instruction’ because the references within this theme refer more to the style of instruction than the curriculum itself. How I chose to code references, including extensive examples, will be discussed further in chapters four and five.

Several of the overarching categories that emerged from the thematic analysis correspond largely with Schwab’s (1983) four commonplaces of education—the curriculum, the student, the instructor, and the milieu. It is worth reiterating that Schwab’s concept of the four commonplaces serves as an *organizing* framework for this study, and therefore research questions were designed to address these areas. All this means, however, is that I sought to learn more about the perspectives of each of the interviewee groups on these aspects of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. This did not influence the type of information or the themes that emerged in these areas.

Issues of Validity and Reliability

Since this case study is primarily qualitative, I have sought to address issues of reliability and validity, including generalizability, as they are conceptualized in the qualitative field. (In addition, as stated previously, the quantitative data came from a small but complete population; it was not a sample and it is used for heuristic purposes only.) My approach to each of these issues is addressed here and outlined in the table in Appendix 5.

Broadly speaking, external validity is concerned with the extent to which a study’s findings can be applied to other situations; this is also known as generalizability. Merriam (1988) contests that, in the traditional sense of the term, the idea of generalizing in a case study makes no sense. She explains, “One selects a case study approach because one wishes to understand the particular in depth, not because one wants to know what is generally true of the many” (p. 173). Stake’s (1995) concept of naturalistic generalizations, however, suggests how case study findings can be applied to other situations. Stake explains, “People can learn much that is general from single cases. They do that partly because they are familiar with other cases and they add this one in, thus making a slightly new group from which to generalize, a new opportunity to modify old generalizations” (p. 85). Naturalistic generalizations, then, are “conclusions arrived at through personal engagement in life’s affairs or by vicarious experience so well constructed that the person feels as if it happened to themselves” (Stake, 1995, p. 85). It is critical that researchers provide enough rich, detailed description about the case and its context that readers are able to

make their own decisions about the extent to which the findings might be applicable to their situation. Therefore, I attempt to improve readers' abilities to make naturalistic generalizations by providing a rich, thick description of the cases.

Internal validity deals with the question of how one's findings match reality. Merriam (1988) explains the incongruence of this term with regards to qualitative research:

One of the assumptions underlying qualitative research is that reality is holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing; it is not a single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed, and measured. Assessing the isomorphism between data collected and the 'reality' from which they were derived is thus an inappropriate determinant of validity. (p. 167)

The case study researcher seeks to understand and capture people's constructions of reality, or how they understand the world. Therefore, in a sense, "for the case study worker what *seems* true is more important than what *is* true (Walker, 1980, p. 45)" (Merriam, 1988, p. 167). Judging the validity or truth of a study rests upon the investigator's showing "that he or she has represented those multiple constructions adequately; that is, that the reconstructions (for the findings and interpretations are also constructions, it should never be forgotten) that have been arrived at via the inquiry are credible to the constructors of the original multiple realities" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 296). The qualitative researcher is interested in perspectives rather than truth per se, and it is the researcher's obligation to present "a more or less honest rendering of how informants actually view themselves and their experiences" (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984, p. 98).

Merriam (1988) suggests six basic strategies for ensuring internal validity: "using triangulation, checking interpretations with individuals interviewed or observed, staying on-site over a period of time, asking peers to comment on emerging findings, involving participants in all phases of the research, and clarifying researcher biases and assumptions" (p. 183). In this study, I sought to ensure internal validity by (1) using multiple methods and multiple sources to address the research questions as a form of triangulation; (2) spending almost three weeks engaged with students and instructors at each site; (3) reviewing the findings as they emerged with an outside intercultural and international education expert; and (4) being very self-reflexive and honest about my own biases and assumptions as a researcher (see the following section in this chapter).

Much like with internal and external validity, the traditional conception of the term reliability is somewhat problematic within the qualitative research paradigm. Reliability refers to the extent to which one's findings can be replicated. However, as Merriam (1988) explains, "reliability is problematic in the social sciences as a whole simply because human behavior is

never static” (p. 170). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest thinking about the “dependability” or “consistency” of the results obtained from the data. “That is, rather than demanding that outsiders get the same results, one wishes outsiders to concur that, given the data collected, the results make sense—they are consistent and dependable” (Merriam, 1988, p. 172). Techniques for ensuring dependable or consistent results include (1) explaining the assumptions and theory underlying the study, (2) triangulating the data, and (3) describing in detail how the data were collected and how findings were derived from the data (Merriam, 1988). As discussed previously, this study will triangulate the findings by using multiple methods and multiple sources to address the research questions. In addition, I try to be very forthright in describing the theory on which the study is based, and also in outlining my personal biases and assumptions as a researcher. I also provide details about how the data was collected and how the themes emerged from that data. This includes using quotes from the interviewees to illuminate the meaning of those themes.

Researcher Background and Assumptions

As mentioned in the previous section, being up-front about the researcher’s biases and assumptions is a critical aspect of ensuring internal validity. Patton (2002) explains that qualitative researchers must be reflective about their own voice and perspective. Complete objectivity, he says, is impossible, and pure subjectivity undermines credibility. Therefore, researchers must focus on achieving balance by “understanding and depicting the world *authentically* in all its complexity while being self-analytical, politically aware, and reflexive in consciousness” (Patton, 2002, pp. 494-495, original italics). Patton suggests researchers continually engage in three types of reflexivity: self-reflexivity, reflexivity about those studied, and reflexivity about the audience.

Self-Reflexivity

My experience in the intercultural education field, along with my personal experiences living abroad, have instilled in me numerous values, beliefs, and assumptions that I bring to this research...or that have perhaps brought me to this research. Most likely both are true. I have had the great fortune to be able to teach two study abroad intervention courses—the Maximizing Study Abroad intervention mentioned in the last chapter, and an intercultural communication course specifically designed for students returning from an experience abroad—and those experiences have reinforced my belief that study abroad offers rich opportunities for learning, but

that many participants are unable to fully capitalize upon those opportunities. As a result, I believe those of us in the study abroad and international education fields have a responsibility to intervene and help facilitate students' intercultural learning and development throughout their international experiences. This reveals another bias, which is that I believe such experiences ought to be about more than cognitive learning; that is, the goal is not simply that students learn *about* another culture, but that they learn *from* and *through* their experience abroad. I recognize these beliefs run the risk of coloring my view of the study abroad intervention I am researching, and have tried to remain cognizant of this fact at all times and keep an open mind to whatever findings might emerge from the research.

Reflexivity about Those Studied

From the beginning, I have been mindful of the fact that my presence at these two sites and in the Seminar could in some ways be an intervention in and of itself, and I have done what I could to minimize this possibility. For example, it was clear to me early on that I would need to be very cognizant of how the nature of my relationship with the participants, especially the Seminar instructors and administrators, might affect the research. With the instructors, I knew I would need to walk a careful line between appearing knowledgeable about the work in which they were engaged and coming across as an "expert" in the field. I met all three instructors prior to my fall 2010 site visit but after they had informally agreed to participate in this study (the Western Europe instructors on site and the Africa instructor at a CIEE conference in the U.S.). I would say that I maintained a friendly, yet professional relationship with all three. As a result, the instructors got to know me and my background to some extent. Throughout our relationship, however, I attempted to refrain from expressing strong opinions on matters that I thought might influence the instructors in any way. Nonetheless, I am aware that the nature of our relationship could have affected the information the instructors chose to share with me. However, I believe the positive aspects of this outweigh the negative because I would like to think the instructors felt comfortable enough with me and confident enough in my character to talk openly and honestly about their experience with the Seminar. I consistently made an effort to convey that I was interested in learning *from them* about how they conduct the Seminar, and was not there to judge, evaluate, or give advice about what they were doing.

In addition to meeting the instructors prior to conducting my research, I have known Dr. Vande Berg, then Vice President of Academic Affairs at CIEE and the creator of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, since July 2008, when we met at the Summer Institute for

Intercultural Communication. He has served as a mentor to me since then, and our relationship was instrumental in me following this line of research. We are very much of the same mind when it comes to study abroad and ideas about intervening in students' intercultural learning, and I recognize that this may affect my view of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. I have tried to be very self-reflective in this regard so that I may remain as objective as possible.

Language is another issue about which I have had to be cognizant. Both of the study abroad programs included in this research strongly encourage participants to speak the target language (which is not English at either site), and yet I conducted my interviews in English. I speak the target language of one of the sites, yet not the other (note that the Seminar is taught in the target language at the site where I speak that language, and in English at the other). At the site where I do know the target language, I tried to speak in that language whenever possible outside of the interviews in order to show respect for the value the program places on second language acquisition. At the other site, I made an effort to learn and use basic phrases in the target languages as much as possible. Also, all of the Seminar instructors are host country nationals, which means English is their second language. Therefore, I tried to be especially cognizant during the interviews of whether they understood the questions the same way I intended them, and also of whether I understood what they meant to express with their answers.

Reflexivity about Audience

My intended audience is, first and foremost, my dissertation committee. A second, broader intended audience includes fellow international and intercultural educators, particularly study abroad professionals. On both accounts, I perceive these audiences to be comprised of intelligent, professional, well-meaning individuals. The point in presenting my findings is not to try to convince anyone of anything, but to describe the methods through which the findings emerged and provide extensive evidence from the data to illuminate what they mean. Whenever possible, I use the interviewees' own words. I also try to provide a rich description of the contexts surrounding the cases. My assumption is that readers can then use their own judgment to make (or not make) naturalistic generalizations about the application of the findings to other contexts.

Conclusion

In summary, this is a mixed-methods multi-case study of CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. It examines the process of facilitating students' intercultural learning and

development at two CIEE sites where the Seminar is taught. I visited both sites during fall 2010, where I observed several sessions of the Seminar and interviewed the instructors and students. I also interviewed the Seminar administrators at CIEE headquarters and collected IDI and LSI data for the students and instructors, in addition to reviewing other secondary data sources. This study is meant primarily to be descriptive and exploratory. I now turn to reporting the findings in chapters four and five.

CHAPTER IV: FINDINGS, PART 1

This chapter and the next include the findings from the case study. In this chapter, I first report the findings from the students' Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) scores in order to set the context for the qualitative findings that follow. I then discuss the findings from the Seminar observations and the thematic analysis of the student interviews. In chapter five, I discuss the instructors' IDI scores and the thematic analysis of the instructor and administrator interviews. All names used are pseudonyms, except in the case of the creator of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, Dr. Michael (Mick) Vande Berg, who consented to being named in this study.

Student IDI Scores

As mentioned in the last chapter, there were 16 students who took the IDI at the beginning (Time 1) and end (Time 2) of the semester, including 11 students in Africa and five students in Western Europe. Table 6 lists participants' IDI scores at Time 1 and Time 2, along with the corresponding IDI orientations and change score. Figure 5 represents the score distributions for all of the participants at Time 1 and Time 2, while Figure 6 shows the distribution according to intercultural worldview.

IDI Scores at Time 1

The average IDI score for all students at Time 1 was 98.52, which is in the middle of the Minimization range. Scores ranged from 74.14 (P) to 133.33 (Ad). Four students were in Polarization, nine were in Minimization, two were in Acceptance, and one was in Adaptation. There were no students in Denial.

At the Western Europe site, the average score at Time 1 was 90.39 (low M); scores ranged from 75.76 (P) to 105.30 (M), a spread of 29.54 points. Two of the students at the Western Europe site were in Polarization; the other three were in Minimization.

In Africa, the average Time 1 score was 102.21 (M). Students' scores ranged from 74.14 (P) to 133.33 (Ad), a difference of 59.19 points. Two students in Africa began in Polarization, six were in Minimization, two were in Acceptance, and one was in Adaptation.

In other words, there were students at both sites that began their semester abroad in Polarization; however, while there were no students at the Western Europe site in Acceptance or Adaptation, there were three students with intercultural mindsets (two in Acceptance and one in Adaptation) at the Africa site. While the average Time 1 score at each site fell within Minimization, it was at the low end of the Minimization scale for Western Europe and toward the higher end for Africa.

Table 6. IDI Scores by Student

Student*	Site	IDI T1		IDI T2		IDI Change
Amelia	WE	105.3	M	95.69	M	- 9.61
Sarah	WE	95.27	M	86.54	M	-8.73
Maeve	WE	95.53	M	98.89	M	3.36
Jake	WE	75.76	P	90.91	M	15.15
Sofia	WE	80.1	P	96.08	M	15.98
Jen	WE	Information not available				
Average Western Europe:		90.39	M	93.62	M	3.23
Josh	Af	108.42	M	96.74	M	-11.68
Angela	Af	93.3	M	84.12	P	-9.18
N/A	Af	98.56	M	102.57	M	4.01
Ann	Af	133.33	Ad	139.04	Ad	5.71
Jane	Af	122.76	Ac	128.57	Ac	5.81
Lucy	Af	120.64	Ac	131.97	Ad	11.33
Allison	Af	90.2	M	103.63	M	13.43
Zoey	Af	106.04	M	119.69	Ac	13.65
Emma	Af	100.61	M	118.26	Ac	17.65
N/A	Af	74.14	P	93.86	M	19.72
N/A	Af	76.33	P	97.4	M	21.07
Average Africa:		102.21	M	110.53	M	8.32
Average All Students:		98.52	M	105.25	M	6.73
WE = Western Europe; Af = Africa P = Polarization; M = Minimization; Ac = Acceptance; Ad = Adaptation N/A = Denotes students who did not participate in qualitative aspect of study. * All names used are pseudonyms.						

IDI Scores at Time 2

At the end of the semester, the average IDI score for all students was 105.25 (M), which represents an average increase of 6.73 points from Time 1. In total, 12 out of the 16 students showed positive gains on the IDI; seven moved up an orientation and five moved up within an orientation. Table 7 illustrates student movement within and between IDI orientations. Eight of the twelve who gained did so by more than ten points. Four students moved from Polarization to Minimization, two students moved from Minimization to Acceptance, and one student moved from Acceptance to Adaptation. Three students moved up within Minimization, and one student each moved up within Acceptance and Adaptation.

In total, four students regressed numerically on the IDI (two students from each site); one of these students moved from Minimization to Polarization, whereas the other three all regressed within Minimization. Of those who gained, the average gain score was 12.24. Among those who regressed, the average was -9.80 points. Students who showed positive development gained between 3.36 and 21.07 points; those who regressed lost between -11.68 and -8.73 points.

Figure 5. Distribution of IDI Scores at Time 1 and Time 2

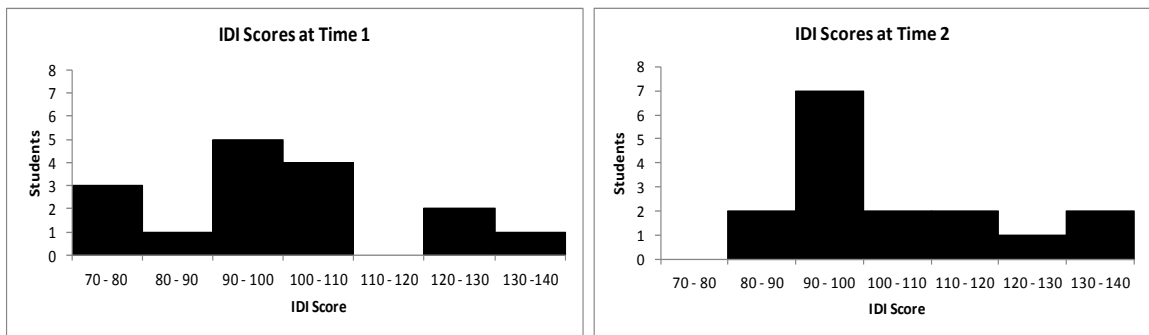


Figure 6. Distribution of Intercultural Worldviews at Time 1 and Time 2

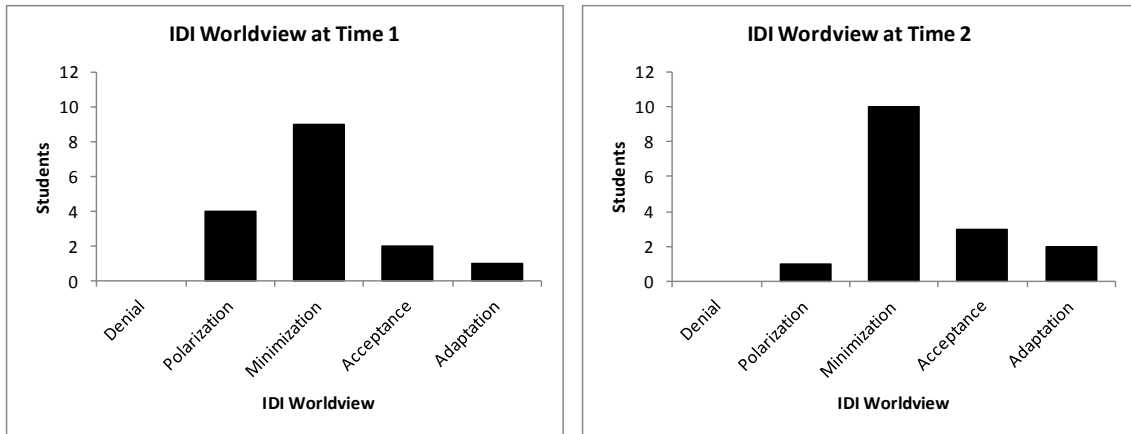


Table 7. Participants' IDI Score Change Between and Within Worldviews

IDI Score Change		Pre- → Post-Test	Western Europe (n = 5)	Africa (n = 11)	Total Both Sites (n = 16)
+	+ to next worldview	P → M	2	2	4
		M → Ac	0	2	2
		Ac → Ad	0	1	1
		<i>Subtotal</i>	2	5	7
	+ within the same worldview	M → M	1	2	3
		Ac → Ac	0	1	1
		Ad → Ad	0	1	1
		<i>Subtotal</i>	1	4	5
Total +		3	9	12	
-	- to next worldview	M → P	0	1	1
		<i>Subtotal</i>	0	1	1
	- within the same worldview	M → M	2	1	3
		<i>Subtotal</i>	2	1	3
	Total -		2	2	4

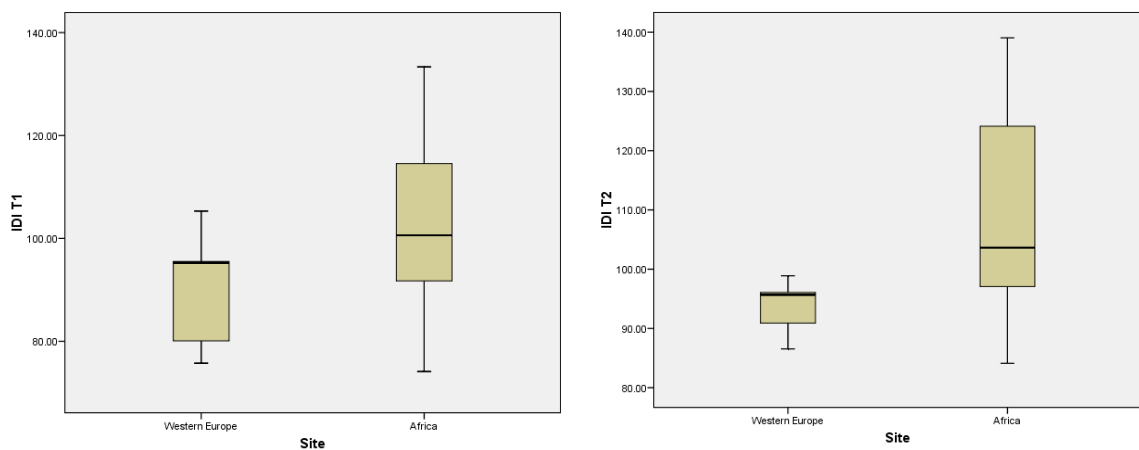
P = Polarization; M = Minimization; Ac = Acceptance; Ad = Adaptation

The change scores differ considerably between the two sites. The average IDI score at Time 2 in Western Europe was 93.62, and the average change score was 3.23. This represents a minimal change within Minimization. At this site, the two students who were originally in Polarization gained the most—just over 15 points each—and moved into Minimization. The other three all stayed within Minimization; two of those students regressed numerically (-9.61 and -8.73 points) and the other gained 3.36 points. All five of the students at the Western Europe site therefore ended in Minimization. Their range in scores decreased from 29.54 at Time 1 to 12.35

at Time 2. The difference in the score spread between Time 1 and Time 2 in Western Europe can be seen in Figure 7. This indicates that despite being in somewhat different stages of intercultural development at the beginning of the semester, the students on this program all ended up in a relatively similar place.

In Africa, the average IDI score at Time 2 was 110.53 (high M), which represents an average change score of 8.32. Again, this is a change within the Minimization scale, although the gain is larger and the Time 2 score is significantly higher on the Minimization scale than the Western Europe Time 2 score (93.62). In Africa, scores at Time 2 ranged from 84.12 (high P) to 139.04 (Ad), a range of 54.92. This translates to change scores ranging from -11.68 to 21.07. Of particular note is the fact that nine of the 11 students at the Africa site gained on the IDI. Five students moved up a scale; two moved from Polarization to Minimization, two from Minimization to Acceptance, and one from Acceptance to Adaptation. Four students moved up within a scale (two in Minimization and one each in Acceptance and Adaptation). Two students from the Africa site regressed numerically (-11.68 and -9.18); one of these represents a move from Minimization to Polarization while the other is a move within Minimization. Unlike in Western Europe, where all students ended in Minimization, students' scores in Africa were more diverse at Time 2 (see Figure 7); one student was in Polarization, five were in Minimization, three were in Acceptance, and two were in Adaptation.

Figure 7. Spread of Time 1 and Time 2 IDI Scores by Site



T-Tests

To better understand the relationship between Time 1 and Time 2 IDI scores, I ran paired T-tests. Because the numbers were small and the data were not normally distributed in all cases (see Figures 8 and 9), I used the non-parametric Wilcoxon signed-rank test (Field, 2005). On average, when analyzed as a whole, scores at Time 2 ($Mdn = 119.333$) were significantly greater than at Time 1 ($Mdn = 107.825$), $z = -2.120$, $p = .034$. When separated by site, participant scores in Africa at Time 2 ($Mdn = 128.570$) were significantly greater than at Time 1 ($Mdn = 120.640$), $z = -2.045$, $p = .041$. However, in Western Europe scores were not significantly greater at Time 2 ($Mdn = 95.690$) than at Time 1 ($Mdn = 95.270$), $z = -.674$, $p = .500$.

Figure 8. IDI Change Scores for All Students

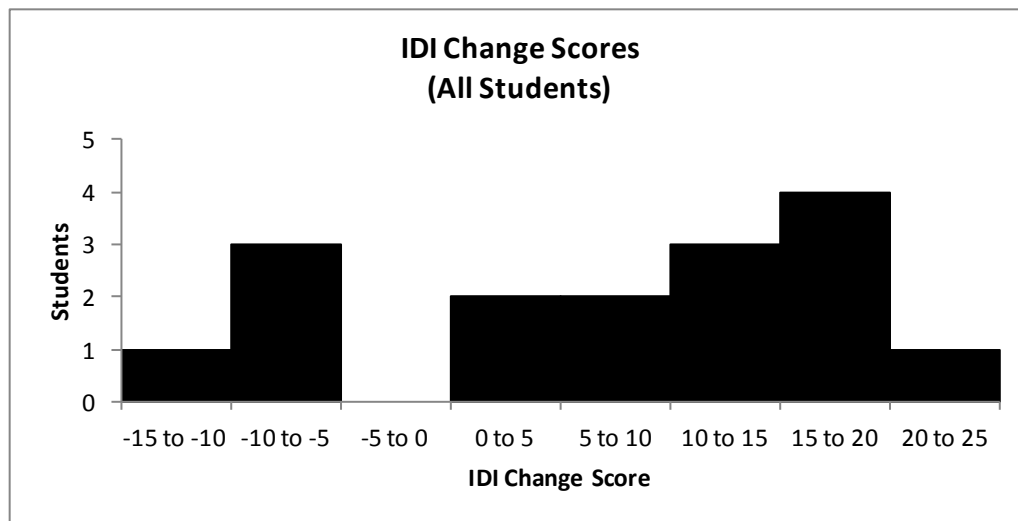
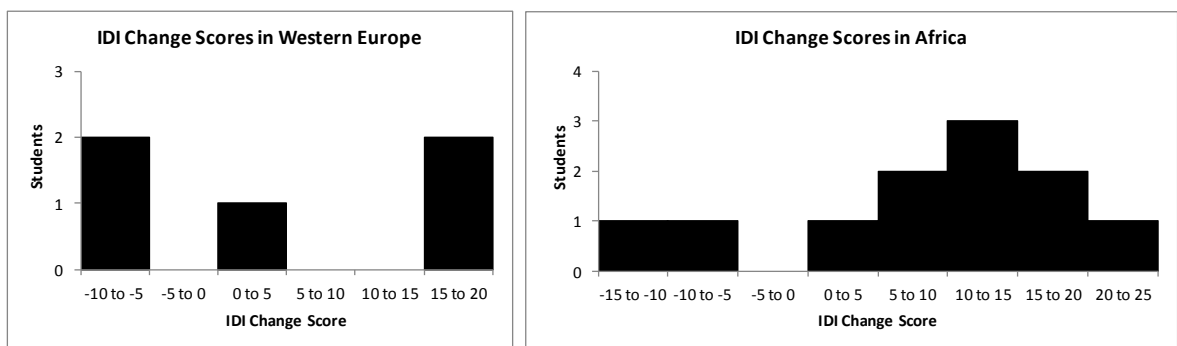


Figure 9. IDI Change Scores by Site



IDI Change Scores Broken Down by Initial Development Orientation

Breaking down the IDI change scores by initial Developmental Orientation (DO) reveals some interesting findings (see Tables 8 and 9). Not only did all of the students who began the semester in Polarization increase their IDI score, their average increase was 17.98 points. All four of these students gained at least 15 points and moved from Polarization to Minimization. These numbers may not reach statistical significance ($p = .068$) due to the very small sample ($n = 4$), but they indicate significant intercultural development on the part of these students.

In contrast, the students who began the semester in Minimization had much more varied change scores. The change scores of the nine students who started in Minimization range from -11.68 points to 17.65 points, with an average change of 1.43 points. It is noteworthy that of the four students who regressed on the IDI over the course of the semester, all four began in Minimization. Only one regressed a full orientation to Polarization, while the other three who regressed remained in Minimization. On the other hand, three students who began in Minimization gained within Minimization and two moved into Acceptance.

Two students began the semester in Acceptance and gained 5.81 and 11.33 points, for an average of 8.57. One remained in Acceptance and the other moved into Adaptation. Again, there was no statistical significance ($p = .180$), likely due to the very small sample ($n = 2$). Only one student began the semester in Adaptation; she gained 5.71 points.

Table 8. Analysis of Participants' IDI Change Scores by Initial Development Orientation (DO)

Initial IDI DO	N	Mean Change Score	Min. / Max.	P
Polarization	4	17.98	15.15 / 21.07	.068
Minimization	9	1.43	-11.68 / 17.65	.594
Acceptance	2	8.57	5.81 / 11.33	.180
Adaptation	1*	5.71*		
* Only one student had an initial orientation of Adaptation, therefore the mean change score represents only that one person's score and other statistics are not included.				

Table 9. Participants' Movement Within and Between Intercultural Worldviews According to Initial Developmental Orientation (DO)

Initial IDI DO	Pre \updownarrow Post	Western Europe (n = 5)	Africa (n = 11)	Total Both Sites (n = 16)
Polarization (n = 4)	P \uparrow M	2	2	4
	Total P \uparrow	2	2	4
Minimization (n = 9)	M \downarrow P	0	1	1
	M \downarrow M	2	1	3
	Total M \downarrow	2	2	4
	M \uparrow M	1	2	3
	M \uparrow Ac	0	2	2
	Total M \uparrow	1	4	5
Acceptance (n = 2)	Ac \uparrow Ac	0	1	1
	Ac \uparrow Ad	0	1	1
	Total Ac \uparrow	0	2	2
Adaptation (n = 1)	Ad \uparrow Ad	0	1	1
	Total Ad \uparrow	0	1	1
P = Polarization; M = Minimization; Ac = Acceptance; Ad = Adaptation				

Percent Achievable Progress

I also calculated each student's percent achievable progress—or, in the case of those who regressed, percent negative progress—on the IDI. The concept of percent achievable progress was first introduced by Lilli Engle (L. Engle & Engle, 2004; L. Engle, personal communication, August 16, 2012) and is defined as the extent to which each student bridges the gap between his or her entry-level IDI score and the highest achievable score (145). This approach “is particularly appropriate since the IDI concerns personal development as opposed to absolute knowledge” (L. Engle & Engle, p. 230). In the case of students who regressed, I calculated the extent to which each student bridged the gap between his or her entry-level IDI score and the lowest achievable score (55) (L. Engle & M. Vande Berg, personal communication, August 24, 2012). The percent achievable or negative progress is reported for each student in Tables 10 and 11 respectively.

Of the 16 students who took the IDI, 12 of them gained. Ten of those students gained more than 20% of their percent achievable progress, and their average percent achievable progress across the two sites was 24.44%. The average percent achievable progress in Western Europe was 17.76%, whereas it was 32.00% in Africa.

Four students—two at each site—regressed between Time 1 and Time 2. Their average percent negative progress was -22.07%. The average for the two students in Western Europe was -20.40%, while it was -23.74% for the two in Africa.

Table 10. IDI Percent Achievable Progress (AP) of Students who Gained

Student*	Site	IDI Time 1	IDI Time 2	IDI Change Score	% Achievable Progress
Maeve	WE	95.53	98.89	3.36	6.79%
Jake	WE	75.76	90.91	15.15	21.88%
Sofia	WE	80.1	96.08	15.98	24.62%
Jen	WE	Information not available			
Average %AP Western Europe:					+17.76%
N/A	Af	98.56	102.57	4.01	8.63%
Allison	Af	90.2	103.63	13.43	24.51%
Jane	Af	122.76	128.57	5.81	26.12%
N/A	Af	74.14	93.86	19.72	27.83%
N/A	Af	76.33	97.4	21.07	30.68%
Zoey	Af	106.04	119.69	13.65	35.04%
Emma	Af	100.61	118.26	17.65	39.76%
Lucy	Af	120.64	131.97	11.33	46.51%
Ann	Af	133.33	139.04	5.71	48.93%
Average %AP Africa:					+32.00%
Average %AP Both Sites:					+28.44%
WE = Western Europe; Af = Africa * All names used are pseudonyms.					

Table 11. IDI Percent Negative Progress (NP) of Students who Regressed

Student*	Site	IDI Time 1	IDI Time 2	IDI Change Score	% Negative Progress
Amelia	WE	105.3	95.69	-9.61	-19.11%
Sarah	WE	95.27	86.54	-8.73	-21.68%
Average %NP Western Europe:					-20.40%
Josh	Af	108.42	96.74	-11.68	-21.86%
Angela	Af	93.3	84.12	-9.18	-25.61%
Average %NP Africa:					-23.74%
Average %NP Both Sites:					-22.07%
WE = Western Europe; Af = Africa * All names used are pseudonyms.					

Observation Findings

In this section, I discuss the findings from my observations of the Seminar. For each site, I first provide some contextual information derived through these observations. Second, I describe what I witnessed during the Seminar sessions that I observed. Last, I highlight some of the most salient observations from each of the sites.

Western Europe

The Seminar Context

At the Western Europe site, CIEE had a new, modern office space just outside of the university campus. In it were the staff offices, several classrooms, and a small lobby with two computers where students could congregate. I sat in on the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad three times over the course of my site visit. All six students—five females and one male—were present during each session. The lead instructor, Andre, taught the first class alone due to the fact his co-instructor, Paolo, was out of town. Together they co-taught the other two sessions.

The group met in a different space within the CIEE offices each session. The first and third sessions were each held in a different one of the small, modern classrooms; students sat in the desks of their choosing, mostly toward the back half of the classroom. On one of these occasions the desks were arranged in somewhat of a semi-circle. The instructors stood toward the front of the room, although they moved around and interacted with students throughout the class. The second session I observed was held in Andre's office. The instructors remained on their feet the majority of the time, while students sat around a small circular table except when presenting.

Description of the Sessions

The lessons covered during the sessions I observe in Western Europe are, in order: Perception, Stereotypes, and Suspending Judgment. Instructors and students all speak in the target language throughout the class, except on a few occasions when there is a question about vocabulary and the instructors mention the English translation. In all three of the sessions, one of the instructors begins the class by asking students what they talked about during the previous class. Students are slow to respond, but each time someone eventually offers a short synopsis of what was covered in the previous class.

Session #1: Perception

The first session begins with a brief review of the previous class, and then Andre, who is teaching alone, reminds students that he asked them to come to class with a critical incident from their own experience to share with others. After some prodding, a few students offer examples. One explains that her host mom says she eats like a child because she eats very little and will often push her food around on her plate. Another says her host mom does not seem to want to talk on the phone for very long. After each example, Andre asks students why they think this is and tries to get the class to dissect the incidents more. The students offer a few thoughts, but when they don't say more, Andre typically offers his own ideas and possible explanations and encourages the students to investigate further on their own.

Then Andre presents a PowerPoint on perception and reality. It includes many images or optical illusions that may be perceived in different ways. The presentation—along with extensive instructor notes—comes directly from the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad online instructor materials. Andre goes through each of the slides, engaging the students in conversation about what they see and how this relates to reality and perception. He does not, however, follow the instructor notes provided in the curriculum very closely. Rather, he presents things in his own, less formal manner. The students seem engaged and the conversation is relatively lively.

Next, Andre transitions to another PowerPoint presentation from the curriculum materials. The presentation explains an assignment in which students are asked, in small groups, to take photos in the host community of things they find obvious and curious. At one point in the PowerPoint, there is a slide where instructors have the option to insert a photo from the local culture or use the example provided (which is from a very different culture). Andre has not replaced the example photo, and does not explain why it was considered obvious or curious by the student who took it (information provided to him in the curriculum instructions).

Before concluding the class, Andre asks students if they remember taking the Learning Style Inventory (LSI) and if they recall their preferred learning style. Students are silent for a few moments, and then several respond with the color that was associated with the combination of their primary and secondary learning styles, rather than the learning style itself. Andre hands out information about where to access the online reading assignment, explaining that he understands they might not like reading, but that it's important to try to expand their learning styles. He concludes by reminding students that for the next class they are supposed to do the reading, the photo assignment, and talk to their Cultural Partner.

Session #2: Stereotypes

In the second session—held in Andre’s office and with both instructors present—the students present their photos from the obvious/curious assignment. This is followed by a lesson about stereotypes and cultural generalizations. Once again, the instructors follow the curriculum, but do so rather loosely. For example, the curriculum materials suggest each group of students choose their best photo and present on it. Instead, the three groups each present all of their photos, and Andre facilitates a conversation about why each might be considered obvious and/or curious. He asks many questions, such as: ‘Why do you think that’s obvious? Why do you think that’s curious? If it’s obvious to you, could it be curious to someone else?’ Andre also asks many specific questions related to the content of the photos, such as: ‘Why do you think there are so many fountains in this country? What do you think those men are doing? Why are streets so narrow here?’ In total, there are more than 20 photos, so discussing them takes well over half the class period. One student, Josh, apparently chose to do the assignment on his own rather than with someone else and prefaces his presentation by saying he did not actually take the photos himself; his images appear to be from the internet. The instructors do not comment on this.

When they finish discussing the photos, co-instructor Paolo leads an activity in which he asks students—in two groups—to write on the board the expectations they had about their host country and its people prior to arrival. Once they have done so, Paolo talks a bit about stereotypes. He asks the students questions from time to time, but when they don’t say much in response, he continues. He explains that it is important to learn how to change stereotypes into cultural generalizations and he gives students a handout about the differences between the two. Andre interjects a comment from time to time, such as to emphasize that it is not just a matter of changing the way you talk about things, but that this is related to changing how we think as well. There is an activity on the handout in which students are supposed to decide whether certain statements are stereotypes or cultural generalizations, and the instructors decide that the students should do that as homework because there is no time left to do it in class. Andre concludes the session by emphasizing the importance of breaking preconceived notions and looking below the surface. He asks students to complete the handout previously mentioned and to write some of their own stereotypes and cultural generalizations about the host culture before the next class meeting.

Session #3: Suspending Judgment

In the third class I observe, Paolo begins by reviewing the differences between stereotypes and cultural generalizations and then turns to the related homework. The class goes through the handout together, discussing whether they think each statement is a stereotype or a cultural generalization, focusing primarily on the semantics of the sentence. When they finish, Paolo asks the students to each read one stereotype and one cultural generalization that they wrote about the host culture. They do so without much commentary, and then Paolo concludes by saying that the students probably had many stereotypes about the host country before they came, but that it's important to try to avoid stereotyping in an effort to respect other cultures.

Next, Andre facilitates a very popular intercultural activity known as the Describe–Interpret–Evaluate exercise (see Paige et al., 2006). First, Andre passes around an unfamiliar object and asks students to comment on it. As they do, Paolo writes their comments in three columns on the board. Andre later explains, with some help from the students, that one column represents description, one represents interpretation, and the third is evaluation. He says that people often jump to interpretation and evaluation before getting a full, objective understanding of a thing, and that what they have been trying to do in the Seminar is learn to suspend judgment. For the next part of this activity, the students break into pairs and each pair receives several photos. They are told to go through each of the Describe–Interpret–Evaluate steps using their photos.

When the pairs finish, Andre facilitates a debrief with the whole group. They talk briefly about what aspects of the exercise they found difficult or easy, and then each of the pairs shows the group one photo of choice and reports what they recorded in each of the three columns. Lastly, the whole group goes through the exercise together one more time with another photo. During the interpretation phase, one student says the image looks like a soldier helping a child in a third-world country. At the end of the exercise, Andre explains that the photo was actually taken in the U.S., and it is of a soldier helping a child after a hurricane. He says this is a good reminder of the importance of looking for further possible explanations beyond one's initial interpretation. He then explains that the Describe–Interpret–Evaluate exercise is relevant to the students' experiences abroad; perhaps, for example, they may have rushed to judgment if they found out at the beginning of the semester that they had a 35-year-old host brother who lived at home. The exercise they just learned, he explains, can help them expand their comprehension of

such situations. Andre wraps up the class by asking, “What do you think?” When no one responds, he asks, “Can you apply this to your own lives?” Several students nod in agreement.

Primary Observations

One of my primary observations of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad at the Western Europe site is that *it was relatively relaxed, informal, and collegial*. There was not a regular designated meeting place, but instead students just came to the office and it was typically decided in the moment where they would meet. The instructors often wore t-shirts and jeans (on the job and when teaching the Seminar). They joked with the students and vice versa to the extent possible in the students’ non-native language. The instructors seemed prepared for each class—they had obviously talked about who would lead which parts and had the necessary PowerPoint materials—yet, on the other hand, they facilitated the class in a very informal way and often strayed quite a bit from the notes that went along with those PowerPoint presentations or the instructions on how to conduct certain activities.

Another observation is related to *the frequency with which the instructors asked ‘Why?’* They regularly asked students why they thought certain aspects of the culture were the way they were. Students sometimes had thoughts on the matter, but oftentimes stayed silent. The instructors usually followed up by providing their own explanation or examples from personal experience and encouraging the students to investigate the matter further. For example, when two groups of students had taken a photo of fountains during the obvious/curious photo activity, Andre asked, ‘Why are there so many fountains in this country? Why are there horse statues on this fountain? Where does the fountain’s name come from?’ The students responded with silence or guesses to each question, so Andre talked a bit about the cultural symbolism of fountains in the host country and the important history and meaning of one of the fountains in particular. He concluded by suggesting students investigate more about the fountain in the other picture. In another example, when one group of students displayed a photo of a street sign in a regional language, the instructor talked about what languages his parents spoke to whom in his house when he was younger and asked the students if they knew why that might be. When no one responded, he talked a bit about the history that impacted the use of the regional language and encouraged students to ask their host families more about this.

I also observed *the role language learning plays in the Seminar at this location*. At this site, the instructors teach the Seminar in the target language. Students enrolled in the Liberal Arts program—those who may take the Seminar—are required to have a relatively strong language

level. As mentioned previously, there is also an optional language commitment program, and all of the students in the Liberal Arts program and in the Seminar during this particular semester had chosen to participate. As a result, I observed not only that the instructors and students communicated in the target language during the Seminar, but the students did so amongst themselves as well. It was obvious that the instructors—especially Andre—regulated their speech with the students, speaking more slowly and simply than they did with colleagues. Students would also sometimes ask how to say a certain word or phrase, or the instructors would stop for a moment while teaching the Seminar to ask if students knew a certain word and write it on the board if they did not. A couple of the students had dictionaries out during the class, and I saw them looking up words on several occasions. In addition, when the instructors started each class with a review of the previous session, it felt a bit as though they were checking students' comprehension of the material more than exploring the application of the concepts to students' experiences. This was perhaps, at least in part, due to the fact the material was presented in the students' non-native language. In general, the students were a bit slow to respond to questions in class, despite the fact that they all seemed relatively comfortable. This may or may not be related to the fact the class is conducted in their non-native language.

Africa

The Seminar Context

In Africa, CIEE was renting a small office and shared classroom space at a local private college during the time of this study. As mentioned previously, due to unforeseen circumstances, the Seminar had to be rescheduled, so I was only able to observe two sessions. On both occasions, the class met in its assigned classroom not far from the CIEE office. The first session was not held on the regular day or time, but was a make-up class that had to be scheduled over the lunch hour. Because of this, the instructor ordered pizza so the students could eat lunch during class. All of the students were present during the first session, with one student (Josh) absent during the second meeting. During the first session, I observed students arranging the desks in the classroom into a circle prior to the start of class; in the second session desks were in a circle when I arrived. The instructor sat in a desk within this circle some of the time and at other times stood up and moved around the room.

Also of note is the fact that although Malik, the Resident Director at this site, teaches the course on his own, another CIEE staff member was sitting in on the Seminar during the semester

in which I conducted my research. Ellen was a U.S. American woman married to a man from the host country. Although she had previous experience living in the host culture, she had only recently returned there and taken the job at the local CIEE office after living in the U.S. and working at the CIEE headquarters for several years. Through my informal observations in and around the office, I saw that she had extensive interaction with the students—even more so than the Resident Director—and they came to her for just about everything. What also became clear through my observations of the Seminar and interviews with the students is that the Seminar participants were unaware of what Ellen's intended role was in the Seminar. Apparently Malik never explained to the students that his colleague would be sitting in on the Seminar during her first semester to learn more about it. However, Ellen and Malik together co-taught the 'Society and Culture' class required of all students, so the Seminar participants were accustomed to them teaching together, and many of them apparently assumed her presence in the Seminar signified they were co-instructors there as well.

Description of the Sessions

In Africa, the Seminar is taught in English. The two lessons that I observe there cover the Intercultural Development Continuum and intensity factors, and intercultural communication.

Session #1: The Intercultural Development Continuum and Intensity Factors

Similar to in Western Europe, the instructor begins the first session I observe by asking students what they discussed in the previous class. When one student says they talked about cultural value spectrums, Malik asks students if they have had a chance to observe those values at work, and one student gives an example of his experience with collectivism and power distance during his recent rural visit.

After then outlining the topics to be covered during class, Malik begins with a PowerPoint presentation on the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC). He has with him a printed copy of the lesson notes from the online curriculum materials, and refers to them from time to time. In the curriculum materials, the Seminar administrators suggest changing one of the initial slides to include an example from the local culture and the instructor has done this. This slide inspires a conversation about what the students know about the significance of a type of local nut. Several students comment about what they have heard or experienced in this regard and Malik offers some insights as well. From this slide the instructor transitions into a discussion of the IDC worldviews, which he explains represent the complexity with which people experience

culture. He proceeds to present the material primarily by lecturing, posing questions to students from time to time. He adheres relatively closely to the curriculum instructions. He provides an example of a time he felt he was in Polarization and a student gives an example of something her host mother said that demonstrated Reversal. Malik spends more time discussing Minimization—the most commonly-held worldview in general and within his class—than any of the other worldviews, mentioning that it is a comfortable place to be and that many human rights and religious groups, for example, embody this worldview. When he completes the PowerPoint, he gives students a handout on the IDC and then checks the time, at which point he sees there are only ten minutes left of class.

Malik then changes to another PowerPoint presentation, this one on Paige's (1993b) intensity factors. He mentions that these were discussed briefly during the online pre-departure orientation they all attended and asks what the students remember about the intensity factors. No one answers, and Malik begins to read through the top ten intensity factors (listed on a slide) very quickly. Following that slide there is one slide about each intensity factor, and Malik goes through these very quickly, skipping several altogether. Then he hands out a rating scale while asking students to identify which factors are the most intense for them. Students have barely begun—a few are still asking for clarification about the rating system—when Malik starts pointing to students and asking them to tell him their top three intensity factors. Most students are obviously still trying to choose their top three as they answer. When Allison quickly lists her top three, Malik asks why language is not on her list. Allison seems a bit taken aback and simply replies that no, language is not one of the most intense factors for her. Malik's colleague Ellen has tallied the students' answers on the board as follows: Visibility – 7; Language – 5; Power/Control – 4; Status – 3; Expectations – 1; Immersion – 1.

Malik wraps up the class by explaining he has e-mailed students with instructions for the next field report and some related readings. There is a brief discussion about when a few things are due and what assignments they have left to do in the semester. When the class is over, six female students stay to talk to Ellen about a matter that came up during class. The topic of that conversation and what led to it are detailed in the 'Critical Incident' section at the end of this chapter.

Session #2: Intercultural Communication

In the second session of the Seminar that I observe, Malik again begins by asking students what they learned in the last class. When someone mentions the intensity factors, Malik

asks if any of those stress factors have become more evident to them since the discussion. Two students comment on the fact that they have noticed certain stress factors have become less intense over time, and they provide examples from their own experience. Malik wraps up the review by saying it is important not to just study theory, but to draw connections between the theory and their personal experiences.

The topic of this session is intercultural communication. After previewing what they will do in class, Malik gives students a handout with a list of types of nonverbal communication. After students read through the list on their own, Malik instructs them to turn the paper over and then asks them to recall all the types of nonverbal communication they can remember. After they do so, Malik asks which of the nonverbals students feel are most important when communicating in their host country. Students express their opinions, with others sometimes agreeing or arguing the contrary. For example, one student says facial expressions are the most important, and another student, Zoey, responds that she has noticed facial expressions are not used much. A third student, Ann, explains that facial expressions are a major way of communicating in her host family, but that the expressions are small. There ensues a relatively lengthy conversation—in which all of the students participate to at least some extent—about nonverbal communication and how it has played a role in the students' experience. Malik responds from time to time with questions that seem meant to encourage students to think from another perspective. He also remains silent much of the time, allowing the students to respond to each other's comments. Finally, he concludes the conversation by asking students to vote on the nonverbal that they feel creates the most miscommunication between U.S. Americans and host country nationals. On the board, he circles the top four as identified by the students: eye contact, silence, tone, and gestures.

Next, Malik gives students a handout on communication styles that includes three different continuums: degree of directness (direct/indirect), importance of face (more/less important), and role of context (high/low context). He chooses students at random to read the explanations aloud, and then he asks students to mark on each continuum where they think the U.S. majority and host culture majority fall, stressing that the point is not to put cultures into boxes, but that it is about identifying norms. After a few minutes of silence for the students to do the activity, they discuss. They talk about each of the continuums, with students again relating their choices to their own experience in the culture, while other students respectfully disagree based on their own experience. The instructor asks probing questions along the way. For example, one student says that if his host mother is upset with him, she does not tell him directly

but instead lets him know in some other indirect way. A few students respond that their host family tells them directly if they do something wrong. Zoey says she is confused because local people tend to be direct about some things and indirect about others; as an example, she says locals tell people very directly if they think they are fat. Malik asks if that comment is indeed direct. Another student responds that she has noticed her host mother only tells her she is getting bigger in front of the host mother's friends. The student says she thinks maybe her host mother is indirectly bragging about her own cooking.

For the last part of the class, Malik explains that the students will work in three groups, each of which will be assigned one of the top three nonverbals they identified earlier as particularly important in the host culture (eye contact, silence, or tone). He hands out instructions for the next activity and reads aloud what the students need to do. Then he puts them into groups, splitting up Jane and Ann—the two students with the highest initial IDI scores—who are sitting next to each other. In this exercise, students are supposed to create a skit in which there is miscommunication due to the type of nonverbal communication they have been assigned, highlighting the differences between the intended and received messages (by performing the skit and at the same time holding up large cue cards that indicate what each person is actually thinking).

The groups then work on their skits for about twenty minutes. As they work, I listen in to the extent I can; it sounds like most groups begin by recalling relevant stories from their own experiences. Malik is in and out of the class while the students work and walks around the room listening in when he can. Once they are ready, each of the groups performs its skit. For example, one group acts out a skit in which a U.S. American student experiences a great deal of awkward silence; however, the host sister in the skit feels no such awkwardness but is simply focused on what she is doing. Another skit is about a local man approaching a U.S. female student for her phone number, and the other is about a host mother whose sense of humor is misunderstood by her U.S. student. There is a good deal of laughing during and after the skits.

Once each group has performed, Malik facilitates a debrief by asking what could be done to fill the communication gaps that were demonstrated in the skits; two students share their thoughts. Then the instructor asks students what they have learned during this lesson about communicating in the host culture. Lucy mentions she has noticed people in the host culture tend to have a joking nature, so maybe instead of getting worked up about things, the best solution is to joke back. A few students make comments to the effect that it can be hard to know if someone is joking, and they would not want to joke back and end up offending someone. Zoey gives an

example of when she tried out joking herself and it worked well. She says that when a cab driver refused to give her back her change, emphasizing how broke his family was, she responded that if he did not give her back the change, her own family would be broke. Up until that moment, she said things had been very tense, but when she made that comment, the driver laughed and gave her the change. Another student gives an example of a time she saw a Peace Corps member also use joking effectively.

Malik asks if there is anything they have not discussed about communication that the students feel is important. A few students make comments or ask questions about what is okay in certain situations and the instructor provides his opinion. As the class wraps up, one student comments that she takes comfort in the fact that they are “awkward as a group”—that knowing others are having awkward experiences too makes her feel less alone. Jane responds that silence is not necessarily awkward, “it’s just awkward to us.”

Malik reminds the students about the due date for their field reports and says he has e-mailed more details. Class ends, having lasted close to two hours rather than the typical hour-and-a-half.

Primary Observations

One of my primary observations from the Seminar in Africa is that the nature of instruction was very different from what I observed in Western Europe. More specifically, *Malik followed the curriculum materials and instructions more closely than the instructors at the other site*. However, the desire to get through all of the materials seemed to create a somewhat rushed feeling at times. Although the two classes I observed in Africa were markedly different with regards to the level of interaction, in general the class there appeared to be more lecture-based than the class in Western Europe. In addition, on several occasions Malik incorporated site-specific examples into the PowerPoint presentations.

I also noticed that *students in Africa found connections between the class concepts and theories and their own experiences quite easily*. It is difficult to know whether this is due to the students themselves, the instructor, the experience and the cultural context, the fact that the Seminar was taught in their native language, or a combination of all of those factors. What is clear is that the instructor asked specific, probing, and sometimes challenging questions that went beyond simply asking students to think about why something was the way it was.

It was also noticeable that there was a *wider range of intercultural development among the students* in the Seminar in Africa than in Western Europe. In addition, *it seemed more evident*

in Africa that the instructor was trying to take into account students' intercultural worldviews when teaching. Comments students made ranged from those typical of Polarization to demonstrations of Acceptance and even Adaptation. On several occasions, when one student would make a comment indicative of a more monocultural mindset, another student would respond in a way that revealed a more intercultural mindset. Malik seemed to encourage this by either asking other students to respond to their classmates' comments or by staying silent to allow that to happen naturally. Also, on at least one occasion, he arranged groups for a task in a way that seemed to take into account students' intercultural worldviews, splitting up the two most interculturally-developed students.

In addition, *Malik rarely seemed to "explain" the culture to students or give clear answers to why certain things are the way they are.* As mentioned earlier, he would instead respond to questions with questions, ask the students to respond to each others' comments, or suggest they test out their assumptions in the local culture. With regards to this last approach, this seemed to demonstrate an attempt to teach around the Experiential Learning Cycle, as Kolb's (1984) model and the Seminar curriculum encourage. One example mentioned previously is when some students said they had found or heard that joking could help ease tense situations and Malik suggested others try it out. This was a demonstration of encouraging students to test out their new knowledge (known as Active Experimentation in Kolb's model).

Another important thing I noticed, however, is that at least *some students brought up what they felt were important concerns, but often left the Seminar feeling these concerns were not sufficiently addressed.* For an example, see the 'Critical Incident' section at the end of this chapter. One of the biggest issues seemed to revolve around gender—that is, how the female student majority in the class felt they were treated by local males.

Findings from the Student Interviews

Table 12 offers an overview of the coding categories and primary themes from the student interviews. Many of the themes listed here have further sub- and sub-sub-themes, which are not included in this chart. Instead, the findings are reported by category and the full coding structure of each category is elaborated upon in the appropriate section. Note that the word "theme" is sometimes also used to refer to sub-themes and sub-sub-themes for the sake of simplicity. Throughout this section, whenever a student is named, the site at which they were studying is listed in parentheses after their name (WE = Western Europe; Af = Africa).

Table 12. Student Interviews: Overarching Coding Structure

<p>Milieu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most beneficial aspects of the study abroad experience• What students are learning from the study abroad experience• Challenge level of the study abroad experience• Seminar context <p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most beneficial aspects of curriculum• Curriculum repetitive and simplistic• Learning Styles• Cultural Partners <p>Instructors and Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Positive regard for instructors• Student-centered vs. teacher-centered• Cultural background of instructor <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Motivation for studying abroad• Seminar participants a diverse group <p>Role of the Seminar in Student Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stepping back and reflecting• Discussing experience• Affects how students engage the experience• Framework for experience• Asking ‘Why?’• Seeing from another perspective• Processing the experience• Suspending judgment• Increased self-awareness

Milieu

The first category is that of the ‘Milieu,’ which is one of Schwab’s (1983) four commonplaces of education. The milieu refers to the contexts in which the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad and its participants’ learning takes place. In my interviews with the students, I asked them not only about their experience with the Seminar, but also more generally about their experience abroad in order to get an idea of what contextual factors may influence their learning through the Seminar. Within the ‘Milieu’ there are four themes, each with several sub-themes of their own. Table 13 outlines these themes and indicates where each emerged—in Western Europe (WE), Africa (Af), or both.

Table 13. Student Interviews: Milieu Category

‘Milieu’ Themes	<i>Where did the theme emerge?</i>	
	Western Europe	Africa
• Most beneficial aspects of the study abroad experience	X	X
○ Homestay	X	X
▪ Positive homestay experience	X	
▪ Homestay challenging but positive experience	(1 reference)	X
○ Programmatic elements	X	X
○ Other engagement opportunities	X	X
• What students are learning from the study abroad experience	X	X
○ Personal growth and self-awareness	X	X
○ Learning about another culture	X	X
○ Learning about their own U.S. culture	X	X
○ Language skills	X	X
○ Learning about development		X
○ Learning about being a racial minority		X
• Challenge level of the study abroad experience	X	X
○ Experience is challenging but good	(1 reference)	X
○ Experience is easier than expected	X	
○ Cultural differences and challenges	X	X
▪ Race and gender		X
▪ Language	X	X
▪ Religion		X
○ Academically unchallenging		X
• Seminar context	X	X
○ Small, intimate size	X	X
○ Sitting in a circle	X	X
○ Language of instruction	X	
○ Get outside the classroom	X	X

Most Beneficial Aspects of the Study Abroad Experience

Since one of the secondary research questions of this study asks what aspects of the experience students consider particularly supportive of their intercultural development, I posed this question to them during our interviews. Their answers constitute the theme ‘Most beneficial aspects of the study abroad experience,’ which is comprised of three sub-themes: ‘Homestay,’ ‘Programmatic elements,’ and ‘Other engagement opportunities.’

Homestay

When asked what aspects of the study abroad experience were having the biggest impact on their intercultural development, learning, and growth, students resoundingly identified the homestay. In fact, every single student in the study mentioned his or her homestay in response to this question. They used expressions like “huge,” “best,” and “most worthwhile” to describe the impact of that experience. For example, Zoey (Af) commented, “I feel like it’s the host family that’s really one of the most worthwhile parts of the entire experience.”

Several students talked about the insider perspective they get from living with locals, especially compared to if they were to be living together. Angela (Af) explained, “I can’t really imagine being here and not living with a host family. I don’t think it would be the same experience. I think that you gain such in-depth access into the culture.”

Positive homestay experience. Although all of the students felt their homestay experience was one of the most beneficial aspects of their time abroad, they tended to speak about it in qualitatively different ways at the two sites. In Western Europe, students generally described this simply as a positive experience. That is, five out of the six students in Western Europe had only good things to say about their host family and their experience living with them. They described their host families as “kind,” “great,” and “sweet,” and talked about how “comfortable” they were with their families. For example, when asked about her experience with her host family, Sofia (WE) said, “They’re very kind (...), very easy to talk to.”

Jake (WE) said his host family experience was “perfect,” explaining, “My host mother is so easy to be around and just a pleasure to talk to. [...] I couldn’t believe that after five days of living there, I felt like I was at home. I felt completely comfortable.” Amelia (WE) also spoke of how comfortable she was with her host mother. When asked about the most beneficial aspects of her experience, she responded:

Definitely my homestay. When [family and friends from back home] ask me, ‘What is your favorite thing about [your host country]?’ I’m like, ‘My host mom!’ [...] She’s a great cook (...) and she eats, like, the same food that I do, which is also really nice (...). It’s so easy to talk to her. [...] And when I go home, I feel like I’m home. And I’m almost so comfortable there that I don’t want to leave.

Homestay challenging but positive experience. On the other hand, although the students in Africa also identified the homestay as one of the most beneficial aspects of their experience,

almost all of them spoke of it as a “challenging but positive” experience. They did not describe their homestay experiences as “comfortable,” as many of the students in Western Europe did, but instead used words like “challenging” and “difficult.” Yet they felt they were learning a lot through the homestay experience. For example, Angela (Af) said, “[L]iving with a host family. [...] It’s been challenging, but I feel like that’s what I’ve learned the most from.” Allison (Af) explained, “I think the host family situation (...) has a lot of positives and negatives. But that has also taught me a lot about culture (...). I know (...) I can’t judge all of the people based on my one family, but that’s been eye-opening.”

Several students described some of the particular challenges they had experienced in their homestays. Emma (Af) said that “being in an extended homestay is a challenge” and explained that it took her a long time to figure out the family dynamics. For example, she said she did not know whether or not her family was polygamous at first. A number of students described in more depth how the challenges were contributing to their learning. For example, about her homestay experience, Lucy (Af) explained, “I feel like I have less control over my experience, which frustrates me, but I also feel like it’s stretched me to grow a little more and to kind of learn to adjust to situations that I don’t really have control over.”

Josh (Af) talked about how cultural differences contributed to the challenges he was experiencing with his host family:

At the end of the program, I think I’ll say host families and just the whole thing overall is a good experience, but incredibly challenging. Just the cultural differences...I did not feel at all welcome when I first moved in. My American cultural background says that when you are hosting someone in your house you need to show them that you want them there, that you want to [get to] know them. [...] And that’s not the case here. People get to know each other more slowly. [...] So that was hard.

Similarly, Angela (Af) said, “It was really hard in the beginning because there was a lot silence and you don’t really know if they like you.” Nonetheless, over time she had become very close with her host family.

Of the six students in the Seminar at the Western Europe site, only one mentioned any challenging aspects of the experience. When asked her about the homestay, Sarah (WE) responded:

It’s good. My family is really, really nice. I find it hard because I don’t know how much time is appropriate to spend with them. [...] They watch *a lot* of TV.

I understand it's part of the culture (...) but it's frustrating for me to sit there with them and watch TV because I'm not talking to them. [...] And they smoke in the living room, which is hard for me to sit there. [...] And so I feel like I'm not sure how much time I should be spending with them versus spending in my room or outside of the house.

To summarize, all of the participants in this study identified their homestay as the most beneficial or one of the most beneficial aspects of their experience and as something that was significantly impacting their intercultural learning and growth. However, there was a qualitative difference in how students at the two sites spoke about their homestay experience. In Western Europe, they tended to describe it simply in positive terms, whereas the students in Africa described their experience as difficult and challenging, yet still very beneficial.

Programmatic Elements

Apart from the homestay, students also identified many other 'Programmatic elements' that they felt were contributing significantly to their intercultural learning. Programmatic elements refer to aspects of their particular CIEE program. The homestay, of course, is a programmatic element. However, I separated it out because of the frequency with which students mentioned it. There did not appear to be any specific aspects of the program that the students considered nearly as significant as the homestay. Instead, students mentioned a wide array of things. They discussed particular classes in which they were enrolled, the on-site orientation, the CIEE staff, and an internship experience. Site-specific program elements that the students discussed included the language commitment program and the direct enrollment aspect in Western Europe, and the rural visit and 'Society and Culture' class in Africa.

Several students in Africa mentioned they enjoyed the courses in which they were able to discuss issues relevant to their experience. For example, Ann (Af) said, "I do appreciate in our courses that we talk a lot about issues that (...) [give] background to things that happen in our daily lives." Emma (Af) mentioned the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad directly in response to the question about the aspects of the experience from which she is learning the most.

One student each in Western Europe and Africa identified the local CIEE staff as one of the aspects of the experience that was most benefiting their learning. For example, Angela (Af) commented:

Having [Malik] and [Ellen] to talk to, that's definitely been helpful. [...] Whenever I'm confused about something, we just ask [Malik] and [Ellen], 'Is

this normal?' [...] Even if they are busy, they will make themselves available to answer questions.

Amelia (WE) made a similar remark about the support provided by the staff in Western Europe:

I feel like if I did need anything, I could go to anyone in this office and ask about it, which is one of the best things about study abroad—that you're not alone in a foreign country. At least [at this site], from what I've seen, there's a pretty strong support network. And that really encourages learning and it just helps you have a better experience, I think.

Jake (WE) said the on-site orientation at the beginning of the semester was one of the things from which he learned the most, explaining, "That basically prepared you for what you were going to see and what you were going to experience." For example, he said his host family goes out to lunch together on Sundays "and they just scream at each other and cut each other off," but he was prepared for that thanks to the orientation he received about general local customs.

In Western Europe, a few students said that enrolling directly in local university classes was one feature of the program from which they were learning a lot. For example, Maeve (WE) said she appreciated experiencing a class for native speakers, and also commented:

It's interesting to see, like, when they have to write a research paper, our professor (...) was showing us all the resources we can use, and like half of the websites were in English. I never really realized how much English there is in the world.

Lastly, one student also said she found the language commitment program in Western Europe particularly beneficial. Sarah (WE) commented:

It's pushing me to (...) improve [my language skills] a lot faster than I would otherwise. [...] Sometimes I get really frustrated. But it's part of this experience, and the reason that I'm here is to become fluent in [the language] and it's helping me a lot.

Other Engagement Opportunities

The third theme within 'Most beneficial aspects of the study abroad experience' is 'Other engagement opportunities.' In addition to citing programmatic elements that were contributing significantly to their intercultural learning, students also mentioned self-initiated forms of engagement. More specifically, students referred to relationships they had formed or activities in

which they were engaged. This theme was not nearly as significant as the first two in this category, however.

Jake (WE), for example, said he was learning a lot from the local friends he had made. He explained, “They know where to go, (...) things that work best... And you learn vocabulary, you learn grammar, you learn to understand better.” Two students in Western Europe mentioned getting involved with and making friends through different local religious groups. Jen (WE), for example, said that she and another student on the program were attending a local church regularly and had started to socialize with people they had met there. She commented, “So that’s been fun and just something to immerse yourself into another culture.”

Allison (Af) talked about what she was learning through her involvement in restarting an NGO previously begun by CIEE students:

We (...) work with a group of girls, [ages] nine to fourteen, in a school and teach them about leadership, health issues (...), public speaking, dance sports, and different things like that to kind of help them gain self confidence. And I’ve learned a lot through that just because the girls are so different in their raising from people in America. [...] It’s really interesting to see where women are in this country (...). So it’s (...) a lot of big issues that I don’t think I’d have ever faced if I’d just stayed in the [United States].

To summarize, students cited three aspects of their experience that were most significant to their learning. The first two are both related to the structure of the study abroad program, whereas the third is outside the scope of the program. First, students overwhelmingly cited the homestay as the aspect of their experience that was most significant in their learning. Second in importance were other aspects of the organized study abroad program, although there was no one programmatic element that stood above the others in importance like the homestay did. Third, students also identified other engagement opportunities that they had initiated on their own, although this theme was not nearly as strong as the first two.

What Students are Learning from the Study Abroad Experience

In addition to asking students about the most beneficial aspects of their experience abroad, I also asked them what they were learning from the general experience. This is another aspect of the milieu surrounding the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad because what students are learning from their experience abroad obviously impacts what they might potentially learn through the Seminar. Four sub-themes emerged across the two sites: ‘Personal growth and

self-awareness,' 'Learning about another culture,' 'Learning about their own U.S. culture,' and 'Language skills.' Two additional sub-themes emerged only in Africa: 'Learning about development' and 'Learning about being a racial minority.'

Personal Growth and Self-Awareness

Students at both sites widely recognized that the study abroad experience was contributing to their 'Personal growth and self-awareness.' Along with 'Learning about another culture,' this was the most prominent sub-theme with regards to what students were learning from the study abroad experience. Students talked about "personal growth," "learning about myself," and becoming more "responsible" and "independent." For example, Ann (Af) remarked, "It's been especially good for me, confidence-wise and growing into myself."

Emma (Af) said a lot of what she had gained through the experience was personal growth, and offered the following example: "I've learned to sort of put myself out there and keep asking questions and trying to remain integrated in the [host] family and not slack or become absent from the house too much...or find the balance." For Allison (Af), this process of learning about herself was inspiring as many questions as answers. She commented, "I'm learning a lot about *myself*, but yet still at the same time being confused [about], like, who I am, what I want to do, how I fit into the world, where I belong—a lot of questions." Allison (Af) later added, "[I'm] also just learning about myself as a woman."

Several students in Western Europe related the challenges of speaking a foreign language to the personal growth they felt they had experienced. For example, Amelia (WE) commented:

I'm learning about myself, just as a person, which is kind of cool. I was just so terrified of speaking [the target language]. [...] But coming here and having to speak, and people telling me from day one, 'Oh, you speak [the language] really well,' was so helpful and just really helped me get out of my shell (...). [...] And every day I'm still excited when I can just have a conversation with anyone. [...] It's just showing me that I'm not as shy or scared as I thought I was.

Jake (WE) said he had "grown as an individual," due, at least in part, to the experience of having to function in his non-native language. He explained:

Just self-confidence with regards to things that I maybe had taken for granted before—situations in which I would have been a little more reserved, and now I'll probably go back to the states and be like, 'Well, what's the worst that can happen? At least I can speak the language.' [...] Because that's kind of the

worst fear here—you're standing there and somebody says something ten times and you still don't get it. So I think it's definitely changed me. [...] I've learned a lot about myself, what I'm capable of.

Zoey (Af) talked about how the difference in physical amenities in her host culture forced her to engage in and learn from some difficult self-reflection:

Honestly, I've learned a lot about what I expect out of the world...and what things I took for granted. I think one of the hardest parts here was at the very beginning. I was really not super happy about the physical amenity situation and I just felt absolutely crushing guilt about that. [...] That was really hard, but it was definitely eye-opening (...). And it makes me think a lot about (...) what my conception of the world was... including my subconscious conception, things that I didn't really think about.

Learning About Another Culture

Students at both sites also widely said they were 'Learning about another culture.' This sub-theme and the last were the most widely discussed with regards to what students were learning from the experience. In most cases, students talked specifically about what they had learned about their host culture, but in some cases they spoke more broadly about learning about different cultures in general. Ann (Af) commented, "I've learned so much about [this country] and the lives of [local] people." Maeve (WE) explained, "Probably what I've learned is just more about the [host] culture. [...] This experience has kind of opened my eyes to other cultures and just a different way of living, a different way of seeing lots of things." When asked what she was learning from the experience, Zoey (Af) responded, "I'm definitely just learning a lot about how the world is different in different places. A lot of it I knew before, (...) [but] you just absolutely can't understand things that you have not experienced yourself."

Several students talked about specific things they were learning about the host culture. For example, Josh (Af) discussed what he was learning through one of his internship experiences. He explained, "I teach English classes (...) every Friday. So I can see just how kids treat a teacher. I've stayed after and I've seen how the actual teacher teaches and how it's especially different. [...] So I see that system."

Learning About Their Own U.S. Culture

In addition to learning about other cultures, several students across sites said the experience had taught them about their own U.S. culture as well. For example, Josh (Af) commented:

Going to another culture, you learn so much about your own culture. I used to be an American-basher. [...] I can appreciate it more, having stepped back and seen it from a different point of view and seeing the things that we have that the majority of other countries don't.

Similarly, Maeve (WE) said the experience of being outside her own culture helped her see it better. She explained:

Probably what I've learned is just more about—well, the [local] culture—but the American culture too. Like when I'm doing things here and thinking about how it would be if I were still in the U.S., or how we do things there. Because I've never been taken out of that to look at it from somewhere else, someone else's point of view. And it's just very different (...).

Language Skills

All but one of the students in Western Europe, along with a couple of students in Africa, mentioned that their language skills were improving as a result of their experience abroad. When asked what she was learning from her experience, Ann (Af) answered succinctly, “Linguistically, tons.” Jane (Af) recognized that she had not only improved her skills in French, but also in the predominant local language. Amelia (WE) commented, “Finding out that my [language ability] is better than I think it is—and also that it's gotten better—is cool.” Jake (WE) said, “After being here for two months (...) my confidence [has] risen in [my language skills] as I've learned an immense amount.”

To summarize this theme thus far, students across both sites said that first and foremost they were learning about another culture and about themselves. In addition, they were gaining language skills and learning about their own U.S. culture.

Learning About Development

Two additional themes emerged with regards to what students were learning from the experience abroad, but these were cited only by students in Africa. First, several students at that

site said that they were ‘Learning about development.’ For example, when asked what she was learning from the experience abroad, Angela (Af) responded, “A lot about development, what development is. I’m not learning that in our classes, but just seeing it on a daily basis.” Many students who were participating in this particular program expressed interest in the possibility of working in development and/or in Africa in the future, and they were obviously reflecting on the role of Westerners and the West in such work. For example, Allison (Af) commented:

We’ve been talking a lot about what our roles are as Westerners. I do want to work in non-profits and things like that. There’s also, like, the Western influence and trying to avoid coming in with your own agenda and changing everything because of what you think is right. So it’s just a lot of worrying about that.

More than any other student, Lucy (Af) spoke extensively and passionately on the topic of development and what she was learning in that regard. For example, she commented:

I feel like I’m learning that development just has a lot of issues that cause some really, really serious problems. And I think that’s been the biggest thing that I’m going to take from this experience, is just learning about the dynamics, the culture of dependence that’s fostered by the way development operates. [...] I feel like in development people aren’t really able to own their own labor or to own their own development. I feel like success is always attributed to the people who come in and help and never to the people who are actually living in the community. And I have problems with that.

Learning About Being a Racial Minority

The second sub-theme that emerged only in Africa is that students said they were ‘Learning about being a racial minority.’ All but one of the students enrolled in the Seminar at this site were European-American, whereas most people in the host country were Black African. The topic of race came up quite often during my interviews with students at this site and several of them specifically said one of the things they were learning from their time abroad was what it is like to be a racial minority. For example, when asked what she was learning from her experience abroad, Allison (Af) answered straightforwardly, “That it really kind of sucks to be the minority in a place where you very much stick out.” In addition, when I asked her what aspects of the experience were most contributing to her learning, she answered, “I think definitely that, the race. The race part is *huge*.” Ann (Af) responded similarly, but in more detail, when asked about what she was learning from the experience:

Well, really getting perspective on how it feels to be a minority. Because it feels like all eyes are watching all the time. [...] And so that's really interesting for me [coming from] my school, where the population is probably about 90% white, to be able to understand what it feels like when everyone else looks different than you.

Challenge Level of the Study Abroad Experience

Another important theme that emerged from the student interviews within the milieu category has to do with the 'Challenge level of the study abroad experience.' This refers to the extent to which students felt challenged by the experience of being abroad and the aspects of the experience that students identified as particularly challenging or unchallenging. This theme is comprised of four sub-themes: 'Experience is challenging but good,' 'Experience is easier than expected,' 'Cultural differences and challenges,' and 'Academically unchallenging.'

Experience is Challenging but Good

Just as they did with regards to the homestay, students at the two sites spoke in qualitatively different ways about the experience abroad in general. This was most evident in the interviews with students in Africa, who almost all described their experience abroad—much like their homestay—as “challenging,” “difficult,” “frustrating,” and “hard,” yet at the same time said it was “positive” and “beneficial,” and that they “love it.” As Lucy (Af) stated simply, “It’s been good and it’s been hard.” When I asked Josh (Af) about his experience abroad, he chuckled while responding, “Oh gosh! It’s really frustrating. [...] It’s hard, very hard. But I’ve loved it.” Of her experience, Emma (Af) said, “It’s definitely been challenging. [...] But it’s really been a great learning experience. I don’t think I could have been challenged in a more positive way.” Allison (Af) tied this in with her experience being a racial minority in the host country, mentioned previously, stating:

[My experience] is good. It’s difficult. We’re learning a lot, I think, about ourselves and...different issues that we kind of go through that I know a lot of my friends probably won’t really experience, especially being a white person in America. It’s beneficial, definitely. I love it.

When discussing some of the particular challenges she had faced, Ann (Af) remarked, “Any time you have a trial, you know...when you overcome that, you grow a little bit each time. So this has been a really good experience with just circumstantial trials.”

Sarah (WE)—the only student in Western Europe who mentioned experiencing any challenges with her host family (see the previous ‘Homestay’ theme)—was also the only student there who described her experience abroad in general as challenging. When asked about her experience, Sarah (WE) said:

It’s good. I’m a little homesick the last couple weeks, but I think that’s just because I’m not as busy. The first month and a half or month we were seeing all the new things and doing so much, and now I’ve had time to settle in. This is my life. And so...it’s a little bit unnerving at times, but it’s fine. I love it.

Experience is Easier than Expected

Unlike Sarah (WE) and so many of the students in Africa who described their experience as challenging but good, two of the students in Western Europe said they felt the experience was easier than they had expected. That is, they were not experiencing the cultural challenges that they had anticipated. For example, when asked about her experience, Maeve (WE) responded:

It’s good. I haven’t really had any problems. [...] I was really worried about taking all of the classes in [the target language] and having that be an issue, but it really hasn’t been. And all the professors are really great. I haven’t had any problems.

Amelia (WE) said she was excited to find things in her host culture were more like home than she had expected:

It’s also just cool to find out that things that I thought would be really different aren’t at all. [...] I’m so excited every day when I walk around and I’m like, ‘Oh my gosh, it’s the same.’ Because coming here I was like, ‘Oh, study abroad. Everything’s going to be different because it’s a different language, different culture, different (you fill in the blank),’ and it’s not. I go home and talk to my host mom, and she and I could have been friends in another life. We’re so alike in some ways.

While only two students explicitly said they were not experiencing the cultural challenges they had anticipated, it is noteworthy that the students in Western Europe—apart from Sarah—did not speak of challenges they had experienced, whereas almost every student in Africa did.

Cultural Differences and Challenges

There were several aspects of the experience abroad that students cited as particularly challenging. As mentioned previously, the students in Africa spoke much more about the difficulties and challenges of the experience, so it is perhaps not surprising that the aspects they found most challenging relate to the cultural differences present at that site. The following comment, made by Emma (Af), summarizes this theme well: “The culture is very, very different. The language is different. And religion is different. So there have been a lot of new things to face.” Similarly, Jane (Af) explained, “It’s a totally different culture. It’s totally foreign to anything, really, that we’ve seen.”

The aspects of the experience that students found most challenging were: ‘Race and gender,’ ‘Language,’ and ‘Religion.’ The first and last were mentioned only in Africa, while the second was also mentioned by one student in Western Europe. ‘Race and gender’ was mentioned much more frequently than the other two sub-themes.

Race and gender. ‘Race and gender’ are grouped together as one sub-theme because they were so often mentioned in conjunction with one another. This is likely due to the fact that eight out of the eleven students enrolled in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad at the Africa site were European-American females. Several of them spoke extensively about the challenges involved in being a “white woman in Africa.” They discussed how they felt their race and gender affected how they were treated by locals. Allison (Af) stated succinctly, “My main two issues have just been being a white person and being a woman.” She later spoke about this more in depth:

You’re so aware of your skin color. [...] It’s interesting to come here and be faced with such a tax. Like, ‘You’re white, you’re a white woman. You should come with me. You’re supposed to answer my phone call. Why aren’t you giving me your number? Why aren’t you giving me money?’ [...] And it’s difficult...to be refused service or to not be given your change because they’re like, ‘You’re white; it doesn’t matter.’ [...] I’ve just never been confronted with such amount of racism (...) before. So it’s very difficult to handle that (...).

Lucy (Af) discussed many of the same issues as Allison, explaining the mental and emotional toll the challenge of being “a white woman in Africa” sometimes took on her:

Sometimes I feel like the aspects of [the local] culture that can reveal themselves to white people are all of the bad ones. When I’m on the street, I just get sick of

being cat-called all the time. And I brace myself every time I walk by a group of men. And sometimes that just gets exhausting. And it's easy to start making generalizations and (...) approaching situations assuming the worst about them. [...] And so sometimes I just feel like I don't want to interact with people at all because I'm sick of it.

The women were not the only ones to mention being challenged by issues of race, however. After the Seminar session in which they discussed the intensity factors, Josh (Af) commented:

The visibility factor is the hardest thing for me. I hate walk[ing] down the street and I'm the only white person for miles (...) and I'm going to be stared at, and anything I do people are going to notice. So the first couple of days I hated going outside. It's like you're on stage all the time.

Language. The second challenge the students identified was language, although this came up much less frequently than race and gender. Two students in Africa and one student in Western Europe specifically said that language was one of their biggest challenges. For example, Jane (Af) commented, "At first it was hard because my French wasn't all that great. And they speak [a local language] at home, you know?" Emma (Af) also identified language and communication as one of the most challenging aspects of the experience.

Sarah (WE), who was the only one in Western Europe who talked about experiencing any difficulties, explained some of the specific challenges presented by being in a non-English-speaking country:

You know, opening bank accounts and getting my residence card are just so much harder here because of the language barrier. [...] [And] I think it is hard to meet [local] people. Because they seem a little shy and I'm also shy because of the language thing. That's not my personality, but because I don't feel like I can just go up to someone and start a conversation and have them understand me and me understand them, it makes it a lot harder to make friends.

Religion. The third challenge students mentioned was religion. Both of the countries where these students were studying are strongly influenced by a particular religion—Islam in Africa and Catholicism in Western Europe. Given that Catholicism is typically more familiar than Islam to U.S. Americans, it is perhaps not surprising that only the students in Africa talked about being challenged by local religious beliefs and practices. Several students in Africa talked

about religious differences during our interviews, although only three cited this specifically as a particularly challenging aspect of their experience. Jane (Af) explained:

For example, Islam—I knew it was a big thing here. [...] But when I came and I saw how much Islam influences the culture, it just opened my eyes to something that I had never ever in my life known. And it was hard and *really* foreign the first few weeks.

Similarly, Angela (Af) commented, “Living with a Muslim family has been really different for me. Just being in that atmosphere of watching them pray five times a day... or fasting... just everything. Just having to deal with that difference and communicating around that, through that.”

To summarize, perhaps not surprisingly, students in Africa spoke much more than those in Western Europe about the ways in which they felt challenged by their experience abroad. Students talked about three aspects of the experience that were particularly challenging; all of these were related to the ways in which the local culture differs from the students’ home culture. In Africa, students identified race and gender—two issues that were often intertwined—as the biggest challenge presented by the local culture. Language and religious differences also came up, but not nearly as frequently as race and gender.

Academically Unchallenging

Although the students in Africa found the experience more culturally challenging than did those in Western Europe, many of them said it was not academically challenging. In fact, more than half of the students in Africa made a comment to this effect, while no one in Western Europe brought up the topic of academic challenge. Specifically, students in Africa said the classes were quite easy and that they disliked the fact they took all of their classes with other U.S. Americans. For example, when asked about her experience abroad, Angela (Af) responded, “It’s not really challenging academically. But I feel challenged in other ways, culturally. I know the classes are too easy, but other than that I’ve really loved everything else.”

When asked what aspects of the experience he was learning the most from, Josh (Af) responded with a chuckle, “Not the classes.” He went on to elaborate, “You have to take into account that this is [a different educational] system, which is much more lecture-based, a lot less homework. [...] So I just feel like I’ve been goofing off and not learning that much.”

Students in Africa not only tended to find the content of their courses unchallenging, but several also said they disliked that there was little to no immersion with regards to academics. As

Emma (Af) explained, “We’re all in class with other American students. And being on campus, I’ve met other people, but we’re not *really* integrated at all (...). I sort of expected more integration between the [local university] students and us.” Ann (Af) commented on what she saw as a drawback to the limited academic immersion:

I’ve been walking around a lot today and kind of looking at the little groups of American students all over the place. And that’s a little hard for me to deal with because I know that when I walk down the hallway, that’s what I do too. But I don’t think it’s really that it’s the Americans that you’re going for; it’s just the people that you know because you’re in the same classes. And so that’s hard for me with this program.

Seminar Context

The final theme within ‘Milieu’ is the ‘Seminar context.’ I asked students if there were any aspects surrounding the Seminar itself—such as when and where it was taught, who else was enrolled, the classroom setting, the resources, etc.—that they felt had an impact, positive or negative, on their learning. The following four sub-themes emerged: ‘Small, intimate size,’ ‘Sitting in a circle,’ ‘Language of instruction,’ and ‘Get outside the classroom.’

Small, Intimate Size

The contextual factor that the students most widely identified was the size of the Seminar. There were six students enrolled in the Seminar in Western Europe and 11 in Africa, and students at both sites (but especially in Africa) said they appreciated the small size, explaining that it allowed for a more intimate atmosphere in which everyone was able to talk. For example, Jane (Af) commented, “The size of the class should not be any bigger...because it just wouldn’t be possible. You can’t have a Seminar (...) that’s so involved and so... almost intimate.” Lucy (Af) said that the small size of the Seminar forced her to speak up, explaining:

I don’t really do well in large groups. If other people are talking, I don’t really feel the need to talk. And so unless there’s something kind of forcing me to want to put my voice out there, I won’t.

A few students in Africa said they appreciated that there was a cap on the number of students who could enroll in the Seminar and that they had to apply to participate. For example, Allison (Af) commented:

I do like that we had to apply to be part of a smaller group. Because I feel like that works a lot better than in the ‘Society and Culture’ class [where] we’re in a huge group and not everyone can say things. [...] I also like that you kind of get to know the people in the class a bit better...in that kind of context. You have something to bond about (...).

Similarly, Emma (Af) commented:

I think the size of the class is good. [...] Like ten, eleven, twelve would be fine, but much bigger would be hard to really get comfortable with one another. I think it’s really cool because the people in the class, (...) we’ve been able to get to a level of comfort that is just really beneficial and we’re able to talk candidly about sensitive issues.

In Western Europe, the class was even smaller, a fact that Maeve (WE) seemed to value. She explained, “One time it was only four of us and it was right here at this table, and that was probably just the most relaxing one. Because (...) when there’s less people you feel like you can say more.”

Sitting in a Circle

Several students said that being able to sit in a circle or around a table in the Seminar was an important part of the context. As mentioned previously, the students in Africa arranged their desks in a circle each session. In Western Europe, one session of the Seminar that I observed was held around a circular table in the Resident Director’s office, whereas the other two times it was held in a classroom where the desks were arranged somewhat haphazard.

With regards to the class configuration, Amelia (WE) commented, “I like when we can just sit around a table and talk.” Jane (Af) explained the importance of the configuration:

It’s good that we sit in a circle. That’s necessary for a Seminar. I just think that helps because you can see peoples’ faces, look them in the eye, and when other people talk you can see the expression or the way everyone reacts to what is said.

Josh (Af) felt improvements could be made with respect to the seating arrangement in the Seminar in Africa:

It’s kind of an awkward classroom. We kind of get in a circle, but it’s just weird. If we had a round table, that’d be sweet. That’s something this country needs, a round table...or this university. Because I feel like it’s more inclusive.

Language of Instruction

As mentioned previously, the Seminar was taught in English at the Africa site and in the target language at the Western Europe site. ‘Language of instruction’ of the Seminar emerged as a theme, although a minor one, in Western Europe only. Maeve (WE) emphasized on several occasions that she appreciated the Seminar was conducted in the local language. For example, she commented, “It’s a time to still speak [the target language], but just to talk about what we’re doing and how we’re doing.” At another point in our interview, she said, “It’s a very laid-back environment, but yet it’s still in [the target language], still keeping with the goal of the whole program.”

Sofia (WE) saw the Seminar as a good environment in which to improve her language skills. In discussing why she enrolled in the Seminar, she explained what the instructors had said about it that she found attractive:

[The instructors] talked about how many [past Seminar participants] ended up leaving with their [language skills] a little bit better than others because they were able to talk together in a group, not be embarrassed. Because they know that our [language skills] [are] not going to be perfect (...) and they can help us and correct us. Like yesterday I noticed I said something wrong and [one of the instructors] was able to correct me.

Sarah (WE) also said she found the way the Seminar instructors spoke the local language to her “inspiring,” and commented, “I just want to sound like them and be able to communicate like they can.”

Get Outside the Classroom

One aspect of the context surrounding the Seminar that several students across the two sites said they disliked is the fact that it is typically taught in a classroom. They found this somewhat contradictory in a seminar about living and learning in another culture and said they would prefer to take the class out into the host culture more often. Jen (WE) explained, “We’re always in the classroom. I think it would be cool if we could go (...) to a different place. Even if it’s just sit outside or go to a café one day and talk about something.” Sarah (WE) concurred, stating:

I think the thing that I would like with this Seminar is for us to go outside of the CIEE building and go to a café and just talk, or do something where we’re really

seeing the culture and experiencing the language and doing something besides just sitting in one of these rooms.

Lucy (Af) focused primarily on getting away from a formal classroom environment more than taking the Seminar into the local culture. She commented, “If I had my way, all my classes would be outside or we’d all just sit on the floor, maybe with some pillows around.” Desks, she said, are spaces where she goes to get things done, whereas if she needs to generate ideas or think more freely, she goes outside.

To summarize, there are a number of contextual factors that the students felt affected the Seminar in either positive or negative ways. Many students said that they appreciated the small, intimate size. In addition, several mentioned they found it beneficial when they sat in a circle or around a table. Some of the students in Western Europe mentioned liking the fact that the Seminar there was taught in the local language. One way in which students felt the Seminar could be improved is by taking it outside the classroom and into the local culture more often.

Curriculum

The next category that emerged, which aligns with Schwab’s (1983) concept of the subject matter, is ‘Curriculum.’ It is important to remember that the basic Seminar curriculum is the same at all sites, and the ways in which it differs across locations are due in large part to the implementation choices made by the instructors. This category refers primarily to the pre-designed curriculum, although students’ experiences of the curriculum are obviously affected by how it is implemented. I asked students their thoughts on the strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and about key curriculum components. Four themes, several with their own sub-themes, emerged within ‘Curriculum.’ They are: ‘Most beneficial aspects of the curriculum,’ ‘Curriculum repetitive and simplistic,’ ‘Learning Styles,’ and ‘Cultural Partners.’ Table 14 outlines these themes and sub-themes, highlighting where each emerged.

Most Beneficial Aspects of the Curriculum

When asked what aspects of the curriculum they found most beneficial, some students discussed specific activities or lessons, while others answered more broadly. Four different sub-themes emerged: ‘Being forced (in writing) to reflect on and analyze personal experience,’ ‘Goal setting,’ ‘Personal inventories,’ and ‘Learning about cultural values (of own and other cultures).’ Interestingly, these themes were site-specific. The first three were present in Africa, while the fourth emerged in Western Europe.

Table 14. Student Interviews: Curriculum Category

‘Curriculum’ Themes	<i>Where did the theme emerge?</i>	
	Western Europe	Africa
• Most beneficial aspects of the curriculum	X	X
○ Being forced (in writing) to reflect on and analyze personal experience		X
○ Goal setting		X
○ Personal inventories		X
○ Learning about cultural values (of their own and other cultures)	X	
• Curriculum repetitive and simplistic	X	X
• Learning Styles	X	X
○ Benefits of the learning styles lesson	X	X
▪ Validation of students’ learning styles	(1 reference)	X
▪ Recognition of learning style diversity	(1 reference)	X
○ Level of understanding of relevance of LSI	X	X
▪ Unsure how learning style relates to study abroad experience	X	
▪ Basic understanding of how learning style relates to study abroad	X	X
▪ Deeper understanding of and reflection on relationship between learning style and experience		X
▪ Knowledge of preferred learning style impacting engagement		X
• Cultural Partners	X	X
○ Typically a family member	X	X
○ Positive aspect of curriculum	X	X
▪ Seminar generates questions and topics	X	X
▪ Allows for deeper conversations and questioning		X
○ Not as value-added as it could be	X	X
▪ Lacks structure and clarity	X	X
▪ Cultural Partner designation insignificant to relationship	X	X
○ Conversations with Cultural Partners	X	X
▪ Sharing culture-specific information	X	
▪ Sharing perspectives		X

Being Forced (in Writing) to Reflect On and Analyze Personal Experience

One of the strongest sub-themes within ‘Most beneficial aspects of curriculum’ is ‘Being forced (in writing) to reflect on and analyze personal experience.’ However, while this was mentioned by approximately half of the students in Africa, it was not discussed by students in Western Europe. Several students specifically mentioned their field report assignments, which

they were required to do multiple times during the semester. These assignments asked the students to reflect on and analyze a personal experience in light of certain concepts or theories they were discussing in class. Many students in Africa said they found this beneficial and that it was good to actually be “forced” to go through such an exercise and then have the opportunity to discuss it in the Seminar. For example, Josh (Af) said, “The homework—like the [field reports] and stuff like that—are good because it makes me reflect....even when I don’t want to.” Jane (Af) also said she found writing and then discussing the field reports helpful, explaining:

[The instructor will] give us (...) questions we have to answer and it usually pertains to something we’ve experienced. And we have to write about it and then reflect on it. It’s usually questions like, ‘How has this changed your view as a whole of whatever it is we’re talking about?’ or ‘How has this made you become more culturally aware?’ [...] Thinking about stuff like that through an experience that I’ve had is really, really beneficial for me, personally.

Ann (Af) said she appreciated being forced to reflect on and write about her experience. She added, “Because a lot of times I’ll think about it briefly, but I won’t really write it out or deeply reflect and question.”

Lucy (Af) also mentioned the field reports, commenting, “It’s been good to be forced to analyze my day-to-day life with the knowledge of the cultural values that I might find here and how those could be operating within society. I think that’s what’s been most helpful for me.” She explained that they are supposed to send their field reports to someone back home and that she found the feedback from her correspondent helpful. She commented, “That’s been really nice to just have another person’s input and to have another perspective with which to think about what I’m experiencing and how I’m interpreting it.”

When asked about how his experience abroad might compare to the experience of students not in the Seminar, Josh (Af) said the field reports help him and the other Seminar participants “think more critically” about their experiences, which keeps them from getting overly frustrated. He explained:

Instead of (...) thinking of an awkward situation as, ‘Man, it’s just an awkward situation,’ like, kind of analyzing it and saying, ‘Yes, it’s an awkward situation, but that’s because this is the way that person is seeing this and this is the way that you’re seeing it, and you guys are not at all meeting.’ Instead of just having a memory of frustration, you can be like, ‘Oh, that was just a cultural

misunderstanding.’ So I feel like we’re less frustrated people [than those not in the Seminar].

Goal Setting

Another aspect of the curriculum students in Africa found particularly beneficial was ‘Goal setting.’ At the beginning of the semester there is an assignment in the Seminar in which participants are asked to create personal goals for the semester and consider how they might go about achieving those goals and how they will know when they have achieved them.

Approximately half of the students in Africa identified this as a beneficial activity. It was not mentioned by students in Western Europe. For example, when asked what aspects of the curriculum she found the most beneficial, Ann (Af) stated succinctly, “The goal assignment is really the one that sticks out the most in my mind.”

Students said they liked the goal-setting activity because helped them “stay on track” or remain “proactive” during their experience. For example, Allison (Af) commented:

I really like the active things that we do, like making plans and goal sets. [...] I think it’s appropriate when you only have four months in a place. Like, listing things you want to accomplish so you don’t—not waste your time—but don’t go home and be like, ‘Darn it. I was there and I didn’t do this.’

Ann (Af) brought up the goal-setting activity when asked if she felt that participating in the Seminar was affecting her experience abroad in any way. She responded:

I think so. I think it has forced me to (...) have goals and try to keep to those goals. [...] I literally actually have a little goal flower on my wall at home—just a little reminder—and so sometimes if I do something that’s going against those goals, then I’m like, ‘Tsk...hmm, maybe I should do that.’

Personal Inventories

Another aspect of the curriculum the students—again, only those in Africa—found beneficial was doing ‘Personal inventories,’ referring to Kolb’s (2005) Learning Styles Inventory (LSI) and the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer, 2007; Hammer & Bennett, 1998) they took at the beginning of the semester. (Although students in Western Europe discussed some beneficial aspects of the Learning Styles Inventory when asked specifically about it—as discussed in the upcoming ‘Learning Styles’ theme—they did not specifically cite this as a particularly valuable aspect of the curriculum.) Students received information from the LSI about

their preferred learning style and also did some in-class activities around that. They were not, however, told their individual IDI scores. Despite this fact, several students mentioned both of these inventories as being beneficial, in large part because they said they liked learning about themselves. For example, Josh (Af) commented, “Just doing the inventories to learn about oneself, that’s interesting and beneficial for me.”

Zoey (Af) said she enjoyed taking the LSI and doing the related activities, adding, “Maybe I only liked it because I’m totally narcissistic and like learning things about my own personality, but I thought it was really interesting.” Allison (Af) made a similar comment:

I really liked the evaluation of our learning styles because I guess I’m selfish and really like to take quizzes about myself. I’ve never known my learning style. [...] So that was cool. I think a lot of us liked that.

Learning About Cultural Values (of Their Own and Other Cultures)

The fourth sub-theme that came out within ‘Most beneficial aspects of curriculum’—and the only significant sub-theme among the students in Western Europe—was ‘Learning about cultural values (of their own and other cultures).’ Three of the Seminar participants in Western Europe mentioned this as one of the most beneficial aspects of the curriculum; however, they did not talk about this—or any other aspect of the curriculum—nearly as extensively as the students in Africa discussed the previous sub-themes. This sub-theme was not mentioned by students in Africa.

When asked if any aspects of the curriculum were helping her intercultural development more than others, Maeve (WE) responded, “Yes. [...] We read about the [host culture] values and then the American values, and (...) that was really interesting.” Jake (WE) responded similarly, stating, “I’d say the articles on how Americans are perceived and how [host country nationals] are perceived. I guess those cultural differences and everything would be the things that stand out.”

To summarize this theme, students in Africa identified more aspects of the curriculum that they found beneficial and spoke more extensively on this topic. They liked the goal-setting activity and personal inventories (including the Learning Styles Inventory and Intercultural Development Inventory), and especially appreciated that the Seminar forced them to reflect on and analyze their personal experience in writing. When asked to identify the beneficial aspects of the curriculum, the students in Western Europe had much less to say, but several did mention that they liked learning about cultural values of their own and the host culture.

Curriculum Repetitive and Simplistic

Whereas students across the sites did not feel the same way about the positive aspects of the curriculum, they were quite in agreement with regards to the criticisms. A strong theme to emerge across sites was ‘Curriculum repetitive and simplistic.’ Approximately half of the students at each site said that the curriculum was “repetitive,” “simplistic,” “obvious,” or “monotonous.” For example, Ann (Af) commented, “A lot of it has been really repetitive. I kind of feel like we’ve talked about the same thing for the last two months.” Allison (Af) agreed, stating, “Basically what we talked about today we’ve learned a few times over, with just maybe different vocabulary.”

Amelia (WE) offered more background on why she felt the Seminar was a bit simplistic for her personally:

I did so much research on study abroad before I went and I read so much literature (...). [...] So a lot of it feels repetitive. A lot of it feels like things that I just know from common sense. [...] I’ve had a lot of intercultural experience even though I’ve only ever been out of the country one time before (...). [...] So it feels kind of dumb sometimes. And sometimes it’s like, ‘Oh, it’s good to have that reinforcement.’

Several students across sites brought up a specific lesson that they found particularly simplistic. The lesson was about stereotypes and cultural generalizations (which, as discussed earlier, is one of the sessions I observed in Western Europe). Jake (WE), for example, referred to the distinction between stereotypes and cultural generalizations as “nitpicky vocabulary,” and said, “The whole ‘Stereotyping: bad’ thing, we learned that in fourth grade.” Allison (Af) shared Jake’s (WE) sentiment that the stereotypes and cultural generalizations class was overly simplistic and too heavily focused on semantics:

We all know what a stereotype is, we know what a cultural generalization is, but we spent a whole class talking about that. And when it came down to it, we kind of figured (...) they’re both the same except one has a lot more fluffy words in it. [...] We know that stereotypes are not good; you shouldn’t make stereotypes. But I think it’s just natural for you to do so (...). [...] And I kind of wish that we went from a different—like an elevated place.

Lucy (Af) summarized what a lot of other students were saying and, like Allison (Af), suggested discussing the topic on a deeper level:

Sometimes I feel like the information that's introduced to us is stuff that we've learned many times before. And I feel like it would be helpful to go a little more in-depth with things instead of spending a class period (...) defining generalizations and how you avoid them.

What this theme makes obvious is that although students at the two sites identified a variety of aspects of the Seminar curriculum that they found beneficial, the majority agreed that the principle weakness was its repetitive and simplistic nature. In this respect, they were particularly critical of the lesson on stereotypes and cultural generalizations.

Learning Styles

Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory forms part of the theoretical and pedagogical framework of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. As mentioned previously, participants take Kolb's (2005) Learning Style Inventory (LSI) at the beginning of the semester to find out their preferred learning style(s)—Concrete Experience (“experiencing”), Reflective Observation (“reflecting”), Abstract Conceptualization (“thinking”), or Active Experimentation (“doing”). They also participate in several in-class activities that are meant to help them understand their own preferred learning style(s), how this relates to their experience abroad, and the importance of trying to stretch to learn in different ways. Instructors are also asked to help students draw parallels between learning styles and culture, explaining that “there are many different ways of being that are equally valid and effective” and that “in order to grow interculturally, we need to practice stretching outside our usual cultural preferences” (“Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad BluePrint,” 2010). In other words, the Seminar asks students to come into greater awareness of their own preferred learning style(s) and to push themselves to learn in new ways. For this reason, I asked students specifically about the learning styles lesson, as well as about their own preferred learning style(s) and whether they felt that was having an impact on their experience abroad and/or in the Seminar. Students' responses generated two sub-themes: ‘Benefits of the learning styles lesson’ and ‘Level of understanding of relevance of LSI.’

Benefits of the Learning Styles Lesson

Students found the learning styles lesson beneficial for two reasons. First, it served to validate their own learning styles. Second, it helped them recognize the diversity of learning styles within the Seminar group.

Validation of students' learning styles. One of the things that students said about the Learning Style Inventory (Kolb, 2005) and the related lesson was that it helped them better understand and appreciate their own learning style, even if they already had an idea of how they preferred to learn. Several students in Africa and one student in Western Europe made comments along these lines. For example, Angela (Af) explained, "It just kind of confirmed how I do feel that I learn best. So it kind of provided some validation." Josh (Af) said, "Ever since [doing the Learning Styles Inventory] I've realized, 'Yeah, really, I am a reflective observer.'" When asked what she felt she got out of the learning styles lesson, Lucy (Af) responded:

I think part of it is that it's okay to be who you are and to be the learner that you are. That we're all different and obviously you need difference. Because I feel like sometimes I tend to get really frustrated when I find that I'm not the person that I think I'm supposed to be, rather than just being happy with who I am.

Recognition of learning style diversity. Lucy's (Af) comment about having different learning styles touches upon the second sub-sub-theme, 'Recognition of learning style diversity.' That is, students appreciated seeing diversity within the Seminar group that they had not previously recognized. Once again, several students in Africa and one student in Western Europe made comments along these lines. For example, Lucy (Af) continued from above, "It's helped me realize that we do all have different learning styles and we need to learn how to accommodate one another." About the learning styles lesson, Angela (Af) commented, "There was a lot of diversity in our class." She said she enjoying seeing "that there are other people with different learning styles and it's okay that we have differing styles." Josh (Af) talked about his reaction upon finding out his own preferred learning style: "That makes me think, alright, then others may or may not be like that. And then also realizing [just] because I learn best this way, that doesn't mean they do. That also opened up my perspective (...)."

Level of Understanding of Relevance of LSI

As mentioned previously, I asked students specifically about whether they felt their own preferred learning style had any influence on their experience abroad and/or in the Seminar. Their responses demonstrate varying levels of understanding of how their learning style relates to their personal experience. Four sub-themes emerged that indicate different levels of understanding. They are, in order of increasing depth of understanding: (1) 'Unsure how learning style relates to study abroad experience,' (2) 'Basic understanding of how learning style relates to study abroad,' (3) 'Deeper understanding of and reflection on relationship between

learning style and experience,’ and (4) ‘Knowledge of preferred learning style impacting engagement.’ Comments made by students in Western Europe fall only into the first and second levels of understanding, whereas references from Africa fall into the second, third, and fourth levels.

1) *Unsure how learning style relates to study abroad experience.* Three students, all from the Western Europe site, made comments that indicate they were unsure how learning style relates to their experience abroad. For example, Sofia (WE) could not remember her preferred learning style and said she did not know if it was affecting her experience abroad or in the Seminar. Jen (WE) liked the learning styles lesson, but with regards to the relationship to her experience abroad, she responded, “I don’t know what I would do differently, like, knowing that I’m a doer and an experimenter.” Amelia (WE) was more critical, stating:

So we did this whole survey in class and then we talked about the results. And that just kind of felt like it had absolutely nothing to do with anything. [...] I’m not really sure what the point of that was. Sometimes we do things in the Seminar that I have no idea what point they’re trying to drive home.

2) *Basic understanding of how learning style relates to study abroad.* Next, several students demonstrated a basic understanding of how learning style relates to study abroad. More specifically, three students in Western Europe and one student in Africa made comments to this effect. All of these students identified as “doers” or “experiencers” according to the LSI and talked about the fact that their desire to learn through doing and experiencing is related to how one learns during study abroad. For example, Jake (WE), who said he is a “doer,” commented:

If I was one of the other [learning styles], I wouldn’t have to go to [this country]. I could read it in a book. [...] Experiencing it and actually doing it for myself, and constantly challenging myself... definitely right up my alley to go abroad.

Also a “doer,” Sarah (WE) responded similarly:

I’m *doing* a lot of things. I’m going to the bank and figuring out how to do stuff. And I walk around a lot and just look at the shops and watch people, and I think I am physically *doing* a lot of things and learning.

Although Maeve (WE) identified as an “experiencer,” rather than a “doer” like Jake (WE) and Sarah (WE), she made a similar comment when asked if she felt her preferred learning style was affecting her experience:

Yes. Because you can read a book about [the local] culture; but someone who has read 15 books on [this] culture versus myself, who has not read any but will have lived here for four months, I think I would probably have a better idea of it.

The only one in Africa to demonstrate only this basic understanding of how learning style relates to study abroad was Ann (Af), who described herself as “all over the board” on the LSI. We looked at her kite together and saw that she was relatively high on three different learning styles, particularly “thinking” and “experiencing.” When I asked how this might be affecting her experience, she responded, “I can’t really remember what particularly the differences between thinking and reflecting are at the moment. But experiencing is very much the reason why I came to [this country].”

3) Deeper understanding of and reflection on relationship between learning style and experience. At the third level, students recognized a relationship between their preferred learning style(s) and their own personal experience abroad or in the Seminar. Well over half of the students in Africa made comments of this nature, while none of the students in Western Europe demonstrated a similar level of understanding.

Several students spoke about the relationship between their preferred learning style(s) and their experience in the Seminar. For example, Allison (Af) commented that as an “active learner,” she most appreciated the “hands-on” assignments such as the activity in which they had to take pictures of things in the culture that they found obvious or curious. Josh (Af), a Reflective Observer, said he appreciates knowing his preferred learning style. He explained:

Sometimes when I’m frustrated that I don’t get something, I realize I’m not trying to learn in the right way for me. [In] the Seminar, sometimes I talk just because there’s awkward silence and I’m like, ‘Well, I could say something.’ I don’t really want to; I like to sit. I need to realize this. Like when [Malik] was explaining something, I was trying to write the notes in my notebook and I wasn’t learning anything. Well, I wasn’t paying attention; I was just writing the notes and (...) I still wasn’t learning. What I need is, like, five minutes to sit and look at that, and to think about it, understand it, and then, okay, I’ll know it. Reflect on it and understand it. So, [the learning styles lesson] just taught me that.

When asked whether her learning style was influencing her experience, Zoey (Af)—a strong Abstract Conceptualizer—responded:

Yeah. [...] I'm definitely a thinker. [...] I sort of tend to philosophize all of my personal experiences. And we do a lot of more concrete, activity-based learning stuff in the Seminar (...) and it's definitely not really my style. [...] But I can deal with other things.

Angela (Af) also felt that the class format did not always fit with her preferred learning style, although for the opposite reasons that Zoey (Af) identified. That is, whereas Zoey tended to make the information more abstract, Angela disliked what she identified as the abstract nature of the Seminar.

In talking about the relationship between her preferred learning styles (as an “experiencer” and a “doer”), Jane (Af) hinted at the Seminar’s attempt to teach around the Experiential Learning Cycle:

A lot of [the Seminar] is just going and experiencing and then bringing back what you thought of the experience and then discussing it. I think that's something that just fits the way I learn. I tend to just try things out (...). Because just watching isn't good enough. Then coming back and talking about it helps me process what I did. And then the next time I go to do it, I can understand it that much more.

Several students discussed how their preferred learning style(s) related to their broader study abroad experience. For example, Josh (Af), a Reflective Observer, mentioned that his learning style was even apparent to his host father, who once told him, “Yeah, Josh, of all our students, (...) he's the thinker. He sits in that room and thinks of questions and he comes and asks me.” In response to hearing this from his host father, Josh (Af) commented:

Just recognizing—especially when I'm so overloaded with different stimuli from the culture and experiencing all this—I just need to go to my room and sit and think for awhile (...). And then I'll go and ask somebody to try and understand things better. But from my experience, I've been a huge homebody because I need that time to step back and look at things. If I just keep going without doing that, I could go crazy.

4) Knowledge of preferred learning style impacting engagement. At least one student in Africa not only demonstrated a deeper understanding of how her learning style affected her study abroad experience, she actually used the knowledge she gained about herself from the Learning Style Inventory to push herself outside her comfort zone to engage in the experience in ways she would not have otherwise done. Although this is not a strong theme since it was mentioned

explicitly by only one student, it is worth noting this student's deeper understanding and application of one of the theoretical and pedagogical frameworks of the Seminar.

Emma (Af), whose preferred learning styles are Concrete Experience and Reflective Observation, commented, "I didn't ever really think about my learning style before and how that might be affecting how much I get out of my experience here or how I process things." However, she said the LSI helped her recognize how much she prefers "observing things and learning from actual experiences and then reflecting." She commented, "But I saw that I didn't really have much in terms of going out and actually doing something to learn. [...] That's been something I'm trying to work on." When I asked Emma what she meant when she said she was trying to work on that, she explained in more detail:

Like, not just standing back and observing, which I'm pretty happy doing. I'm working at a clinic two mornings a week with my friend and it would be very easy for us to just watch the consultations and learn. [...] But instead I'm trying to get more involved. Like tomorrow I'm hoping to learn how to bandage wounds properly, and *actually* do it. And I've been working with a woman who does the mother-child program; it's for weighing babies and recording their temperatures. So I've been going there because I know I can actually do something to help her and learn from her. It would have been just as comfortable for me to observe, but I don't think I would get as much out of it.

Cultural Partners

Students in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad are asked to choose someone from the local culture to serve as a Cultural Partner. There are several assignments throughout the semester for which they are supposed to use their Cultural Partner as a resource person. At several points when I was observing the Seminar, particularly in Western Europe, the instructor suggested to the students they consult with their Cultural Partner informally about something that came up in class.

I asked students about the Cultural Partners aspect of the Seminar and five different sub-themes emerged: 'Typically a family member,' 'Beneficial aspect of curriculum,' 'Not as value-added as it could be,' 'Seminar generates topics and questions,' and 'Conversations with Cultural Partner.' Several of these include sub-sub-themes as well.

Typically a Family Member

The first theme is that students typically chose a member of their host family to be their Cultural Partner. This was the case for all of the students in Western Europe and two-thirds of the study participants in Africa. This is perhaps not surprising considering all of the students on the programs involved in this study were in homestays.

Many of the students mentioned the convenience of choosing someone in their host family to be their Cultural Partner. For example, Emma (Af), who chose her host sister, explained, “Having her as my Cultural Partner is helpful because we live in the same house so it’s easier to find time to sit down and talk.” Jake (WE) explained why he assigned his host mother to be his Cultural Partner:

I enjoy talking to her immensely. So I figured why not kill two birds with one stone? Instead of having to call up somebody from the university and trying to find a place to meet just for a couple of hours, why not just consistently talk to my host mother?

Lucy (Af) purposefully chose a member of her host family to be her Cultural Partner in order to increase the amount of time she spent with them. She explained, “I didn’t really want to go outside my host family for [a Cultural Partner] because I really wanted the time that I wasn’t spending on homework and being out with friends to be with my host family.”

A couple of students ended up using a member of their host family as their Cultural Partner when other plans fell through. For example, Amelia (WE) explained that for the two assignments that required her to talk to her Cultural Partner, she forgot to do so with the person she had originally designated as her partner, so she discussed it with her host mother instead.

Positive Aspect of Curriculum

Several students spoke very positively about the Cultural Partner component and identified it as a beneficial aspect of the curriculum. For example, when I asked if any aspects of the curriculum had been more beneficial than others, Jen (WE) immediately mentioned her Cultural Partner. About her partner, Emma (Af) said, “In general she has just been a really great resource and she’s really willing to help.” Jake (WE) spoke more generally about having a Cultural Partner: “It’s been a great experience. Once again, just another excuse to talk to a [local] person, to practice, to improve, to learn about a culture.”

Within ‘Positive aspect of curriculum,’ two closely related yet distinct sub-themes emerged. First, students said the Seminar helped generate questions and topics to engage their partners in conversation. Second, they felt the Cultural Partner designation allowed them to have deeper conversations and ask questions they otherwise might not have felt comfortable asking.

Seminar generates questions and topics. One of the beneficial aspects of the Cultural Partner component of the Seminar was that the class helped generate questions and topics that the students could then discuss with a local. This was mentioned by students at both sites. For example, Lucy (Af) said she felt her relationship with her host mother was affected by the Seminar and the fact she was her Cultural Partner. She explained:

Just having more insight into the culture allows you to ask better questions and gives you questions to ask. Because it’s hard to ask questions about stuff when you have absolutely no knowledge base. [...] I think that’s been the biggest thing, is just having questions to ask her. And I think that the Seminar has been helpful generating those.

Jen (WE) commented, “I don’t know if I would have stretched or pushed myself to ask [my host mother/Cultural Partner], like, ‘Why?’ as much if I wasn’t in the class.” Likewise, Zoey (Af) explained, “I would say it influences what questions I ask [my Cultural Partner] and it makes me feel [more] like I want to just ask questions [like], ‘Why is this thing how it is?’” Jake (WE) explained how the Seminar was affecting his relationship with his Cultural Partner (his host mother):

And over two-and-a-half months in, I would have thought long ago we’d have run out of things to talk about, but we pick one topic and, ‘Boom!’ She learns and I learn. If anything, I might have the Seminar to thank for that—for topics of conversation.

Allows for deeper conversations and questioning. Not only did the Seminar help generate topics of discussion; the Cultural Partner designation also improved the quality of those conversations. Several students specifically said they found it beneficial to be required to designate a Cultural Partner for the Seminar because doing so allowed for deeper conversations and questioning. This was mentioned, however, only by students in Africa. For example, Emma (Af) explained, “When I was given an assignment with specific objectives, it opened up a conversation [with my Cultural Partner] about values that we otherwise might not have had.” Jane (Af) commented, “I have learned lots of things that I wouldn’t have asked probably directly because of the Cultural Partner thing.” When asked if she felt her relationship with her Cultural

Partner was any different than it would be if she were not designated as such, Angela (Af) responded:

Yeah. Because I think that her being my Cultural Partner allows us to have those conversations. And I'm more comfortable having those [difficult] conversations, whereas if she wasn't my Cultural Partner and I just sat her down and asked her a series of questions, I just feel like it would be a little awkward.

Not as Value-Added as It Could Be

Although many students found the Cultural Partners beneficial, others felt this aspect of the curriculum was not as value-added as it could be. That is, although they saw the possible benefits of such an activity, they did not feel the full potential was realized for various reasons. Two sub-themes emerged within this theme: 'Lacks structure and clarity' and 'Cultural Partner designation insignificant to relationship.'

Lacks structure and clarity. The majority of the students in Western Europe, along with two students in Africa, felt that there was a lack of clarity or structure with regards to the Cultural Partner activities. Some students mentioned not having many specific assignments that involved the Cultural Partners, and a few said they had missed the fact that they had been asked to talk about something with their partners. For example, Emma (Af) said that they had not had many Cultural Partner assignments, adding:

There was [an] assignment—we didn't all realize this until after—but the obvious/curious assignment (...), we were supposed to show the pictures to someone—it could've been our Cultural Partner—to start a conversation. But we kind of missed that.

Jake (WE), although he said he went "above and beyond" in speaking to his Cultural Partner (his host mother), also said that he only occasionally talks to her about things from the Seminar. Other students simply had not had much contact with their Cultural Partners at all. Josh (Af) admitted, "I just haven't really talked to [my Cultural Partner] much."

Amelia (WE) said she purposefully chose someone her own age to be her Cultural Partner, but ended up talking to her host mother for most of the related activities because it was challenging to find time to meet with the partner she had originally chosen. About the Cultural Partners, she commented, "I think if it *works*, it's super value-added. If it doesn't, it's [not a big deal]."

There seemed to be some confusion in Western Europe about the purpose of the Cultural Partner. Several students used the terms ‘language partner’ and ‘Cultural Partner’ interchangeably and understood the purpose to be more of a language exchange. For example, when Sarah (WE) commented that she helps her partner with her English more than her partner helps her with her language skills, I followed up to clarify whether they focus mostly on language learning. She responded, “Yeah, yeah. I mean, it is a cultural partner too, but they told us to get together and speak [the target language] for an hour every week. So we do that more than talk about the culture.” Maeve (WE) also said she and her partner just get together once a week and talk in the local language, explaining:

Maybe there will be more to see later in the Seminar, but right now I don’t really feel like the language partners are doing anything. [...] I don’t really feel like that’s adding a whole lot to the Seminar.

Cultural Partner designation insignificant to relationship. The second sub-theme under ‘Not as value-added as it could be’ is ‘Cultural Partner designation insignificant to relationship.’ Particularly since most of the students had chosen a member of their host family as their Cultural Partner, I asked them if they felt that relationship was any different than it would have been had they not formally designated that person as their Cultural Partner. Two students at each location basically said no, they did not feel the Cultural Partner designation made a significant difference in their relationship. For example, when asked about this, Allison (Af) responded:

We didn’t pick Cultural Partners until like a month in, oddly. [This woman and I] were already talking about those things, so I just went ahead and assigned that title to her. [...] So whenever we had an assignment, I wrote her down.

Similarly, Ann (Af) chose someone who she felt she would have had those types of conversation with anyway. In response to my question about whether designating her host father as her Cultural Partner had an effect on their relationship, she responded:

Honestly, no, I don’t think so. I kind of wish I would have chosen my host brother as my Cultural Partner because I talk to my [host father] anyway about this sort of thing. But with my host brother I haven’t really talked about those sorts of, like, deeper issues (...). And so I wish I would’ve chosen him.

Conversations with Cultural Partners

Students also discussed some of the conversations they had had with their Cultural Partners. Two sub-themes became apparent with regards to these conversations: ‘Sharing

culture-specific information' and 'Sharing perspectives.' The former came up only among students in Western Europe, whereas the latter was mentioned primarily by students in Africa.

Sharing culture-specific information. Of the three students in Western Europe who spoke in any depth about the conversations they had with their Cultural Partners, two focused on the culture-specific information that was shared during these conversations. That is, they talked about learning about the host culture and sharing information about their own culture with their partners. More specifically, both of these students referred to an activity that they were asked to do with their Cultural Partners at the beginning of the semester in which they talked to their partners about the origin, significance, and meaning of each of their names. When I asked Jake (WE) if he talked with his Cultural Partner about things that come up in the Seminar, he responded:

At the beginning (...) we did the little name game where you say what's the history of your name, and I had nothing. I asked her and she had this huge long story. But through that story I learned some interesting things. [...] Anything else I've covered with her in terms of the Seminar? Maybe just cultural generalizations, in terms of how things are with [locals]—Is this store open right now? How come the banks are closed at two?—those kinds of things. [...] I can't tell you how many times we just make comparisons like crazy.

Maeve (WE) also talked about learning about the cultural origins of her host mother's and grandmother's names and said she found it interesting that so many people in her host family were named after other family members.

Sharing perspectives. On the other hand, many of the students in Africa spoke in depth about the conversations they had had with their Cultural Partners. The theme that pervaded these conversations was that they seemed to go deeper than just sharing information about their cultures and were more about sharing perspectives. For example, several students said they had talked with their Cultural Partners about their perspectives on being a woman in Africa. About her relationship with her Cultural Partner (her host sister), Jane (Af) commented:

It's interesting to talk to a sixteen-year-old girl about women in [this country]. I asked her if she would ever have a polygamous family. She was like, 'Never! I'll never have a husband who has another wife.' I was like, 'Okay, that's cool.'

Angela (Af) said she had many conversations with her Cultural Partner—someone who worked at the school—about the same topic. She explained:

I feel really comfortable talking to [my Cultural Partner]. We've talked about *a lot* of different things and she's very honest...*very* honest. But there has been some tension just because there are things that are different for her because she lives in a different culture. We had a conversation about polygamy and she very much understands it and sees it as a part of her culture. And I asked, 'Well, if your husband wanted a second wife, what would you say?' And she said she would be upset, but she would understand. And I *completely*...was just...amazed, I guess. And I'm very outspoken so it was *really* hard for me not to say something. But I had to take a step back and really think about things. [...] So it was really interesting to have that conversation with her.

Religion was another common topic of conversation about which the students in Africa and their Cultural Partners shared their perspectives. Allison (Af) recalled her conversations with her Cultural Partner, a woman who had been living and working in her host family's home but had recently moved away:

We would just talk about different issues, which was *really* cool. And she was a very devout Muslim, but it was very great because we were able to talk about the similarities between religions (...). [...] It was great to see a woman who I thought really truly embodied at least the spirit of Islam and being a Muslim. And she just listened to what I had to say.

Jen (WE) was the only student in Western Europe to speak of her conversations with her Cultural Partner in terms of sharing perspectives. She brought up her host mother's role as her Cultural Partner in response to my question about the most beneficial aspects of the Seminar curriculum:

When [my host mother and I] have time, we'll just talk about politics, or we'll talk about why they think it's important to eat dinner all together, or why a lot of people here are Catholic, or why the holidays are so important. And it's interesting to hear her reasoning...and for me to tell her mine. She always asks questions, like, 'Oh, that's interesting. [...] Why do you do that?' And I'm just like, I never really thought about why we did that until I was here and they did it differently, and I want to know why.

To summarize, the vast majority of Seminar participants chose a member of their host family to be their Cultural Partner. Many students felt this was a positive aspect of the curriculum; however, many also indicated it was not as value-added as it could be. Students

appreciated the fact that the Seminar helped generate questions and topics of conversation and that the Cultural Partner designation allowed those discussions to go deeper than they would have otherwise. For several students in Western Europe, those conversations tended to focus on sharing culture-specific information, whereas there was more emphasis on sharing perspectives for students in Africa.

Instructors and Instruction

Another of Schwab’s (1983) four commonplaces of education is the teacher. What emerged through the student interviews is, more specifically, a category that encompasses both the instructors and their method of instruction, or teaching style. For this reason the category is titled ‘Instructors and Instruction.’ Included in this category are direct references to the Seminar instructors and their particular ways of imparting the course materials. Table 15 outlines the themes within this category and indicates where each emerged—in Western Europe (WE), Africa (Af), or both.

Table 15. Student Interviews: Instructors and Instruction Category

‘Instructors and Instruction’ Themes	<i>Where did the theme emerge?</i>	
	Western Europe	Africa
• Positive regard for instructors	X	X
• Student-centered vs. teacher-centered	X	X
○ Student-centered	X	
▪ Laid-back, informal instruction style	X	
▪ Discussion of student experience is central	X	
○ Teacher-centered		X
▪ Curriculum-driven		X
▪ Teacher-dominated, lecture-based		X
▪ Disparity between theory and experience		X
▪ More sharing, discussion, group reflection desired		X
▪ Instructor guides student thinking		X
▪ Student concerns go unaddressed		X
• Cultural background of instructor		X
○ Value of local perspective		X
○ Affects ability to relate to students		X
○ Cultural differences in educational system and teaching style		X
○ Students hesitant to appear culturally insensitive		X

Positive Regard for Instructors

The first major theme in the ‘Instructors and Instruction’ category is ‘Positive regard for instructors.’ Students at both sites spoke very highly of the Seminar instructors, who they referred to as likeable, helpful, and approachable.

In Western Europe, when asked about the role the instructors play in her learning, Jen (WE) responded, “I think they’re great. I think they’re just very fun and they want us to get the most out of the experience.” Jake (WE) went further in his praise, stating:

I’ve got to say that [Andre] has impressed me immensely. He’s easily, of all the people who hold significant power in my life—advisors, teachers, etcetera, directors—he’s by far the most impressive of the bunch. [...] He definitely has my confidence that he has my best interest in mind and that if I ever had a problem, I could go to him.

Students in Africa also spoke highly of their Seminar instructor. For example, Jane (Af) commented:

I love [Malik] because he is just very level-headed. He seems to just know what he’s talking about. He actually listens to what you say. And he’ll throw things out there that none of us would think of.

Zoey (Af) added, “I like [Malik]. [...] I think he’s a good teacher. He’s good at explaining things.” Angela (Af) commented, “He’s really motivated about this stuff. You can tell he really loves teaching all there is about interculturalness. And so that helps that you have a professor who’s motivated.” Generally speaking, all three Seminar instructors across the two sites were well liked.

Student-Centered vs. Teacher-Centered

One of the primary themes to emerge in the ‘Instructors and Instruction’ category is related to the instructors’ differing methods of instruction. The theme is ‘Student-centered versus teacher-centered,’ and essentially has to do with whose interests appear to direct the Seminar, at least from the perspective of the students. In Western Europe, the students described the Seminar as highly student-centered, whereas in Africa, participants felt it was more teacher-centered. Each of these is therefore its own sub-theme with further sub-sub-themes as well.

Student-Centered

The ‘Student-centered’ theme emerged only in Western Europe and is made up of two sub-themes. They are: ‘Laid-back, informal instruction style’ and ‘Discussion of student experience is central.’ These sub-themes represent student perceptions of the instruction style.

Laid-back, informal instruction style. The majority of the students in Western Europe used words like “informal,” “fun,” “laid-back,” and “chill” to describe both the Seminar and the instructors, and they spoke quite favorably of this style of instruction. For example, when asked if there is anything regarding the context of the Seminar that influences his learning, Jake (WE) responded:

I’d say the style in which it’s held would definitely be it. It’s a very laid-back type of approach. [...] It’s not like, ‘Okay, here’s some papers. Do the questions on the back, turn them in next week. We’re going to look at this slide. We got to get through these fifty slides in the next two hours.’ No. It’s kind of like if I was going to hold a class for my classmates. [...] How do you do that? You make it a Seminar for the students, the way the students would do it.

Jake’s comments were reiterated by Maeve (WE), who explained:

[The instructors] make it fun and so it doesn’t feel like an academic-pressure environment thing. They’re not there like, ‘You need to learn this. You need to do this.’ They’re there to be like, ‘What do you want to learn? Do you have questions? Can we help you?’

Several students spoke about the instructors in Western Europe being more like “peers” or “friends” than professors. For example, Sofia (WE) said, “They’re more of like a peer in the class.” She added, “Almost like a friend, but not exactly a friend.” Amelia (WE) concurred, adding, “I mean, I’m a student, obviously, and they’re the directors. But they’re very informal and they’re chill, so it’s nice.”

Discussion of student experience is central. The second sub-theme within ‘Student-centered’ is ‘Discussion of student experience is central.’ Students in Western Europe emphasized the fact that discussing their own experience seemed to take precedence in the Seminar. Several of the students’ comments refer to both the laid-back, informal nature of the Seminar and this focus on discussion at the same time. As Sarah (WE) explained, “It doesn’t seem like a class to me as much as getting together with friends and people you’re learning from and talking.” Maeve (WE) described the Seminar as a place where participants can go in the

afternoon, once “you’ve finished all of your classes for the day and you’re just more relaxed and [can just] take a breath and hang out at the Seminar and talk about what’s going on.”

Other comments focused simply on the importance of having a place to discuss their personal experiences. For example, Amelia (WE) remarked:

I think what I like most about it is [the Seminar] gives me a chance to meet with my directors and have a catch-up and check-in time. Because it really is a time to be like, ‘How are you doing? How was your week? You know, let’s just sit around and talk.’

Maeve (WE) explained what they discuss in the Seminar: “[We] talk about our experience—like if something weird happened. We tell funny stories. Like if something happened on the bus or if something happened with our family...or stuff like that.” Maeve (WE) also commented, “It’s a chance to talk freely about anything that could be just weighing on our mind. And I think that’s something that the other kids [who are not in the Seminar] don’t have the opportunity to do.”

To summarize, students in Western Europe felt the instruction style was laid-back and informal, and discussion of their personal experiences took center stage in the Seminar. They viewed both of these aspects favorably and saw them as ways in which the Seminar catered to their wants and needs.

Teacher-Centered

On the other hand, students in Africa regarded the Seminar as more ‘Teacher-centered.’ Under this theme, six sub-themes emerged: ‘Curriculum-driven,’ ‘Teacher-dominated, lecture-based,’ ‘Disparity between theory and experience,’ ‘Instructor guides student thinking,’ ‘More sharing, discussion, group reflection desired,’ and ‘Student concerns go unaddressed.’ Although each of these is distinct, they are also interrelated and overlap to some degree.

Curriculum-driven. The sub-theme ‘Curriculum-driven’ refers to students’ comments in Africa that it is the curriculum—not discussion of their experience—that takes precedence in the Seminar. This was noted by at least half of the students there and is in direct contrast to the comments made about the Seminar being discussion-driven in Western Europe. Students in Africa talked about there being too much material to get through in the time allotted and said the class sometimes felt very “agenda-driven.” Ann (Af) explained:

I think [with] that time and that group of people especially, who really do want to step back and reflect, I think it’s a little bit detrimental to the outcome of the

class that we're always on this line like, 'We need to get this done,' when a lot of times learning doesn't come from what you planned on doing that day.

When I followed up by asking Ann (Af) why she thinks that happens, she responded, "I don't know if perhaps [the instructor] has an agenda that he really wants to get to. It must be a pretty regimented agenda." Similarly, Angela (Af) commented, "You can tell that he definitely comes into class with a plan, with an agenda. And he sees to it that that gets executed; and if we steer off of that, he will put us back on the path."

Although this agenda-driven nature was sometimes attributed to the instructor himself, a few students observed that perhaps there was too much material to get through. For example, Allison (Af) commented, "I think the classes might even be too short. I mean, there needs to be so much covered in each day and we have to get to it, therefore it's a lot of him talking and us just listening."

As mentioned earlier in the description of the observations, the activity on intensity factors was compressed in order to complete it in the last ten minutes of the class. Several students said they would have liked to have spent more time on that exercise. Allison (Af) commented, "When we were listing the things that we found were most culturally difficult... everything's just so rushed in that class, and I feel like we should be given time on that." Ann (Af) explained how she thinks things should be done differently:

I think that a lot of times we try to pack in so much into one time that really we don't get to do anything. You kind of saw that at the end there when he was like, 'Oh, and here's [the intensity factors].' Or, 'We've got to stop doing that because we've got to do this now.' Like, what?! No! You get one thing done and then you figure out (...) what the class needs most.

Teacher-dominated, lecture-based. The second sub-theme—closely related to but not nearly as heavily emphasized as the first—within the 'Teacher-centered' theme is 'Teacher-dominated, lecture-based.' Several students commented that Seminar class time was dominated primarily by the instructor and lecture time. Josh (Af) explained, "[Malik] does kind of like the lecture/discussion sort of thing, and that takes most the time." Lucy (Af) agreed, "[Malik] can definitely dominate the space a lot." Ann (Af) elaborated a bit further:

I kind of struggle with a very teacher-based classroom. And unfortunately I think it has become that, very much so, which is *really* unfortunate in my point of view. [...] I wish we would do more activity-based things rather than sitting

there and watching a projector, because that's a lot of what we do in a lot of my classes. And that's kind of what I expected this class was not going to be.

Disparity between theory and experience. Another sub-theme within 'Teacher-centered' is 'Disparity between theory and experience.' Approximately half of the students in Africa commented that the Seminar was very theoretical and not sufficiently related to their own personal experiences. Angela (Af) summarized this theme well:

I just feel like the class is really theoretical...and we talk about things in the abstract. And it's *really* frustrating. I feel like we don't really talk about our actual experiences, like, ever. And so it's the complete opposite of what I thought it was going to be.

Several students brought this up specifically with regards to the lesson on stereotypes and cultural generalizations. For example, Emma (Af) commented:

When I read the [syllabus] and saw that we were going to be talking about stereotypes, I thought that we were going to pull in a lot more about our experiences here and the stereotypes we faced, but it was more of a broad discussion about our stereotypes. I think it would have been more beneficial if we'd focused more on our direct experiences.

Ann (Af) said she would like to spend less time on learning concepts and more time "finding examples on our own so that we can apply what we know." She continued, "Because right now I feel like there's a disparity between the two. There's this experience, and then there's the stuff on the board, and we really haven't bridged that very much, which is really unfortunate."

To summarize the 'Teacher-centered' sub-themes thus far, the general perspective of the Seminar participants in Africa was that the instruction was ruled by the need to get through a given curriculum, much of the class period was spent listening to the instructor talk, and there was not sufficient time spent connecting the concepts and theories to their own personal experiences.

More sharing, discussion, group reflection desired. Thus, it is perhaps not surprising that another sub-theme that emerged in Africa is that more sharing, discussion, and group reflection is desired. Seminar participants at this site widely agreed that they wanted more time to discuss and share their personal experiences and engage in group reflection as a class. Allison (Af) explained, "There's not a time for discussion and I think a lot of us thought that we would be able to explain and ask questions of what was going on and how to handle it." Related to the previous theme, students expressed a desire to engage in more group conversations and reflection to help

them connect the concepts and theories they were covering in the class with their own experiences outside the classroom. As Ann (Af) stated:

I think some of the things we have done have been really good bases to begin discussions. But I think we need to do a *whole* lot more group reflecting (...) on personal experiences that have happened and talk about things that might be bothering people. Because I think, especially in this context, that there are issues that arise that you can learn a lot about, but need other people to be there and critically reflecting with you.

This idea was reiterated by others, such as Josh (Af):

We wish we could have more time to just be like, ‘This week this is what I didn’t understand,’ and just kind of throw it out and look at it through, like, (...) a [host culture] lens. [...] I mean, we do have opportunities, but just having more time for that. Because I feel like if we work through our own concrete experiences in class that will help us to solidify what we’re being taught too. [...] Like, yeah, okay, we’ve heard this model and this and that. Whatever. We’re here, we’re living this, it’s hard, we have questions, we have experiences we don’t understand. We want to share with one another.

Allison (Af) explained how she thinks discussing their personal experiences could be helpful:

I have a lot of these feelings that I still don’t know what to do with. And I know a lot of people in our class also feel that way because we talk about it. We just want to talk about *this* issue, *this* stereotype, something that’s happened to us and how to move forward with it (...).

Instructor guides student thinking. Another sub-theme within the ‘Teacher-centered’ theme is ‘Instructor guides student thinking.’ Several of the students in Africa recognized that the instructor would sometimes deliberately guide their train of thought or play devil’s advocate, typically with an end goal in mind. For the most part, this was viewed positively or at least in neutral terms. For example, Jane (Af) commented, “It’s not just him standing in front of us talking; it’s him facilitating a conversation pretty much...with a goal in mind, I think.” She explained further:

He really helps you delve deeper into things to see what you can pull from them without actually telling us. I think he tries to get us to say things... He just really seems to know how to explain things without actually explaining them, and show them without actually writing it out word for word for us.

While some students viewed this practice of having the instructor guide their thinking as a good thing, Josh (Af) suggested it can also be a little frustrating:

[Malik] usually tries to step back and he kind of plays the devil's advocate or pokes and prods and tries to get things out of us. [Ellen] is definitely more like, 'Here, this is actually how it is,' kind of being more straight-forward. But [Malik] definitely pokes and prods and tries to get us to think, which is good...and annoying at the same time.

When I asked which of these approaches he preferred, Josh (Af) responded:

It's one of those things where oftentimes what's better is what is harder. But what I want right now is not what is harder. I mean, there also has to be a time where you're just like, 'No. Straight up, this is how it is.' But (...) it makes us reflect and makes us think about what we're saying or doing, so it's good.

At least one student clearly did not want what was harder. Allison (Af) said she did not appreciate the instructor's practice of guiding students' thinking with a goal in mind, explaining:

I strongly believe the teacher is a facilitator, not necessarily the person who shows you the map and then guides you each step of the way. Give us a problem [and] we'll work it out. Then (...) if we don't make it to the point, not to just be like, 'You're taking time. Let me tell you.' I don't gain knowledge that way.

Student concerns go unaddressed. The final sub-theme within 'Teacher-centered' is 'Student concerns go unaddressed.' Students said that when they brought up issues they were experiencing or if they questioned the material in any way, their concerns were often not addressed. Approximately half of the students in the Seminar in Africa talked about this and most of those who did so had a lot to say on the matter. Oftentimes they recognized that the curriculum-driven nature—or other themes previously identified—were at least partly at fault. For example, Josh (Af) explained:

I feel like sometimes [the instructor] needs to be more attentive to the issues of the students. Sometimes he's like, 'Let's get through this lecture.' He needs to recognize we're not paying attention because we have issues that inconvenience that learning, and that's hard with time constraints.

Zoey (Af), a very intellectual student who asked several insightful questions about the material during my observations, explained how she felt those questions were received:

Slightly tangential questions are not going to be addressed at all. It's not like I've ever felt disrespected by [Malik], but I definitely sometimes feel like if I

have opinions that are not sort of what the opinion of the content of this class is right now, that—again, not like they’re disrespected—they’re just sort of not really taken into consideration or addressed.

A couple of students mentioned a time when a fellow Seminar participant asked to talk about an uncomfortable, frustrating, and somewhat scary experience she and some peers had on public transportation. According to the students, a small group of U.S. female students were traveling at night and the driver refused to let them off until well past their intended stop, so they ended up having to walk a good distance alone after dark, which they had been advised against doing for safety reasons. Allison (Af) explained:

We brought that up [in the Seminar] and our professor just kind of laughed and was like, ‘Oh, it’s the sense of humor here.’ And I was like, ‘No, I really think it’s because we’re white.’ Like, ‘This is an issue we’re having. How do we confront it?’ [...] And he’s just like, ‘No, no, no. He was just joking.’ [...] And it was the brushing off and the laughing about problems. [...] It’s frustrating. This is where we thought we’d be able to explain.

Several students talked about another time when an issue came up in class that they wanted to discuss, which they also felt the instructor failed to address. This incident is explained in detail in the ‘Critical Incident’ section at the end of this chapter.

To summarize the ‘Student-centered vs. teacher-centered’ theme, the students in Africa tended to view the Seminar as relatively teacher-centered. They felt the instructor adhered to a fairly rigid curriculum, which oftentimes revolved around him lecturing. They thought there was insufficient time to discuss, share, and reflect on their own experiences and how these related to the concepts and theories presented in the class. They also said that when they voiced what they felt were legitimate concerns and issues in the Seminar, these often went unaddressed. In addition, students said the instructor played the role of devil’s advocate and would try to guide their thinking; for the most part they viewed this relatively positively, unlike the more negative ways in which they construed the other sub-themes within the ‘Teacher-centered’ theme. On the other hand, the students in Western Europe perceived the Seminar as being more student-centered. They liked the laid-back, informal style of instruction and the fact they were provided with ample opportunity to discuss their personal experiences.

Cultural Background of Instructor

The third theme to emerge in the ‘Instructors and Instruction’ category is ‘Cultural background of instructor.’ As mentioned previously, the instructors at both sites are natives of their respective host countries. However, this theme was only brought up by students in Africa. Within this theme, the following sub-themes emerged: ‘Value of local perspective,’ ‘Affects ability to relate to students,’ ‘Cultural differences in educational system and teaching style,’ and ‘Students hesitant to appear culturally insensitive.’

Value of Local Perspective

Several of the students in Africa pointed out the benefits of having an instructor who could offer a local perspective. As Allison (Af) stated succinctly, “I think it helps that he’s from [the host country].” Ann (Af) explained further, “I think he has a really interesting perspective that is necessary and (...) adds to that class. Because he’s lived here his entire life, pretty much, so he always has a different sort of twist to things.” Josh (Af) commented, “He provides the expertise when a cultural instant comes up that we want to talk about.” Lucy (Af) went into more depth, explaining:

It’s definitely significant that he grew up here, of course, and so has a lot of insight into the culture that obviously we don’t have. And so whenever we talk about our experiences that we’ve had—whether they’ve been good or whether they’ve been frustrating or upsetting—he’s been able to give a different perspective, or maybe insight into what the other person was thinking when they said this.

Affects Ability to Relate to Students

While the Seminar participants in Africa appreciated the local perspective the instructor was able to bring, several of them also felt that the cultural differences between themselves and the instructor negatively affected his ability to relate to his students (as mentioned previously, he was not only from a different national culture, but was also a Black African male, whereas the vast majority of the students in the Seminar were European-American females). For example, when discussing the aspects of the students’ experience that made it more intense or stressful for each one of them, the instructor questioned some of the students’ choices. Allison (Af) said she was very frustrated when Malik asked her why a certain intensity factor was not on her list. She

felt that he could not understand her issues as someone raised in the United States, just as she could not understand his as a male from the host culture.

Several students compared the instructor's ability to relate to students to that of Ellen, the female U.S. American staff member who was sitting in on the Seminar. Ann (Af) commented:

I wish [Ellen] did have more of a role [in the Seminar] because I think a lot of us feel very comfortable with her. [...] Anything that you freak out about, you can be like, 'Umm, [Ellen]?' And [Malik] is there too, but he's... I mean, a man, number one. And so for many of us, you know, we've gotten much closer to [Ellen] because she's gone through some of the same [experiences] that all of us go through every day.

This sentiment appeared to extend outside of the Seminar and was not just expressed by the females in the group. Josh (Af) explained:

I talk to [Ellen] a lot because in the office, she's closer [to the entrance], and she's usually not as busy. So I ask her a lot. I feel free to ask [Malik], I just—he's busier and this and that—so I usually don't ask him as much. But I don't feel like I couldn't. But also, [Ellen] has an American perspective on it. [...] So I feel like I can better understand through an explanation from [Ellen].

Cultural Differences in Educational System and Teaching Style

The fact that the instructor is from the host country also meant that there were cultural differences between the students' and the instructor's experiences and values surrounding the educational system and teaching style preferences. This theme emerged only in Africa and is somewhat related to the previously-discussed teacher-centered nature of the Seminar there, although the focus of this theme is the students' recognition that the differing values surrounding education may relate to cultural differences. This sub-theme is not nearly as strong as the previous ones, yet still worthy of mention for the insight it demonstrates on the part of the students. For example, Allison (Af) commented:

It would be nice to have [the instructor] as a sort of liaison, but we just don't. He's always so busy or has his agenda that he needs to get through. I don't know if that's something he's learned in school here, especially through the French system.

Ann (Af) made a similar observation:

And it's also like the teacher always has to know more. [...] The way I've been taught to teach is *never* do that to students. Or at least you try to help them along, but you don't correct them every time. And I think that maybe that's a French style of teaching.

Students Hesitant to Appear Culturally Insensitive

Students take this awareness of cultural difference between themselves and the instructor one step further in the next sub-theme, which is 'Students hesitant to appear culturally insensitive.' Three of the students in Africa said that they were cautious about bringing up certain topics or asking certain questions of the instructor because they did not want to come across as culturally insensitive. Josh (Af) stated succinctly, "There are some questions that I feel like I would offend [Malik] if I asked them." When asked for an example, he explained:

Questions about Islam. [...] I mean, things that most Americans are just like, 'I just don't get this.' I'm sure he'd answer the question and he'd be fine. I just feel like it could cause issues or a barrier, so... It's not that he's at all closed. It's just (...) for safety's sake. I don't want to cause any issues.

Other students expressed apprehension at voicing their critiques of the Seminar due to the cultural differences between the instructor and themselves. When Zoey (Af) talked about questioning the activity on stereotypes and cultural generalizations, she commented, "I felt bad. I guess the problem is I feel like the culturally-sensitive thing to do [here] is not to criticize that activity." Similarly, when discussing her criticisms of the course with me, Ann (Af) said:

Actually, I should have said something to [Malik] earlier. [...] But (...) I know that students correcting teachers (...) is kind of culturally, like, 'Uh, whatchya doing?' [...] I don't want to offend [him] because he's a really wonderful man, really interesting.

To conclude, although the Seminar instructors at both the Western Europe and Africa sites were all natives of the respective host country, only the students in Africa brought this up as a pertinent issue. They identified the beneficial aspects of having an instructor who can offer a local perspective, yet suggested cultural differences may affect the instructor's ability to relate to the students. Issues of cultural sensitivity arose as well, as a few students recognized that some of their values surrounding education may be culturally different from the instructor's and also voiced a concern about doing or saying things to or in front of the Seminar instructor that might come across as culturally insensitive.

Students

The fourth category, which coincides with another of Schwab’s (1983) four commonplaces of education, is ‘Students.’ This refers to what students had to say about themselves and their peers in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. Two themes emerged within this category: ‘Motivation for studying abroad’ and ‘Seminar participants a diverse group.’ These are outlined in Table 16.

Table 16. Student Interviews: Students Category

‘Students’ Themes	<i>Where did the theme emerge?</i>	
	Western Europe	Africa
• Motivation for studying abroad	X	X
○ Always wanted to study abroad	X	X
○ Language learning	X	X
○ Desire to experience something new	X	X
• Seminar participants a diverse group	(1 reference)	X

Motivation for Studying Abroad

When I asked students about their motivations for studying abroad, three sub-themes emerged: ‘Always wanted to study abroad,’ ‘Language learning,’ and ‘Desire to experience something new.’ All three sub-themes were present at both sites.

Always Wanted to Study Abroad

The strongest sub-theme within ‘Motivation for studying abroad’ is ‘Always wanted to study abroad.’ More than half of the students interviewed indicated study abroad had been part of their “plan” for a long time, or said they had “always” wanted to study abroad. For example, Jake (WE) said, “I’ve wanted to study abroad since...probably eighth grade [or] freshman year.” Similarly, Josh (Af) commented, “It’s been in my head since high school, to study abroad.” Zoey (Af) explained:

It’s been something I’ve sort of passively wanted to do for, I think, my entire life once I found out that was something you could do. And the older I got, the more I kind of decided (...) [that] in order to call myself an educated person in the world, I need to have actually *lived* somewhere other than the United States.

Study abroad was also something Lucy (Af) had been planning to do for a long time, at least in part due to her parent’s encouragement. She explained, “Studying abroad has always been part of

my plan. My mom studied abroad in London when she was an undergrad and it was a really transformative experience for her (...). And so I've always been encouraged to do that.”

Language Learning

Another popular motivation for studying abroad that students at both sites discussed is related to ‘Language learning.’ Approximately half of the students in this study mentioned language learning as one of their motivations for studying abroad. Several students said they had been studying the target language for years and some were pursuing language majors or minors. For example, Lucy (Af) said, “I wanted to go to a French-speaking country because I started studying French in high school.” Similarly, Josh (Af) said he had studied French since high school and when he chose to pursue a degree in it in college, thought, “If I do a language, I’m going to study abroad.” Amelia (WE) said that her choice of host country was related to her background studying the target language:

[I chose this location] because I decided to study [the target language]. I figured that going somewhere where I had to learn a new—or continue learning—another language would scare the crap out of me and be really good for me too.

Desire to Experience Something New

Although not as strong a sub-theme as the first two, ‘Desire to experience something new’ was also cited by the students as a motivation for studying abroad. This was mentioned by two students in Western Europe and twice that many in Africa, although in somewhat qualitatively different ways.

In Western Europe, two students talked about their desire to take advantage of a rare opportunity to live in a different country. For example, Amelia (WE) commented, “Well, I chose my college very far away from home in the first place because I wanted to live in a (...) completely different environment. And study abroad was kind of the same thing.” Similarly, when asked why she chose to study abroad, Maeve (WE) responded, “Also just to live in another country and have the experience. [...] It’s (...) a once-in-a-lifetime [opportunity]. You can’t [typically] just go live somewhere for four months and then pick up and move again.”

Students in Africa focused more on the idea that this was an opportunity to experience something completely “unknown” and very culturally different from what they were accustomed to. For example, Jane (Af) commented, “I just like to discover the unknown, I guess you could say. [...] I really just wanted to explore something that I don’t know. I think it’s important to do

that.” Along similar lines, when Ann (Af) was asked about her motivations for studying abroad, she responded:

For me it was more about coming to (...) a place [that] I really just don’t know much about. [...] I just love getting to know other people and (...) other cultures and kind of pushing myself out of the box as much as I can.

Zoey (Af) specifically said she wanted to experience life in a “third-world country,” explaining:

I got the idea that I wanted to go to sort of a third-world country, if you will, because I feel like (...) there’s a whole mess of the population of the world that just lives in a way that is very, very different from how I’ve grown up. And I feel like in order to be a fully-formed person you need to have seen that and experienced it.

In summary, when asked about their motivations for studying abroad, the majority of Seminar participants said they had wanted or planned to study abroad for a long time. They cited language learning and a desire to experience something new as reasons for wanting to go abroad.

Seminar Participants a Diverse Group

A second theme to emerge in the ‘Students’ category is ‘Seminar participants a diverse group.’ Students said they appreciated the diversity represented among the Seminar participants. This was mentioned by several students in Africa and one in Western Europe. For example, Ann (Af) commented:

I *really* appreciate the people in the class. There are some wonderful people who really do want to step back and think and look at different aspects of life and who offer very unique view points. We’re a *really* interesting conglomeration (...), which is cool. [...] Because we’re all from all over the United States and all different sorts of socio-economic backgrounds and that sort of thing. Even the differences in what the top five American values would be was really different for everybody. [...] So that’s been really beneficial for me.

Emma (Af) said she appreciated the diversity of learning styles represented in the class, adding, “It’s just been really interesting when we have discussions, seeing the different ways people will address the same issue.”

Jen (WE) was the only student in Western Europe to comment on the diversity represented in her group of Seminar participants. When asked about how the Seminar was impacting her experience, she responded:

I go to a small school (...) and so just being in a small group of people from all over and hearing how they can relate and how they don't relate to [the host city] is interesting. Because I never thought I'd have the opportunity to sit with somebody from Los Angeles and Chicago and Texas in [the host city] where we're all, like, thinking about if this is curious to them.

To summarize, students did not have a lot to say about themselves or their peers, and therefore the 'Students' category is a minor one. The one thing they did talk about in some depth was their motivation for studying abroad. A number of students said they had wanted to study abroad for a long time, and they cited language learning and a desire to experience something new as primary reasons. In addition, students discussed their appreciation for the diversity represented in the group of Seminar participants.

Role of the Seminar in Student Learning

Another category from the student interviews—one that is at the heart of this study—is the role the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad plays in students' learning. This refers to how the Seminar affects participants' learning and their experience abroad. Nine distinct themes, several of which have multiple sub-themes, emerged in this category. They are: 'Stepping back and reflecting,' 'Discussing experience,' 'Affects how students engage the experience,' 'Framework for experience,' 'Asking 'Why?',' 'Seeing from another perspective,' 'Processing the experience,' 'Suspending judgment,' and 'Increased self-awareness.' These themes and their sub-themes are outlined in Table 17.

Stepping Back and Reflecting

Students at both sites said they appreciated the opportunity and the space that the Seminar provided them to step back and reflect on their experience abroad while it was happening. They referred to the Seminar as a "weekly wake-up call" and a time to "pause and reflect." For example, Zoey (Af) explained, "It's definitely helping me be more reflective, which is good. [...] [It] let[s] me back up and describe.... and sort of pause while I'm in the middle to reflect. And so I definitely think it's good in that way." Similarly, Maeve (WE) explained:

I think it's helping me reflect more while I'm here, instead of doing that after. [...] The Seminar is that chance, like once a week, (...) [to] just kind of stop and think about where you are and what you're doing and how you're doing and

stuff. [...] It's [a chance] to just stop and pull yourself away for a minute and look at the big picture.

Lucy (Af) echoed this idea that the Seminar served as a weekly check-in of sorts:

I think that it's been good to have little weekly wake-up calls. Because I've definitely found myself stuck in certain ruts over the course of this experience. [...] It's just been good to have wake-up calls where I'm like, 'Okay, how have I been evaluating the things that have been going on around me and is that helpful for my experience? Have I been hurting myself in any way by the way I'm (...) maybe judging situations too soon? Or have I been getting frustrated over things that I don't really need to be getting frustrated about?'

Table 17. Student Interviews: Role of the Seminar in Student Learning Category

‘Role of the Seminar in Student Learning’ Themes	<i>Where did the theme emerge?</i>	
	Western Europe	Africa
• Stepping back and reflecting	X	X
• Discussing experience	X	X
○ Comparing experiences		X
• Affects how students engage the experience	(1 reference)	X
• Framework for experience	X	X
○ Cultural differences framework	X	X
○ Diversity within cultural tendencies		X
• Asking ‘Why?’	X	
• Seeing from another perspective		X
• Processing the experience		X
• Suspending judgment	X	X
• Increased self-awareness	X	X

Discussing Experience

One of the ways students at both sites said the Seminar was benefiting their learning was by giving them the opportunity to take their reflection one step further and discuss the study abroad experience with peers and the instructor(s) as it was happening. They described the Seminar as a place to debrief the experience, a time to talk through and untangle their emotions and challenges, and an opportunity to revisit specific experiences to try to better understand them. For example, when asked about the most beneficial aspects of her experience abroad, Emma (Af) first mentioned the homestay, and then said, “Also having a place to debrief about that and just talk about that with students. And the Seminar has been a place where I can do that.” Jen (WE) commented, “I think it’s just good to talk about things while we’re going through them.”

Josh (Af) said he enjoyed hearing about his classmates' experiences because "it provides a sort of solidarity between us where we'd be like, 'We're all in this together,' and just sort of encourage each other that way. So that's been good."

Sarah (WE) said she and the other participants in the Seminar benefited from talking about their experiences in ways other students were not able to do. She explained:

The people that aren't in the Seminar are obviously having similar experiences, but they don't talk about it really the way we do. They don't analyze things—cultural things—the way we do, and if there's a problem in the homestay, why that's going on. [...] There's just things that we get to analyze and talk about about our experience that the other people don't. So I think that's what's good for me.

Comparing Experiences

Within the 'Discussing experience' theme, one sub-theme emerged that was limited to Africa. Several students in Africa said that they liked discussing their experiences with others in the Seminar specifically because it was an opportunity for comparing experiences with their peers. This was beneficial because it helped them better understand which aspects of their personal experience might be cultural and what was probably not, and to better understand the diversity of their host culture. For example, when asked about the most beneficial aspects of her experience, Lucy (Af) said she appreciated "just (...) having a time to talk to other people about what they're experiencing too and how it's been similar and how it's been different."

Josh (Af) explained the benefits of comparing and contrasting his experience with others more in depth:

I think it's just (...) a good environment to say, 'I didn't get this. This person wouldn't shake my hand, or this person wouldn't speak to me, or this and that.' And just throwing that out there in the group and hearing the expertise of [Malik] and [Ellen]. Or hearing from the other students, like, 'Yeah, that happened to me too. What the heck's up with that?'

Zoey (Af) also said she enjoyed "comparing and contrasting everyone's experiences." She explained:

The thing that I have to guard against all the time is to be like, 'Okay self, my host family does not equal [all] people [in this country].' Because it's hard for me to not do that in my head. So it's good to get everyone else's experiences

too. And be like, this seems like something everyone else experiences too, whereas this thing seems like that's just the way my family is.

Affects How Students Engage the Experience

Another theme to emerge with regards to the role the Seminar was playing in students' learning was that it affects how students engage the experience. One student in Western Europe and several students in Africa discussed ways in which they were engaging in their study abroad experience differently as a result of being enrolled in the Seminar. For example, they said the Seminar was helping them do the following: be more mindful of the world around them and their own reactions to it; push themselves outside their comfort zone; think more before speaking or reacting; be curious and ask more questions; and continue to seek out learning experiences even when things became difficult. Angela (Af), for example, commented:

[The Seminar has] really taught me to (...) think before I speak, which seems like common sense, but for some of us it's not. [...] But that's been really helpful for me because I've had a few experiences where I would think, 'Just think before you come at this situation.'

Emma (Af) said that the Seminar was helping her learn how to not only cope, but to thrive in a new, foreign environment. More specifically, she explained, "I think it has given me some tools (...) to keep me aware of the way that I can sometimes hold myself back from challenges." She said this helped her continue to push herself outside her comfort zone and offered the following example:

A couple friends and I met this guy who sold us fabric and he invited us to dinner at his house and we decided to go. I'm not sure I would have done that before (...). [...] And it was probably one of the best experiences I've had here and really rewarding. [...] So I think that I've been given the tools—partially just from the program in general, but also from having a space [in the Seminar] where we can discuss challenges and obstacles, and ways of thinking and conceptualizing, and cultural differences.

Lucy (Af) talked about the fact that the Seminar was not only a weekly check-in where she could reflect on her experience, but also an opportunity to think about how she wanted to engage the experience moving forward. She explained that the Seminar is a time when she can ask herself, "Okay, for the next week, what do I need to do to...not necessarily get what I want

out of the experience, but... to let it be what it is and take the good out of it that I can?" Lucy (Af) elaborated:

I think it's very easy to be very self-centered and focus on all the things that frustrate *you* and start seeing the people around you as potential annoyances rather than just people in and of themselves who are going about their daily lives just like you are. [...] I think it's just easy when you aren't a part of the culture to have a negative experience and then generalize from there and assume that all people who fit that description are going to be similar. [...] And so (...) just learning to approach every situation coming at it with kind of a fresh perspective every time. [...] And learning to kind of slow down for a bit, be more conscious about how you're drawing conclusions about situations and people (...) and not being so reactive to everything.

Lucy (Af) touched more on how the Seminar was affecting her time abroad when I asked her how she felt her experience compared to that of students not enrolled in the Seminar. She responded:

I think that there are definitely some students who at this point have given up on the experience a little bit for various reasons (...). And so I think [the Seminar has] helped me avoid getting to that spot and (...) it's helped me to want to continue to learn more and continue to seek out more rather than deciding that, 'Okay, I'm kind of used to it now and so I'm just going to get through this last month (...).' I think that's been the biggest thing—just continuing to seek out and to learn rather than just wanting to get through it.

Framework for Experience

Another theme within 'Role of the Seminar in student learning' is 'Framework for experience.' Participants at both sites said the Seminar provided them with frameworks for better understanding their experiences, the host culture, and how they were interacting with their environment. Students referred to numerous frameworks that they found helpful in understanding their experiences, but there also emerged two sub-themes: 'Cultural differences framework' and 'Diversity within cultural tendencies.'

When asked how she felt participating in the Seminar might be affecting her experience abroad, Zoey (Af) answered simply, "I always like being given frameworks through which to view things, so that's nice." Jane (Af) explained:

The first Seminar was really great because it gave us the framework of how to look at things. Because we're coming in [and] it's a totally different culture; it's totally foreign to anything that we've seen. And some people might take it and they'll look at the difference and they'll just say, 'Well, that's weird,' or 'That's incorrect and I should try to correct them.' But with the Seminar, [Malik] was telling us that you can't just go into a culture and say, 'Oh, you're doing it wrong.' Because for them it's not weird. It's a norm; it's just how they live.

When Lucy (Af) said the Seminar helped her keep a fresh perspective throughout her experience, I asked how she felt it did that. She responded by talking about a specific framework from the Seminar: "Well, we've talked about trying to avoid drawing generalizations because they hinder your ability to look at the complexity of the situation and acquire deeper understanding of situations that you're in or interactions or things that you see."

Ann (Af) explained that the Seminar helped her put names to some ideas with which she was perhaps already familiar:

There's been a lot of terminology that I've also learned, which has been really interesting for *me*—just things that I've noticed that I didn't know exactly had names, which was cool to see.

Cultural Differences Framework

As mentioned previously, students referred to numerous frameworks that they found helpful in understanding their experiences, but one that was repeated several and therefore became its own sub-theme was 'Cultural differences framework.' This refers to what students learned in the Seminar about cultural value differences. This theme emerged across sites, but was more prominent in Western Europe. Students did a Cultural Detective (Hofner Saphiere, 2004) activity specific to their host culture, learned about several cultural value dimensions—such as those identified by Hofstede (1984) and Hall (1959)—and received a few relevant readings. Josh (Af) commented:

We talked about the different cultures and the scale between, for example, collectivism and (...) individualism. That's just interesting, and then to add different countries and where they were, it just helps me improve my understanding [of] different countries and (...) of the world.

When I asked Maeve (WE) if she felt her experience abroad differed in any way from that of other students who were not taking the Seminar, she answered, "Absolutely. I think it's

very different. Because there's just some things that you're not aware of [if you don't take the Seminar]...like some of the cultural differences or why something is." This theme came up again with Maeve (WE) when I asked her what she felt she was learning from the Seminar. She responded:

The differences between the cultures is probably the main thing. And having them laid out on paper for me to read and take in and process, rather than having a cultural experience happen and then not really understanding what happened or why it happened.

When asked about the most beneficial aspects of the Seminar curriculum, Jake (WE) responded:

I'd say the articles on how Americans are perceived and how [people from the host country] are perceived. I guess those cultural differences and everything would be the things that stand out.

Diversity Within Cultural Tendencies

Another sub-theme that emerged, although only in two students' responses, is a framework for recognizing diversity within cultural tendencies. One of the objectives of the Seminar is to help students understand the cultural value differences previously mentioned and recognize that there exist cultural tendencies; however, it is important not only to understand these cultural tendencies, but also to recognize the diversity that may exist within any one culture (M. Bennett, 1998). Somewhat similarly, the move along the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC) from Minimization into the first intercultural worldview of Acceptance requires one to move from primarily focusing on similarities to simultaneously acknowledging similarities and more nuanced differences. In other words, recognition of the diversity that exists within cultural tendencies demonstrates a higher level of intercultural sensitivity. For this reason, it is worth highlighting this as a sub-theme, even though only two students—both in Africa—made comments of this nature.

When asked about the most beneficial aspects of the Seminar curriculum, Lucy (Af) mentioned the Cultural Detective (Hofner Saphiere, 2004) activity, explaining:

[T]rying to dig deeper and find the deeper base of values that kind of instruct the way society operates has been good to think about—and also thinking about the myriad ways that people deviate from those cultural values. Obviously you find tons and tons of variation all over the place.

Zoey (Af) talked about a Seminar activity in which the students were asked to compare the United States, their host culture, and themselves as individuals on several cultural value dimension continuums. She reflected on the graphic that emerged when all the students in the class had placed themselves on one of the continuums:

I thought that was such a cool graphic because it was, like, okay, we all kind of agree on [where] the U.S. and [the host country] are (...) and then when you look at us, we sort of *roughly* fit in the America one, but no individual person matched up perfectly even though as a whole we sort of fit it pretty well. And that was definitely like, ‘Yeah, look at that! Individual people!’ Even though in the aggregate people will a lot of times fit with that culture (...), no one person is going to be a representative sample of that demographic. And that’s an important thing to bear in mind with people here too.

Asking ‘Why?’

One prominent theme that emerged only in Western Europe was ‘Asking ‘Why?’’ The majority of the students there said they felt the Seminar encouraged them think about why things are the way they are in the host culture. As Sarah (WE) explained:

[The instructor] always says, ‘Why?’ Like, ‘Why is that the way that it is?’ And I think thinking that way is the best part of the Seminar and why I’m getting so much out of it. It’s because instead of just seeing something that’s different from my culture, I see something and I try to figure out why that is. And I don’t think people that aren’t in the Seminar do that. [...] So I think (...) just curiosity is the best thing about the Seminar.

Similarly, when asked if she felt being enrolled in the Seminar was affecting her experience abroad, Jen (WE) responded, “Yeah. [...] It just makes you think about, like, why that is, or why you look at something and you think that way, or why exactly we eat with the family, or why... Just asking ‘why?’”

However, at least one student in Western Europe did not always find asking ‘Why?’ entirely constructive. Jake (WE) made the following comment about the obvious/curious photo activity the students completed during my visit: “During the last Seminar, I didn’t think taking pictures and just asking the question ‘why?’ all the time was a great use of time, or very enlightening, per se.”

Seeing From Another Perspective

Another way in which the Seminar affected how students learned from their experience abroad was that it helped them see from another perspective. This is not a real strong theme, but is noteworthy nonetheless, especially because it emerged only in Africa and is particularly interesting when compared to the ‘Asking ‘Why?’’ theme present only in Western Europe.

Whereas students in Western Europe said the Seminar caused them to be curious about why things were the way they were in the host culture, several students in Africa said the Seminar actually pushed them to try to see things from the perspective of someone from the host culture. For example, Josh (Af) explained:

There will be certain times when I just want to yell at people and I’ll be like, ‘Wait. [Malik] would tell me to look at it from their perspective.’ [...] I think meeting every week in that class reinforces in our minds—especially when I’m just so frustrated—like, ‘This is a different culture. You’ve got to remember, think the way they’d think; try to see it their way.’

Angela (Af) also said the Seminar reminded her to think before coming to a situation. She added:

We’ve had a lot of discussions about approaching things from the culture you’re in, which I think is really important but *really* hard to do. [...] But through the class, just learning, ‘Okay, this isn’t your own culture and you have to see it from the perspective of someone who lives in this culture,’ that was really helpful.

Jane (Af) discussed how being able to see things from another perspective was improving her experience abroad:

I really think that everyone should take the Seminar because it helps you see it in a different way. Because you can get really frustrated when you don’t understand. And the frustration can turn into anger or it can turn into judgment that you don’t realize. [...] But the Seminar makes you look at it in a cultural way...to make you understand why they do those things. And if I didn’t take the time to just think about it and talk about it, then I don’t know if I’d be as far along in understanding the culture or accepting it as I am now.

Processing the Experience

Another way in which the Seminar impacted student learning is that it helped students process their experience. This theme was not as strong as some of the others previously

discussed, but it was mentioned by several students, although only in Africa. For example, when I asked Jane (Af) what she was learning from her experience abroad, she responded, “I really cannot even express how much I’ve learned. And the Seminar has helped a lot with processing it.” She later reiterated this sentiment, explaining more in depth, “It’s just helped me process all new things that I have seen and experienced, and helped me to understand (...) how to deal with certain things that I see that are foreign to me.”

Emma (Af) commented on how the Seminar was helping her come into awareness about how she was processing the experience:

All of those activities and the discussions that go along with them and connecting them back to our experiences here, I think that that’s made me a lot more (...) aware of how I’m processing my experience. So if there’s a time when I get really cynical or I feel a little defeated—a lot of the stuff we talked about in class, I can remember that and sort of recognize the pattern I’m going through.

Zoey (Af) spoke specifically about how one particular Seminar activity helped her better understand how she was processing her experience:

We took photos of things—like the obvious/curious photos—and sort of discussed them. I thought that was a really valuable and interesting activity because that involved us talking about how we process what we see.

Suspending Judgment

Another theme within ‘Role of the Seminar in student learning’ is ‘Suspending judgment.’ Several students said the Seminar had helped them become less quick to judge. Again, this was not as prominent of a theme as some of the earlier themes in this category, but was mentioned by at least three students across the sites. For example, when asked what she felt she would take away from the Seminar, Jane (Af) responded:

To make sure to withhold judgment. And what I mean by that is, you see something and it’s bizarre to you—you’re going to make some sort of judgment no matter what you do. But to try and see the difference and why you [are] making this assertion. [...] I mean, you see something weird like that, you’re going to automatically think, ‘Oh, that’s weird,’ but it’s important to ask yourself why.

When I followed up on a comment Lucy (Af) made, asking her how it is the Seminar helps her keep a fresh perspective on her experience, she explained:

Trying to avoid evaluating a situation before you have enough inputs to be able to evaluate it in a way that's helpful. [...] Just learning to kind of slow down for a bit, be more conscious about how you're drawing conclusions about situations and people.

Increased Self-Awareness

The final theme within 'Role of the Seminar in student learning' is 'Increased self-awareness.' At both sites, students said the Seminar was helping increase their self-awareness. They said they were both learning about themselves and increasing their own cultural self-awareness. For example, Jen (WE) commented, "It's a lot [of] learning about yourself." She explained:

We do a lot of exercises [focused on] learning about yourself—learning styles and (...) how you can adapt that to the culture here, the best ways for you to learn here and push yourself, and that kind of thing.

Students also said the Seminar was helping them learn about their own culture. When I asked Jake (WE) what he was getting out of the Seminar, if anything, he replied, "This Seminar has broadened my knowledge of (...) where the U.S. stands, how [host country nationals] view Americans, how *you're* viewed when you're in their country—things like that." In response to a similar question, Jen (WE) said, "It's just, like, seeing how other people view Americans and that kind of thing. I think it's interesting."

Maeve (WE) spoke specifically about what she learned from reading about cultural values in the United States versus the host culture, explaining:

I had never really realized that some of those things—like individuality in the U.S.; everyone's like, 'Oh, you're unique, you can do anything you want (...)'—and I didn't really get that that was just (...) something that Americans believe.

Similarly, Lucy (Af) discussed the benefits of learning about subjective culture, which the Seminar defines as "who you are and where you come from" ("Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad BluePrint," 2010):

I think one thing that's been helpful is thinking of the idea of subjective culture. I think that particularly as a white American, we aren't really taught to think of ourselves as people who have a culture, which we do (...). [...] So I think having to think about, like, 'Okay, how do I define my cultural identity? And how is that influencing my experience?' [...] And so just learning to evaluate

yourself while you're trying to interpret and evaluate another culture, I think that's been really helpful.

To summarize, there were nine ways in which the Seminar was affecting students' learning during their study abroad experience. To begin with, students found it beneficial that the Seminar gave them a space to step back and reflect on their experience while it was happening and to discuss it with their peers and CIEE staff. Students talked about ways in which they were engaging their experience differently as a result of what they learned through the Seminar. In addition, they appreciated that the Seminar gave them frameworks that helped them better understand their experience. In Western Europe, the Seminar encouraged participants to constantly question why things were the way they were in the host culture, whereas in Africa students said they felt the Seminar pushed them to try to see things from another perspective, particularly through the eyes of host country nationals. Students also felt the Seminar helped them process their experience and suspend judgment. Lastly, students said the Seminar helped increase their own self-awareness.

Critical Incident

During my observation of the first session of the Seminar in Africa, an incident occurred that serves to illuminate many of the themes that emerged from the interviews. Here I describe what happened and then discuss the relevant themes from the student and instructor interviews. In other words, these are themes that were already reported (in the case of the student interviews) or will be reported in the next chapter (in the case of the instructor interviews), but here they are discussed in regards to this particular incident. The purpose of reporting this critical incident in this form is to present a richer picture of the relationship between the themes that emerged from the interviews and what occurred in the class, as well as to illuminate the complex interrelationships between the themes.

The Incident

The first part of the lesson is about the Intercultural Development Continuum (IDC). The instructor, Malik, begins to go through the PowerPoint presentation about the IDC and the different worldviews. When he discusses Defense, which is one type of Polarization, he asks if anyone has found himself or herself in Defense at any time. Allison responds that at times she has thought, 'Why are men here so aggressive?' She explains that men consistently ask for her phone number and continue to persist even when she says no. She adds that nothing in her

experience has served to change her mind about men's aggressiveness. Jane responds by saying that she used to feel that same way, but that she has come to realize this persistence in asking for her phone number is perhaps more about curiosity than anything else. Angela interjects at this point and says she wants to ask Ellen—the U.S. American female staff member sitting in on the course—for her point of view on this matter.

Before anyone can say anything, Malik interjects, “Why [Ellen]? Do you think she's in a better position to answer that than me, for example?”

Angela simply answers, “Yes.”

Malik says something along the lines of, “Do you think that's based on an assumption?”

Angela responds, saying something like, “Well, yeah, but I think it's right.” Several people chuckle. Malik tells Angela she can discuss the matter later with Ellen and then he goes on with the lesson. During this interaction, the feeling in the room is somewhat awkward or even tense, from my point of view.

At the end of the class, six female students stay behind to talk to Ellen about this issue. Unfortunately I am speaking to someone at the time and am unable to see who approaches whom, and I only catch the latter part of the group's conversation. What I hear is a few women talking about personal experiences in which men touched them in ways they felt would be considered inappropriate in the U.S. Another student also says that one of her friends on the program gave her phone number to a guy and now he is texting and calling several times a day even though she sent him the message that she is not interested. The only part of Ellen's response I am able to hear is that she says that type of behavior had drastically decreased for her since being back in the country as a wife and a mother. Several of the students indicate they are happy to hear that, mentioning that they would like to perhaps return to Africa one day and that they were concerned about how they would be treated by men if they did.

At that moment, students and a professor for another class come into the room and we have to leave. I go with another student to conduct our interview, so I am not privy to any further conversations.

The Students' Perspective

I had already interviewed a few of the students prior to this class and was therefore unable to ask them about this incident. However, I talked about it with each of the students I interviewed after the fact. Several brought it up on their own; if they did not, I asked their perspective on the interaction. A number of the themes related to instruction emerged during our

discussions of this incident. Most prominent among them were ‘Student concerns go unaddressed’ and ‘Cultural background of instructor affects ability to relate to students.’ Additionally, although to a lesser extent, the incident also highlighted the ‘Curriculum-driven’ nature of the Seminar. Another theme that this critical incident highlighted, which comes from the milieu category, is how challenging issues of race and gender were for many of the students in Africa. Although some of the students’ comments address more than one theme, they are reported below according to the most relevant theme.

Student Concerns Go Unaddressed

One of the primary themes to emerge in the ‘Instruction’ category from the student interviews is ‘Teacher-centered.’ One of the sub-themes of that is ‘Student concerns go unaddressed.’ Several students cited this incident as an example of the fact that their concerns and the issues they raised often did not get adequately addressed from their perspective. Ann explained:

A lot of times things are cut and questions that—example A was yesterday when we were sitting there and [Angela] asked [Ellen] that question and [Malik] completely, *completely* skipped over everything. [...] But it was something that all of us—well, all ten girls—definitely want to talk about—*need* to talk about—and would love her perspective. But that was stopped. That happens quite a bit.

When asked about her general impressions of that day’s session, Allison demonstrated similar frustration over the exchange:

Overall I think most of us left kind of frustrated, which is standard, I think, for most of our [Seminar] classes. I don’t enjoy being interrupted—not that I was, but my friend was—and the dismissal of our questions.

Angela, the student who asked the question of Ellen that ignited this incident, had a lot to say on the matter and felt very strongly that it demonstrated how student concerns often go unaddressed in the Seminar. After explaining why she asked for Ellen’s opinion on the matter of local men’s aggressive nature, Angela added:

And of course, *of course* that was dismissed and we couldn’t discuss that, even though *everyone* wanted to discuss that. And you saw how after class everyone stayed to hear what [Ellen] had to say.

When asked how she felt after the fact, looking back on the situation, Angela made a comment that not only refers to the theme ‘Student concerns go unaddressed,’ but also touches

upon ‘More sharing, discussion, and group reflection desired,’ another sub-theme within ‘Teacher-centered.’ Angela remarked:

It was really frustrating because I felt like [Malik] just completely dismissed the whole thing, even though I know he knows that we were all interested in hearing what [Ellen] had to say. [...] So I kind of started tuning out of the class after that because I was really frustrated. But I wish that was something that we discussed because I think that it is important and is *totally* relevant to things that we talked about in that class.

Curriculum-Driven Nature of the Seminar

Another sub-theme within ‘Teacher-centered’ that was touched upon during the students’ discussions of this incident is ‘Curriculum-driven.’ For example, when asked his opinion of the exchange between Angela and the instructor, Josh responded:

We want to share with one another. However, there’s a curriculum we need to do. So it’s like that tension between the curriculum and what [Malik] is supposed to teach, and what we as students want. [...] So I feel like that’s kind of what his response was. He had to finish the curriculum.

Instructor’s Cultural Background Affects Ability to Relate to Students

In addition to referring to the curriculum-driven nature of the Seminar, Josh also suggested the instructor’s cultural background might affect his ability to relate to the students. Interlaced with his previous comment, Josh also said:

I think it would have been interesting to have [Ellen] share her thoughts. But (...) it also has to do with [the fact that] we’re all Americans in there except [Malik]. And so (...) he always has to (...) make sure we’re looking at the [host] culture from a culturally-appropriate lens. [...] He didn’t want to really get into that issue at that point. Whereas [Ellen], as an American white woman, she’s had to deal with that for years and would be happy to try and help her fellow American females that are interested in that.

Allison made a similar comment, also suggesting that the students sometimes found it beneficial to hear the perspective of someone more culturally similar to them:

When [Angela] asked [Ellen] a question and [Malik] was like, ‘Why didn’t you ask me?’ and all of us were like, ‘Well, you’re not a woman like us. Or you’re

not from America. Why *would* we ask you?' [...] But we were asking her a question, like, 'How do you deal with this?' [Malik] wouldn't know that. [...] And we've all been talking about it on our own, like, 'I don't understand how [Ellen] stands to live here and put up with that every single day.' And so it was interesting to hear [after the class] that her being married does change how she's treated (...).

Challenging Issues of Race and Gender

As mentioned previously, this whole exchange centered around a question about local men's "aggressiveness" toward the (primarily European-American) women in the program, which highlights how challenging many of the students found the issue of gender in particular, but also race. This was also alluded to in many of the students' comments, including several of those already mentioned. When I asked Ann if there was anything about the previous class that she thought went particularly well, she answered, "Nothing really sticks out... [except] talking to [Ellen] afterwards." I asked her to tell me about that conversation and why she found it beneficial. She responded:

I think just hearing a married woman's perspective that sometimes it can stop. That not every man will do this for the rest of your existence. If you lived in [this country], that (...) maybe, just maybe, you wouldn't be berated every day. [...] So that was *really* beneficial for me actually, because there have been moments when I've just been really, really, really angry at some of the men here. [...] So I really appreciated [hearing] [Ellen's] viewpoint and (...) that it can be different than our experience.

Summary of the Students' Perspective

In conclusion, one of the things that this incident highlighted was, broadly speaking, how challenging issues of race and gender were for many of the students at the site in Africa. Other themes that emerged from the student interviews that were illustrated through this particular incident were that students' concerns often went unaddressed and that the instructor's cultural background sometimes affected his ability to relate to students. In addition, some students attributed this interaction at least in part to the curriculum-driven nature of the Seminar at this site.

The Instructor's Perspective

I also asked the instructor in Africa, Malik, about this particular incident during our observation-specific interview following the session in which this happened. His comments give more background to the themes that emerged from the student interviews while also providing a different perspective. Although the themes that emerged from the instructor interviews have not yet been discussed in detail, I highlight here several themes from the instructor interviews that were illuminated through this incident. These themes are primarily related to instruction and include: 'Using IDI data,' 'Curriculum-driven vs. student-driven approach,' and 'Helping students recognize and understand other perspectives.' These are explained in more depth in the next chapter, where I report the findings from the instructor interviews.

Using IDI Data

One of the themes from the instructor interviews has to do with how the instructors use students' scores from the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and Learning Styles Inventory (LSI) in their teaching of the Seminar. A sub-theme that emerged in this regard, only from the instructor in Africa, is 'More specific, intentional approach to students' intercultural worldviews.' Malik's explanation of what he was thinking when Angela asked her question demonstrates, for example, how he tried to take the student's intercultural worldview into consideration when responding:

It was so interesting. I said, 'Wow, that's the typical response of someone in Defense.' You know, 'Why are men so aggressive? I've had this experience with some men so men are aggressive.' [...] And I said to myself, 'Okay, how am I going to respond to this?' So I tried to use it in a way that would not put her in a defensive mode (...).

When asked what he felt went particularly well during the session of the Seminar in which this incident occurred, Malik brought up the comment Jane made during the conversation that led up to Angela's question, and he compared it to Angela's response to the same situation. As explained previously, when someone mentioned the topic of men in the host culture acting "aggressive," Jane said she used to feel that same way but had come to realize that this persistence in asking for her phone number was perhaps more about curiosity than anything else. The following quotation from Malik suggests how his knowledge of the students' IDI scores played into his response. In addition, it alludes to how he attempts to use students in more

intercultural mindsets to push and pull the other students along. Referring first to Jane's comment, and then contrasting it with Angela's question to Ellen, Malik said:

[I thought,] 'Wow, that's so interesting, you reacting about this in this way.' And it is a typical reaction of someone who really is in Acceptance. [...] I was so glad to see how [Jane] always strives to look for alternative ways of seeing this reality. [...] And that's how we can see the same reality seen from two different perspectives—from a Defense perspective [and] also an Acceptance perspective. Yet they are talking about the same thing. I think that is something that really makes me see the plurality of worldviews in this class, and the richness of the debate and how some students (...) can contribute to actually making others see the multiplicity of perspectives and the importance of considering things from different angles.

Curriculum-Driven vs. Student-Driven Approach

Another theme to emerge from the instructor interviews that was on display during this incident is 'Curriculum-driven vs. student-driven approach.' While the instructors' comments at the site in Western Europe focused heavily on a student-driven approach, the instructor in Africa emphasized the importance of balancing these two types of approaches. In contrast, as mentioned previously, the students in Africa described the instruction in the Seminar as more teacher-centered or curriculum-driven. When discussing the critical incident in question with Malik, I asked him what influenced his decision to talk with Angela after class, rather than when she asked her question during the Seminar. His response hints at a relatively curriculum-driven approach:

It was more of a time issue. [...] We have talked about Defense (...). And there are other worldviews that are equally important for us to discuss, like Minimization especially. [...] It is an issue that I felt would trigger a longer discussion, [so] I thought, 'Well let's curb it here,' because I knew that we would have time to discuss it later. And it's important for me to at least give them the basics about the other worldviews so that they could have a general idea of the theory as a whole, rather than just snippets of a few worldviews.

Helping Students Recognize and Understand Other Perspectives

Another theme from the instructor interviews is ‘Helping students recognize and understand other perspectives.’ In discussing the conversation he had with Angela after the class, Malik said he was trying to help her understand that Ellen’s opinion or experience was just one of many perspectives. He explained:

After class [Angela] said, ‘Well, I know I made an assumption, but in this particular case, it is right.’ I said, ‘It may be right. But the thing is, don’t you think that there are many people (...) who are familiar with this society like [Ellen]?’ Because those are the two things that she said: as a female and as someone who knows this culture. And I said, ‘Well there are females who know this culture and would probably have a different take on (...) men and women’s relationships here.’ She said, ‘Yes, that’s true.’ I said, ‘That’s exactly my point. [Ellen] has her point of view, she has her perspective, she has her lens, but that’s one lens among others.’ And she said, ‘Okay, I got your point.’

While Malik seemed to want to guard against the students drawing conclusions based on one individual’s perspective, many of the students nonetheless wanted to hear Ellen’s perspective.

Summary of the Instructor’s Perspective

To summarize, Malik’s perspective on this particular incident and his explanation of his reaction illustrates several themes regarding his instruction style. For example, his comments reveal that he tried to take students’ intercultural worldviews into consideration when responding to Angela’s question. In addition, they also suggest his response was fueled by a relatively curriculum- or agenda-driven mindset. Lastly, when he addressed the question with Angela after class, it appears his goal was to help her understand that Ellen’s perspective is just one of many.

Conclusion

This critical incident, including the different perspectives on what happened, serves to illuminate some of the themes that emerged in this study. More importantly, perhaps, it demonstrates the complexity involved in a course such as the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad.

With regards to this specific incident, Malik attempted to respond to Angela’s question to Ellen in a way that took into consideration Angela’s intercultural worldview and tried to help her

understand that Ellen's perspective was just one among many. However, Angela—along with several of her peers—really wanted to hear Ellen's perspective on the issue she raised. This was a challenge many of the students faced on a daily basis, and they wanted to discuss how to best deal with it. Malik seemed to feel that he addressed the issue adequately and made his point with Angela during their after-class discussion. Although Angela told Malik she understood his point, she still left feeling frustrated and like her question had been dismissed. Several of her peers echoed these feelings.

Where instructor and student comments regarding this incident did align was with regards to the somewhat curriculum-driven nature of instruction at the site in Africa. Malik recognized that his response to Angela's question was at least in part guided by his need to get through the lesson plan. As mentioned in the student interview findings, many students felt the Seminar was relatively curriculum-driven as well, and at least one student recognized that this was probably at play in the incident in question.

In the next chapter, I report the findings from the thematic analysis of the instructor interviews in more depth. Also included in chapter five is a summary of the instructors' IDI scores and the findings from the administrator interviews.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, PART 2

This chapter is a continuation of the findings. Here I report the instructors' IDI scores and the findings from the thematic analysis of the interviews with the Seminar instructors and administrators.

Instructors' IDI Scores

As mentioned in chapter three, all of the instructors took the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) when they first began teaching the Seminar and again shortly before or after my data collection visit. Therefore, I was able to compare their scores to see whether or not they had developed interculturally over the course of the time they had been teaching the Seminar. (Note that an older version of the IDI was used when the instructors first took the inventory, so the language was slightly different and numerical scores were not always included in the profiles. For the sake of consistency, I have translated the scores from the older version into the verbiage that the most recent version uses. Numerical scores are included when available.)

Andre, the lead instructor at the Western Europe site, first took the IDI in late 2007 when he began teaching the Seminar. The IDI indicated that, at that time, Andre was very squarely in the Reversal form of Polarization. When he retook the IDI in late 2010, he scored well into Acceptance (122.57). In other words, during the three years he had been teaching the Seminar, Andre moved out of Polarization, through Minimization, and into Acceptance. In comparison, DeJaeghere and Cao (2009) found that among teachers participating in an intercultural professional development program, the average IDI gain over a similar 2.5- to 3.5-year period was 6.90 points, which would be the equivalent of moving from mid-Polarization to low Minimization or from low Minimization to high Minimization.

Paolo started co-facilitating with Andre a few years after the Seminar began, thus he first took the IDI in mid 2009. At that time he scored toward the high end of Minimization (109.18). When he retook the IDI in early 2011, he was in Acceptance (122.20). In less than two years, he increased his score by approximately 13 points.

Malik, like Andre, started teaching the Seminar when it first began. He also took the IDI for the first time in late 2007. At that time, Malik scored at the very top of Minimization, or what is considered the cusp of Acceptance. When he retook the IDI in early 2011, he scored at the very top of the Adaptation worldview (145). Essentially he had moved through Acceptance and Adaptation during the three years he had been teaching the Seminar.

In other words, all three instructors made dramatic improvements in their intercultural sensitivity over the period of time during which they were teaching the Seminar. In addition, the thematic analysis of the instructors' interviews that follows reveals that all three instructors contribute their intercultural growth, at least in part, to the experience of teaching the Seminar.

Findings from the Instructor Interviews

Table 18 includes the overarching coding categories and primary themes within each category from the interviews with the Seminar instructors. As with the student interview coding structure, some of these themes have further sub- and even sub-sub-themes that are not included here. Instead, the full coding structure of each category is elaborated upon in the appropriate section.

As mentioned previously, I initially conducted a general interview with each of the instructors and then also interviewed them after each session of the Seminar that I observed. In Western Europe, I observed three sessions of the Seminar. The lead instructor, Andre, was present at all three, whereas his co-instructor, Paolo, was present at only the latter two. Therefore, I interviewed Andre four times and Paolo three times. In Africa, I observed two sessions of the Seminar and therefore interviewed the instructor there, Malik, three times.

Milieu

As with the student interviews, a category called 'Milieu' also emerged from the instructor interviews. The milieu refers to anything outside of the Seminar that might impact the students' learning and experience in the Seminar. It also includes anything related to the context of the Seminar itself which might affect the students' experience that does not fit within the other categories. Table 19 outlines the themes within 'Milieu' and indicates where they emerged.

Table 18. Instructor Interviews: Overarching Coding Structure

<p>Milieu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cultural challenges students experience• Seminar context <p>Instructors and Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curriculum-driven vs. student-driven approach• Tailoring teaching approach to students' IDI and LSI scores• Adapting Seminar lessons to cultural context vs. to the students• Instructor's intercultural worldview and learning style affect teaching of the Seminar• Teaching Seminar impacts instructors• Challenging students, but not too much• Encouraging students to think and question• Helping students recognize and understand other perspectives• Marketing the Seminar• Initial implementation challenges <p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lessons and activities• 'Cultural Partners' connect inside- and outside-the-classroom learning• Repetitiveness <p>Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Characteristics of Seminar participants• Seminar positively impacting students• Student motivation• Students connecting theory and experience <p>Instructors' Conclusions about the Seminar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What's going well with the Seminar• Challenges of the Seminar• Seminar about more than the materials
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Table 19. Instructor Interviews: Milieu Category

‘Milieu’ Themes	<i>Where did the theme emerge?</i>	
	Western Europe	Africa
• Cultural challenges students experience	X	X
• Seminar context	X	X
○ Importance of Seminar size	X	X
○ Importance of class configuration	X	
○ Scheduling challenges	X	X
○ Question of location	X	
▪ Complicated logistics	X	
▪ Desire to break with idea of a traditional academic class	X	
○ Place and time affect who enrolls	X	
○ Role of target language(s) in Seminar	X	X

Cultural Challenges Students Experience

Instructors at both sites mentioned some of the most common challenges students tend to experience in the local culture. In Western Europe, for example, the instructors said students often experience cultural misunderstandings with their host families regarding their freedom to eat what they want when they want from the refrigerator. Paolo explained, “There were students who came to class and said, ‘My mom shouted at me because I ate this food and I wasn’t supposed to. I cannot understand. It was in the fridge.’” Another common misunderstanding the instructors in Western Europe said students there often experience is related to volume when communicating. Paolo explained:

At the beginning of almost every semester, there’s one student who says, ‘My family is always mad [at each other] and at me. They are shouting and yelling all the time.’ And we say, ‘They are not mad at you. It’s the way [people here] speak. We speak louder than Americans do.’

In Africa, Malik spoke of the cultural differences students commonly experience there not so much as misunderstandings, but as “stress factors.” When I asked about the primary challenges students on his program experience, he answered:

Just cultural difference. [...] [For example], direct speech (...). For students to actually see that that which is said is not necessarily what is is a little unsettling in many ways. [...] And I think they’re sort of kept off balance (...) because they don’t know what to expect...or what is expected from them. I think that’s the biggest challenge for students here.

When asked whether there are specific cultural differences with which students regularly have difficulties, Malik said the regular use of silence in the local culture often makes students uncomfortable. He also mentioned a different sense of humor, explaining:

There are certain issues that are very sensitive related to gender, for instance, that we would joke thoroughly about here. Joking about race or ethnicity [is something] people do here very freely. [...] And because many of [the students] are very visible—actually physically—it’s sort of difficult for them to adjust to the fact that they are referred to by their physical features or their gender.

In other words, the primary challenges students on the program in Western Europe were facing, according to the Seminar instructors, had to do with misunderstandings in communicating with their host families. In Africa, deeper cultural differences were at the heart of students’ challenges as they worked to adapt to a much more indirect communication style and to the fact they were often identified by their race and gender.

Seminar Context

The instructors cited several aspects of the Seminar context that they feel impact the Seminar itself. The following themes emerged: ‘Importance of Seminar size,’ ‘Importance of class configuration,’ ‘Scheduling challenges,’ ‘Question of location,’ ‘Place and time affect who enrolls,’ and ‘Role of target language(s) in Seminar.’

Importance of Seminar Size

Instructors at both locations talked about the importance of keeping the Seminar relatively small. For example, Paolo commented, “I think it’s working well because we are a very, very reduced group—[six] people.” This is advantageous, he explained, because “it’s very easy to participate and to make them tell their stories and discuss things.” However, Paolo also mentioned that getting too small of a group can also have a negative effect. After one class, he commented, “Probably if we had more students in the class, there would be more different opinions or different points of view. It would be more enriching in that sense.”

Andre also commented, “I try to have small groups, although sometimes it’s not possible.” He mentioned that when they offered the Seminar in a more convenient, relaxed location during previous semesters, “the only negative thing was we had too many students.” Asked how many was too many, he responded:

Our last group in the hotel was something like 27. Too many. [...] The problem with these large groups is that you have ten people who really, really participate and are proactive, and then you have ten people who [just sit there bored], waiting for these two hours to go by.

When asked about the ideal size of the Seminar, Malik, who had a class of eleven at that time, responded:

I think up to 20 would be fine. I feel very comfortable with this number I have now, even though it's a selfish way of approaching it because it makes my job easier, while most students would benefit from [the Seminar].

Malik also commented on what he saw as one of the main challenges of having a large group in the Seminar, saying, "For the effectiveness of the course, if you want to pay close attention to individual students, it's not very easy to do so with too many students."

Importance of Class Configuration

Another theme that emerged with regards to the Seminar context is the 'Importance of the class configuration.' This refers to the actual arrangement of the physical space where the Seminar takes place. Although this was not discussed by Paolo or Malik, Andre brought it up on numerous occasions. As mentioned previously, of the three sessions I observed in Western Europe, two were held in different CIEE classrooms and the third took place around a small table in Andre's office. About the choice of space for the Seminar, Andre commented:

If it's in a classroom setting, the students perceive it as just another class. They come, they sit down in class, they have their physical tables—so there's no space for moving around, for doing activities where you need to stand up and walk around.

After one of the Seminar sessions I observed in a classroom setting, Andre explained that he had chosen to hold the Seminar there only because there were two additional people (me and another student who had been absent the previous few weeks). He commented, "What I didn't like is that they sat further back. [In my office] it's more like we're all together in this space [around the table]. Probably it was a mistake to change the setting of the discussion to that classroom." When asked what he felt went well after another session I later observed that took place in his office, Andre responded, "We were all closer to each other. We were all in the same circle. People could not hide in the back."

Scheduling Challenges

Another theme with regards to the Seminar context is ‘Scheduling challenges.’ The lead instructors at both sites said it was initially very challenging to find a time to offer the Seminar that would not conflict considerably with other courses. Malik explained:

Scheduling at first was difficult. The way our schedule works is that students have two sessions of each class every week. Usually it’s Monday and Wednesday, or Tuesday and Thursday. So, since this class is only once a week, at first it wasn’t easy to have a time in which everyone would be free.

Malik said that his solution was to wait until students signed up for courses each semester, then schedule the Seminar at a time when the fewest number of students had class.

In Western Europe, scheduling was further complicated by the fact that (1) students must take a direct enrollment course at the local university, and (2) they often choose their courses to allow for long weekend trips. About the former, Andre commented:

When I did the last presentation during orientation, the list was up to like 24 people. Everyone wanted to take the Seminar. [...] During the add/drop week, people started to drop, drop, drop, drop, drop even though they wanted to do it. Because it’s either ‘I take this course from the university which my university will give me credit for or I take the Seminar.’ And, sincerely, thinking about what benefits them academically, I need to tell them, ‘Take the class at the university. If that’s the class that you really need to fulfill credits, take it.’

Question of Location

In Western Europe, not only was it challenging to find a good time for the Seminar, it was also difficult to decide upon the best location. While most students lived in the downtown area, the local university and CIEE offices (where the CIEE classes were held) were located approximately a 15-minute bus ride away in a smaller town. Over the semesters, the instructors had experimented with different locations for the Seminar, holding it in a comfortable hotel meeting room in downtown, in a classroom at the local university, and in the CIEE offices. Two sub-themes emerged surrounding the question of location: ‘Complicated logistics’ and ‘Emphasis on breaking with the idea of an academic class.’

Complicated logistics. The situation just described made the question of where to hold the Seminar logistically complicated in Western Europe. The primary complications revolved

around finances and the commute (for either students or the instructors). Andre explained why he decided to hold the Seminar in the CIEE offices that semester:

It's a question of finance, of space, and I wanted to try something different. Finance because if we use the classrooms at the university, we need to pay for those classrooms; if we use the conference rooms at the orientation hotel, we also need to pay for those. And the Seminar doesn't really have budget, and we need to do things to try to maximize our funds.

The primary complication of meeting in the CIEE offices, however, was that the space in Andre's office could only accommodate about five or six people, and Andre felt the classrooms there were not ideal environments in which to hold the Seminar, which leads to the next sub-theme.

Desire to break with idea of a traditional academic class. Both Andre and Paolo explained that they hoped their choice of meeting place would help students see the Seminar as something different than a traditional academic class. Paolo talked about the extent to which the three different meeting spaces with which they had experimented accomplished this:

[Location] affects [it] a lot. The first year we [held] the Seminar downtown in a hotel and it went pretty well because we broke with the idea of an academic class. We tried to tell the students that this is not like another regular course (...). It's different. [...] So, [holding] the class not in a real classroom was pretty good during the first two, three semesters.

Paolo said that when they held the Seminar in a regular classroom at the local university, "it was a disaster. Because [the students] considered the Seminar another class, and they went less motivated to that class." On the other hand, Paolo felt holding the Seminar in the CIEE office space, like in the hotel, "broke with the idea of a regular course."

Andre made similar comments about the importance of location. He explained, "If it's in a classroom setting, the students perceive it as just another class. [...] And, from my perspective, that's the worst-case scenario. Don't teach the Seminar in a classroom." Andre described classrooms as "impersonal," "cold environments," whereas he said his office felt "homey."

Place and Time Affect Who Enrolls

In Western Europe, Andre and Paolo said that the combination of time and location had an effect on who enrolled in the Seminar because it influenced how much effort the students needed to put forward in order to attend. For example, Paolo commented:

If it's in the middle of the morning when they're [on campus], there's no effort [necessary], so everyone will take it (...) [for the] one credit and [extra excursion]. This semester we are (...) [doing] it in the afternoons, when most of the students have finished their classes. So they have to stay [on campus]; that's why we only have, like, five. [...] They have to make an effort to stay one hour outside waiting for the Seminar, and there are some students that don't want to do that.

Andre mentioned how this differed from when they offered the Seminar downtown:

If it's downtown in the center—where we've done it twice—those were our largest groups. It was easy for them, comfortable. They would go home, have lunch, and at four just walk to the hotel. [...] Whereas, if we do it [on campus], they need to go home, have lunch, and then take the bus again up to the university. And that also reduces the numbers.

Role of Target Language(s) in Seminar

The role of the target language(s) in the Seminar was very different across the two sites. In Western Europe, the course was originally taught in English, but the instructors had since decided to teach it in the target language, which was possible due to the language level requirements of the program. In Africa, where students were immersed in and learning both French and a local language, the language level requirements for entry into the program were not as high. There the Seminar had always been taught in English, although the instructor indicated he tried to infuse use of the target languages when possible.

In Western Europe, the instructors explained that they had decided to teach the Seminar in the target language because, as Andre commented, "Language and culture are linked together." Paolo elaborated, "You're not going to understand a culture completely if you don't understand the language. [...] That's why the [language commitment] program appeared, and when [that] program appeared, we decided to change [the Seminar] to [the target language]." Both instructors in Western Europe said initially they experienced some challenges teaching the Seminar in the target language, but that they could not imagine going back to teaching it in English. Paolo commented:

At the beginning it was more difficult for us. Because when you speak in [the target language] to American students and you want to explain information, you want to be very careful about the vocabulary and structures and how you transmit

the information. The very first sessions were stressful (...). [...] But after that they developed their [language] skills (...) and it was easier. [...] At the very beginning we were reluctant about teaching it in [the target language], but right now we don't even think about other possibilities.

Andre added, "I think the students (...) can pretty much say what they want to say. Sometimes you may see someone really struggling with the language but, in general, I would say the language barrier has not been such a barrier."

Malik did not talk as much about the role of language in the Seminar, except to say that he tried to encourage the students to use the target languages whenever possible. For example, during one session that I observed in which students created skits, Malik suggested they use French or the local language to represent the local person's thoughts. Afterward he commented to me:

I would have liked them to have used more [of the target languages] in their skits. [...] Representing these unspoken thoughts in [the local language] may seem more challenging than doing it in English, but I think at least one group did it in French, (...) which I think is very good.

Malik also explained that he has two versions of the Cultural Partners lesson plans designed for students at different language levels. The more advanced version encourages students to use more French when interacting with their partner.

To summarize, there were numerous contextual factors that the instructors felt impacted the implementation of the Seminar. They discussed the importance of keeping the Seminar small (although not too small) and configuring the class to feel more intimate. They also talked about the challenges they faced in scheduling the Seminar. In Western Europe, the question of where to hold the Seminar was also important, and the instructors discussed the fact that their selection of when and where to meet affected who chose to enroll. The instructors also commented on the role of the target language(s) in the Seminar, highlighting the fact that the Seminar is taught in the target language in Western Europe and in English in Africa.

Instructors and Instruction

The largest category from the interviews with the instructors is 'Instructors and Instruction.' This includes references to the instructors' role in the Seminar, their method of imparting the Seminar materials, and how they feel their involvement in the Seminar has affected

Table 20. Instructor Interviews: Instructors and Instruction Category

‘Instructors and Instruction’ Themes	Where did the theme emerge?	
	Western Europe	Africa
• Curriculum-driven vs. student-driven approach	X	X
○ Student-driven approach	X	
▪ Emphasis on participation and enjoyment	X	
▪ Focus on friendliness	X	
○ Importance of balancing the two	X	X
• Tailoring teaching approach to students’ LSI and IDI scores	X	X
○ Teaching to preferred learning style vs. teaching around the wheel	X	X
▪ Teaching to preferred learning style	X	
▪ Teaching around the wheel	(1 reference)	X
○ Use of IDI data	X	X
▪ More specific, intentional approach to students’ intercultural worldviews		X
▪ More general approach to students’ intercultural worldviews	X	
• Adapting Seminar lessons to cultural context vs. to the students	X	X
○ Adapting lessons to the students	X	
○ Adapting materials to the local culture		X
• Instructor’s intercultural worldview and learning style affect teaching of the Seminar	X	X
○ Instructor’s learning style affects teaching of the Seminar	X	(1 reference)
○ Instructor’s intercultural worldview affects teaching of the Seminar	X	(1 reference)
• Teaching Seminar impacts instructors	X	X
○ Teaching Seminar affects instructor’s intercultural worldview	X	X
○ Teaching Seminar affects instructor’s approach to students beyond the Seminar	X	X
• Challenging students, but not too much	X	X
• Encouraging students to think and question	X	
• Helping students recognize and understand other perspectives	X	X
• Marketing the Seminar	X	X
○ Selling the Seminar	X	
○ Recruiting committed students		X
• Initial implementation challenges	X	X

them. Table 20 outlines in greater detail the themes, sub-themes, and sub-sub-themes in this category, and indicates where each emerged.

Curriculum-Driven vs. Student-Driven Approach

The different ways in which the Seminar was imparted at the two sites and how the instructors talked about their approach to teaching the Seminar is at the heart of the first theme, ‘Curriculum-driven vs. student-driven approach.’ This refers to how closely the instructors followed the curriculum versus focusing more on discussion and letting students’ interests direct the course. While the ‘Student-driven approach’ dominated in Western Europe, there was a greater emphasis on the ‘Importance of balancing the two’ in Africa.

Student-Driven Approach

The theme ‘Student-driven approach’ refers to the fact that students’ interests typically took precedence over the designated curriculum in guiding the Seminar. This theme emerged only in Western Europe and was commented on by both of the instructors there. For example, Andre explained, “I think I let [the students] experiment more than I should. And I let them somehow intervene in the Seminar with materials or with concepts that are not in the actual lesson plan.” Similarly, Paolo commented:

What I think goes well here is that we try to get their opinions and talk about their experiences in class. [...] I mean, it’s better to discuss something that happened to one student than just constraining our teaching style to what it says in the notes.

On several occasions, Andre referred to their approach as “light.” For example, he stated, “The way we presented [today’s lesson] was in a very easy, light way.”

Two sub-themes emerged within ‘Student-driven approach.’ They are ‘Emphasis on participation and enjoyment’ and ‘Focus on friendliness.’ Again, these were found only in Western Europe.

Emphasis on participation and enjoyment. There was a heavy emphasis at the Western Europe site on trying to get students to participate and enjoy the Seminar. In fact, this idea was mentioned in every interview I conducted with Andre and Paolo. For example, Paolo said, “I know that they like to participate in class, so we promote participation.”

Not only did the instructors in Western Europe want students to participate, they also hoped they would enjoy their time in the Seminar. Andre explained, “I adapt the material so that

[it] is fun, easy to understand, [and] very approachable. Very specifically, I want people to enjoy the class and have the feeling that ‘I want to go back next week.’”

When I asked about their perceptions of the sessions of the Seminar I observed, both Andre and Paolo emphasized the enjoyment factor. For example, after the first session I observed, Andre stated, “I’m satisfied with their reactions in the sense that they enjoyed what we did and some of them, I think, got the point.” He made a similar statement after each of the subsequent sessions.

Focus on friendliness. In addition to emphasizing participation and enjoyment, the instructors in Western Europe also talked about the friendly atmosphere they try to create in the Seminar. Andre explained, “We don’t really follow a formal class structure. I like to present it more like a group of friends coming in and, ‘I’m going to talk about several things and what do you have to say about those things?’” He added, “It is very important for me that they feel comfortable talking to me (...) and getting that—it’s not a friendship—but getting close to that line helps me.” Similarly, Paolo commented, “Andre and I, I think we are very approachable, and we are like friends for some students. [...] We meet [in the Seminar] every week so, in the end, we become friends, not just instructors and students.”

Importance of Balancing the Two

In Africa, the instructor did not focus so much on participation, enjoyment, and friendliness. Instead, he emphasized trying to strike a balance between a student-driven and a more curriculum-driven approach. That is, he placed more importance on the theory and concepts while still trying to connect these to the students’ experiences. This idea of balancing these two approaches was also mentioned—although to a much lesser extent—by the lead instructor in Western Europe.

In Africa, Malik spoke quite a bit about trying to help students connect theory and the content of the curriculum to their personal experiences. He explained, “I think it’s good for them to get some grounding in the theory and try to see how that theory applies to their experiences and use those experiences to go back to the theory again.” After one session of the Seminar, Malik commented, “We talked theory today, but it is not talking theory for the sake of theory. We talk theory for the sake of actually seeing the application of that theory in real life.”

I asked Malik specifically about how he tries to balance the need to get through the designated curriculum with the fact that the Seminar is meant to be guided, at least in part, by the participants’ experiences. He responded:

It is not always easy to balance them. Even though I don't always do it well, sometimes I try to say, 'Okay. If I need to give priority to something it would be what students consider to be important.' [...] What I think is important here is to realize that yes, we have a set curriculum; the ideal thing would be to actually try and cover everything that's in the curriculum, but if that's not done and we do something that I choose to be relevant and important to the experience, I would say we would go for it.

Malik emphasized, however, that the decision whether to spend more time on one thing or another is his, and students may not always know what is best for their own development. He commented:

To me the idea of experiential learning is not to just reach a certain set goal by all means simply because it's been set as the schedule. The idea is to actually have the students gain something from this experience and value that, even though it doesn't mean we'll be just dwelling on what the students consider to be important. They may not necessarily like something that might be useful to their training. [...] I think it's important also to cover things that will be eye-opening and will help students develop the skills that we want them to develop through the Seminar.

Although this theme of trying to balance the curriculum with students' interests and experience was not emphasized nearly as much in Western Europe, Andre did make an occasional reference to linking the theory and concepts of the Seminar with students' experiences. For example, he explained:

We're not going to talk every day about why your homestay did this or why your homestay didn't do this, or why when you went to class today the faculty member yelled at you and you were offended. [...] Those situations will come in automatically when we say something and you say, 'Oh, okay, so maybe this is related to why the faculty did this or why my homestay did this.'

To summarize, while the students' experiences and interests were at the heart of the Seminar in Western Europe, the instructors there recognized the need to help students connect their experiences to the content of the Seminar curriculum. In Africa, there was a greater emphasis on trying to strike a balance between covering the curriculum materials and allowing the students' experiences to guide the Seminar, with the recognition that the instructor has a better understanding of what will benefit the students' learning.

Tailoring Teaching Approach to Students' LSI and IDI Scores

As mentioned previously, students in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad take the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and Kolb's (2005) Learning Styles Inventory (LSI) at the beginning of the semester. Instructors are supposed to take the students' learning styles and intercultural worldviews, as measured by these instruments, into account when teaching the Seminar. Of important note is the fact that the instructors in Western Europe did not have their students' IDI scores at the time of my visit, while the instructor in Africa did. Typically, instructors receive this information and discuss it in detail with one of the Seminar administrators toward the beginning of the semester. This, however, had not taken place when I spoke to the instructors in Western Europe in late October and early November.

To explore the extent and manner in which instructors were taking into account students' learning styles and/or intercultural worldviews when teaching, I began by asking them a very general question about what things about the participants influenced the approach they took in teaching in the Seminar. If they did not mention learning styles and/or intercultural worldviews, I later asked more specifically about how they attended to these. Also, during my first interview with the lead instructors, they both pulled out a paper where they compile the students' IDI and LSI scores. Andre had a chart with columns for the primary and secondary preferred learning styles and the IDI score for each of the students; the LSI columns were filled out but the IDI column was blank. Malik had Kolb's (2005) learning styles graphic with the four different styles at the end of two axes; students' names were listed in the quadrant of their preferred learning style (indicating both primary and secondary styles), with their IDI score listed under their name. Both instructors also showed me their students' individual LSI "kites," which indicate where the students fall on all four of Kolb's (1984, 2005) learning styles. I asked both Andre and Malik to tell me more about how they used this information. I also asked specifically about individual students—how the instructor viewed each particular student's experience abroad and the approach the instructors were taking with each of them. Two themes emerged, each with their own sub-themes: 'Teaching to preferred learning style vs. teaching around the wheel' and 'Use of IDI data.'

Teaching to Preferred Learning Style vs. Teaching Around the Wheel

There were two ways that instructors used the LSI data, which were to teach to the students' preferred learning styles or to teach around the Experiential Learning Cycle (Kolb,

1984), which is often referred to as “teaching around the wheel” (Savicki, 2008b). ‘Teaching to preferred learning style’ was mentioned numerous times by the instructors in Western Europe, with at least one reference from every interview with the lead instructor there, but was not mentioned by the instructor in Africa. On the other hand, ‘Teaching around the wheel’ came up several times in my interviews with the instructor in Africa, but only once in all of my interviews with the instructors in Western Europe.

Teaching to preferred learning style. In Western Europe, the instructors explained that the main way they use the LSI data is to adapt their teaching style to the group’s primary preferred learning style. Andre explained, “Pretty much everyone is ‘doers’ or ‘experiencers’ [this semester], so I adapt to those.” When Andre showed me the chart where he records his students’ LSI and IDI data, I asked how he uses that information. He responded:

What I do is I specifically look at the primary [learning style]. And (...) when I plan how I am going to present the materials for that semester—depending on whether students are more reflective, more abstract, or more active experimentation—I ask them to work in one way or another.

He explained what that meant for his current group of mostly Active Experimenters (AE) and Concrete Experiencers (CE):

If you are an AE or a CE, readings are not something that you really enjoy. [...] This semester I pretty much have only [CEs and AEs]. So I try not to give them too much [reading]. Because I don’t want them to think of the Seminar as ‘This is just another boring two-hour class every week.’

Andre also referred to this practice of teaching to students’ preferred learning styles during our observation-specific interviews. For example, he explained after one of the sessions, “We did the debrief in a very, very simple way. Once again, this group, they’re not into that sort of reflective or...thinking learning style. So I wanted to do it very, very straightforward.”

Teaching around the wheel. On the other hand, Malik made numerous comments about trying to teach around the wheel and encourage students to learn in different ways. For example, he explained:

We have activities that actually lead students to being in touch with people—going outside and doing some activities with their Cultural Partners or just taking photos outside. [...] When I ask them to come back and reflect on those (...), I see that we are actually rotating [around the Experiential Learning Cycle]. And when I introduce the theories to actually support the validity of this, we are trying

to speak to a different type of learner. And then I [say], ‘All of this will be useless unless you actually try to see how it concretely applies to your lives (...).’ [...] And I try to tell them, ‘Okay, these skills that you have learned, I would like you to come back next week and tell me how you have used them, either in class, or on the street, or with your host families.’ I think when we do this, we actually try to make sure that students are tapping into their different potential learning skills (...).

This idea came up again when Malik was talking about the debrief he conducted in a session of the Seminar I observed:

For me, learning around the wheel or debriefing around the wheel is not necessarily a matter of starting from the point that the material suggests. It’s picking it up from where you think is the most relevant at that point and then going around. As you could see, I ended that debriefing with the CE part and asking students how they felt about it and so on and so forth.

When asked to explain further, Malik said the skits they did in class provided the concrete experience, so he started the debrief by trying to get students to reflect on and draw conclusions from that experience and then think about what they had learned that they could implement in the future. He commented:

Debriefing around the wheel for me is not just about touching on something that is of interest to one type of learner and another and another and another. I think you can actually, based on where you are, touch on all four of them and add another one if need be. Because [no] learner is just one type of learner. [Every] learner is all types of learners.

Although Andre did not talk about the idea of teaching around the wheel nearly as extensively, he did bring it up on one occasion in reference to assigning a reading during one of the sessions I observed:

Yesterday I wanted to make sure, by stating, ‘I know that you guys don’t really like to go into the theory, but remember that one of the goals for Kolb’s learning style is to go around the circle. [...] [O]ur goal (...) in life is to be able to master all these four different aspects of how you should learn. [...] None of these styles is better than the other one, but we need to be sure that somehow we manage to cover the [entire] spectrum. And how we can do this now is by making sure you read this article (...).’

Use of IDI Data

The second theme under ‘Tailoring teaching approach to LSI and IDI’ is ‘Use of IDI data.’ This refers to how the instructors used the students’ IDI scores to inform their teaching in the Seminar. The table in Appendix 6 includes a short summary of the lead instructors’ perceptions of each of the individual students’ experiences abroad, their approach to that student, and the students’ pre-/post-IDI scores. Two site-specific sub-themes emerged within this theme. In Africa, the instructor took a ‘More specific, intentional approach to students’ intercultural worldviews.’ In Western Europe, there was a ‘More general approach to students’ intercultural worldviews.’ Of course, it is important to remember that the instructors in Western Europe did not have their students’ IDI scores at the time of my visit, while the instructor in Africa did.

More specific, intentional approach to students’ intercultural worldviews. In Africa, Malik spoke extensively about how he used his knowledge of participants’ intercultural worldviews to intentionally tailor his approach to different situations and students.

To begin with, Malik spoke about how the IDI data help him better understand his students and their reactions. He commented:

When (...) I see students’ discomfort with certain issues, the first thing that comes to mind is to try to see what this student’s worldview is. [...] And sometimes the worldview sort of gives you an idea why students are reacting the way they do. [...] I wouldn’t say that the students’ actions are always predicted by their worldviews, but when their worldview seems to account for reactions, I try to make use of it that way.

Malik also discussed in greater detail how he tailors his approach to specific students and intercultural worldviews. For example, he explained his approach with students in Acceptance and Adaptation (note that Jane, the student he mentions, scored in Acceptance at the beginning of the semester):

These students clearly see difference. And what I try to have them do is actually to see more nuances in these differences. [...] What I ask someone like [Jane] to do is to try to think more about the possible layers that exist. [...] When I know that [Jane] has accepted something without adapting to it, I try to say, ‘Okay, I know you get it. Now try to remove yourself, as if you’re observing yourself. Get out of this position A to position B. Position A means that you understand it

but you're not completely doing it. Position B is trying to say, 'Okay, I'm consciously moving toward understanding and *doing* it.'

In several instances, Malik discussed using the knowledge of a student's intercultural worldview in conjunction with other characteristics—such as the student's race or ethnicity, political or religious beliefs, and past experience—to tailor his teaching approach to that individual. For example, he discussed the approach he took with a student in Minimization with a strong religious background:

By looking at his own perspective, his own religion, I try to make him see whether or not there are variables within this. And I use his own references to make him see also maybe the practice of religion as it differs here—Christianity, particularly. [...] I'm trying to move him using his own reference point, to move him to more appreciation of the differences within that sphere. But I know he's very, very influenced by his religious background and even if he recognizes the differences, it always comes back to what that sameness is.

Malik also explained that he also tries to use students with more intercultural mindsets to “push and pull” the other students along. He explained:

I try to use other students' arguments to ask some to think about their positions and...leave them with the ball. [...] [I] try to foster this discussion and see how students may actually manage to convince each other or try to help each other see the point they're making. [...] They push each other.

Another way in which Malik said he tries to create pushes and pulls among the students is to be very purposeful when putting them into small groups for activities. He commented:

Sometimes what I do is, when I pair them up in activities, I try to pair, say, a student in Acceptance and a student in Defense or Minimization, for them to (...) at least confront those worldviews hoping that one person will pull the other person.

When observing the Seminar, I noticed at one point that Malik seemed to be acting very purposefully when assigning small groups for a skit activity. I later asked him about this and he explained:

I tried to do a mixture based on learning styles and [intercultural] worldview to have more balanced groups and to have them confront each others' views and each others' styles. [...] I try to the best of my ability to mix the groups a little bit (...) to see how that could actually generate different pushes and pulls.

More general approach to students' intercultural worldviews. As mentioned previously, for reasons not made explicit to me, the instructors in Western Europe did not have the IDI data for their students when I conducted my site visit half-way through the semester. In this section, I include students' initial intercultural worldviews as I did when reporting the previous sub-theme; however, this is meant for informational purposes only and it must be remembered that the instructors in Western Europe did not have this data at the time I spoke with them and thus had to speculate on their students' intercultural worldviews.

Comments from the instructors in Western Europe reveal a more general approach to students' intercultural worldviews. For example, when asked about the approach he and Andre take with individual students, Paolo responded:

I think the approach is basically the same [with] all of them. Because some of them come with the idea that things are going to be different, while others don't come with that idea. So we try to show them that necessity to be more open-minded. The person who is already open-minded, they have to wait a little bit. But it takes only one, two sessions (...) and after that, I think most of the students are more or less in the same stage, or situation, to keep on learning.

When asked how the Seminar attends to students' intercultural worldviews, Andre talked about how instructors can use the IDI data to tailor their approach to individual students. However, he did not provide any personal examples. He explained:

When you have a student that comes to you, if you know in which developmental stage he is, you can answer his questions or you can approach his concerns in a very different way. If you have someone who is in Reversal and you know how Reversals function and work, you can definitely answer his questions in a different way than if he was in Acceptance or in Denial.

Andre also mentioned that responding in such a way had become more "normalized" for him during the years he had been teaching the Seminar. Although he did not have the IDI results for his students, he said he "pretty much [had] an idea" where the students were on the scale "based on their comments" and that he did react differently to those comments depending on where he felt the student was on the IDI.

When I asked about his approach with specific students, Andre did not mention intercultural worldviews specifically. Instead he focused mostly on how he tailored his teaching to the students' personalities. For example, he mentioned that Sofia, who started the semester in Polarization, is quite shy and explained:

I can definitely not change her personality. [...] What I try to do with her is I try to keep her talking and I try to formulate the questions so there's no 'yes' or 'no.' [...] Just form the questions in a different way so that she starts talking more. And I hope that by talking more and by feeling that we care about what she needs to say, probably she will participate more.

Andre discussed his approach with another student, Jake, who also began the semester in Polarization:

He has that curiosity, and my approach is like, you may have a little fire and you can either let the fire continue or you can put a little more wood into the fire. With him, I would say I like to challenge him. I like to provide some more wood so that the fire would grow, and eventually let's see what we get out of this fire.

Similarly, Andre said his approach to Sarah, a student in Minimization, also involved trying to challenge her:

I think at some point I may ask her to really jump. To say, 'Okay, why don't you put yourself'—and this is obviously in a metaphorical way—'in risk? Why don't you get out of your comfort zone completely and just immerse yourself into [life in this country]?'

With Amelia, a student squarely in Minimization, Andre said his approach was influenced by her outgoing personality. "I think my approach with her is to help her in the process as much as I can, but also to get her [to] engage other people in the Seminar."

To summarize, the way in which instructors tailored their teaching approach to students' learning styles and intercultural worldviews differed significantly across sites. In Western Europe, the instructors used the LSI data primarily to help them teach more effectively to the group's preferred learning styles, whereas the instructor in Africa focused more on teaching around the Experiential Learning Cycle. With regards to the IDI, the instructors in Western Europe did not have their students' scores and, perhaps by necessity then, took a more general, personality-based approach when it came to adapting their teaching approach to individual students. The instructor in Africa did have this information and took a more specific and intentional approach in tailoring his teaching to students' intercultural worldviews. One method he used to do this was to utilize the other students, especially those with more intercultural mindsets, to "push and pull" each other along.

Adapting Seminar Lessons to Cultural Context vs. to the Students

In addition to adapting their teaching approach, the instructors also talked about adapting the lessons or curriculum materials. Although instructors at both sites mentioned adapting the lessons or materials, there were approximately four times as many references to doing so in Western Europe than there were in Africa. Furthermore, the manner in which they adapted and the reasons for doing so differed across the sites. In Western Europe, Andre and Paolo talked about ‘Adapting lessons to the students,’ whereas in Africa, Malik was more focused on ‘Adapting materials to the local culture.’

Adapting Lessons to the Students

In Western Europe, Andre and Paolo said they adapt the lessons and the materials to the students in the Seminar. More specifically, they talked about spending more time on certain activities because students seemed interested, skipping doing some things in small groups in addition to the large group since the class was rather small to begin with, or moving on from one activity to the next when it seemed like students understood or were uninterested. Paolo explained:

We try to cover the materials, but sometimes, depending on the class, depending on the students’ interests [and] motivations, we go from one place to another and (...) we adapt the materials to the students, not the students to the material. [...] There are topics, texts, and ideas that they are more interested in, and we don’t have any problem [to] continue working with [those]. Because if they are interested in something, they are going to learn.

Paolo mentioned a specific example of how they adapted the materials during one of the sessions of the Seminar I observed:

For example, yesterday we had two things to teach—the obvious and curious pictures and the stereotypes. It was supposed to be 50-50, so 45 minutes for one thing, 45 minutes for the other. However, we spent more than one hour with the pictures because they were participating. [...] So instead of saying, ‘Okay, 45 minutes, we have to stop and change to this,’ we didn’t do it. We just continued talking about the pictures.

Adapting Materials to the Local Culture

In Africa, Malik did not talk explicitly about adapting the lessons in the same way Andre and Paolo in Western Europe did. Instead, he talked about adapting the materials to better fit the local cultural context. For example, he said he does not do the Cultural Detective activity exactly as prescribed. He explained, “I think there are values that students see here that would be more relevant [than], say, discussing values in [neighboring countries]. And I try to superimpose that on the theory that is offered by the Cultural Detective.”

After observing a session of the Seminar, I asked Malik if he had adapted the lesson in any way. He explained that there had been an example in the PowerPoint that referred to wine, but he changed it to a local nut that “holds a very important cultural meaning” because the wine example seemed “so culturally alien to this environment.”

To summarize, while instructors at both sites said they modify the curriculum to some extent, in Western Europe they reported doing so significantly more. Not only did they differ in the extent, but also in the ways they adapt. The instructors in Western Europe said they adapt the curriculum to the students—especially with regards to time spent on various exercises and the manner in which they carried out the activities—while the instructor in Africa talked more about modifying the materials to fit the local cultural context.

Instructor’s Intercultural Worldview and Learning Style Affect Teaching of the Seminar

Another theme in this category is ‘Instructor’s intercultural worldview and learning style affect teaching of the Seminar.’ This is broken down into two sub-themes: ‘Instructor’s learning style affects teaching of the Seminar’ and ‘Instructor’s intercultural worldview affects teaching of the Seminar.’ Both themes were present across sites, although there was only one reference to each in Africa.

Instructor’s Learning Style Affects Teaching of the Seminar

In Western Europe, Andre and Paolo both mentioned on several occasions that they have very different learning styles—as well as teaching styles—and that they complement each other quite well as co-facilitators of the Seminar. According to Kolb’s (2005) Learning Style Inventory, Paolo is a very strong Reflective Observer (RO), while Andre is highest on Active Experimentation (AE) and also relatively strong in Concrete Experience (CE). Paolo commented that he and Andre are very different as facilitators, then elaborated:

Not only as facilitators, but as people who prepare materials. He needs zero minutes to prepare a class and I would say I need like a week to prepare a one-hour session. [...] And I think that is stated in the Kolb test. [Andre] is a “doer”; he likes learning by doing. And I need to have everything very well-planned. [...] So, we are very different, but we complement each other, which is very good.

Andre confirmed Paolo’s description of his own learning style, stating, “I’m definitely a person who bases his learning on doing things rather than on reflecting or in more abstract ideas.” He later mentioned how this affects how he teaches the Seminar, explaining, “Probably because I’m a doer—the theory, it’s fine, but I want them to feel it. And once they feel it, they will learn.”

When Malik took the LSI, he scored highest on Active Experimentation (AE), but was also relatively high on Reflective Observation (RO). He did not have a particularly strong opinion about how his own learning style affected his teaching of the Seminar, although he commented:

I try to force myself [to stretch learning styles], even though I am more comfortable asking students to always see the relevance of what they learn to what they live outside. When I do a debrief of the classes, that is something I tend to focus on a lot—I wouldn’t say at the expense of other aspects of the course—but I can definitely see how that may be attributed to my preferred learning style.

Instructor’s Intercultural Worldview Affects Teaching of the Seminar

In Western Europe, both Paolo and Andre talked about how the intercultural worldview Andre held when he first started teaching the Seminar (the Reversal form of Polarization) impacted the way in which he taught. For example, Paolo explained, “[Andre] loved [the] U.S.; he hated everything related to [this country]. Sometimes his opinions [were] not expressed in the [best] way.” For example, he said Andre used to express some bias when comparing the U.S. and host country cultural values. Andre brought this up as well, providing an example of how his previously-held Reversal worldview had affected his teaching:

At the beginning, I was very critical of the Cultural Detective [exercise], for example. [...] I remember the first year teaching that part—the material talking about the values [here]—and I was completely ripping them apart; I mean, I was destroying all those concepts, [although] not consciously.

As was discussed at the beginning of this chapter, Andre's intercultural sensitivity increased dramatically between when he first started teaching the Seminar and the time of this study, and he discussed with me how he felt his own intercultural growth impacted his teaching:

During that second semester, I realized that when I was presenting the materials, that Reversal notion in the IDI was affecting how I was presenting the information. So by being aware of that, I started to teach these notions in a different way.

With regards to teaching the Cultural Detective since moving out of Reversal, Andre explained, "Now when I present the material, it's more from a neutral view. [...] And I think that provides students with a more general and clear understanding. I'm not [applying] any bias to those concepts."

In Africa, Malik made only one reference to how his intercultural worldview might influence how he teaches the Seminar. The one comment he did make, however, touches on an interesting point not previously addressed. Malik discussed the gut reaction he sometimes feels in response to students' comments and how he has to remind himself—just as he does with his students—that what is normal for him is not necessarily normal for everyone else. When asked about the role his own intercultural worldview plays in the Seminar, he responded:

It's hard for me to tell. But I can say that ... behaviorally, I see more nuances now. Attitudinally, there's still something that makes me react internally to something that a student says that I may find a little bit contrary to what the norm should be, I have to say. Even though I do a [good] job of controlling myself and accepting that what my internal reactions—my sensory reactions—may push me to take as the norm is [just one] norm among others.

To summarize, both of the instructors in Western Europe recognized that Andre's intercultural worldview and his own development affected how he taught the Seminar. They also acknowledged that their different and complementary learning styles played a part in their facilitation. In Africa, Malik had less to say about how his intercultural worldview and learning style affected his teaching, yet his comments allude to how important it is for Seminar instructors to be self aware and remain conscious of these things at the same time they are attending to their students' learning and development.

Teaching the Seminar Impacts Instructors

While several of the previous themes have to do with the impact the instructors have on the Seminar, it also became apparent that teaching the Seminar impacts the instructors. There were two ways in which the instructors felt they had been impacted through the experience of teaching the Seminar. First, they said teaching the Seminar had positively affected their intercultural worldview. Second, teaching the Seminar was also influencing the approach they took with students outside the Seminar. This theme (including both sub-themes) was evident across sites.

Teaching the Seminar Affects Instructor's Intercultural Worldview

The lead instructors in both Western Europe and Africa said they felt that teaching the Seminar had positively impacted their intercultural development. This theme is supported by the fact that, as mentioned previously, all three of the instructors made significant gains on the IDI during the time they had been teaching the Seminar. (Note that while Andre knew his most recent IDI score at the time of our interviews, Paolo and Malik did not.)

When Andre initially took the IDI in 2007, he was in Reversal. When he took it again in 2010, he was in Acceptance. Andre explained that learning that he was in Reversal during his IDI debrief with Seminar administrator, Dr. Vande Berg, actually helped spur his own development, which was then further facilitated through the practice of teaching the Seminar:

The first time that I took the IDI, the results were pretty shocking. [...] When I took the IDI and Mick [Dr. Vande Berg] [debriefed me], I realized that I was in Reversal (...), completely. [...] And as the semesters went by (...) I started to be more aware of the materials and the concepts, [and] I started to realize, 'This is not where I should be. This is just not the person I want to be.' And then, as I was learning the material, I was accepting all the materials, I was incorporating them into my personal life. The last time I took the IDI (...) I think I was in Acceptance. I have definitely changed and (...) teaching the Seminar has helped me [develop].

Andre explained how learning to facilitate students' intercultural development actually helped him develop his own:

I learned that I had to expand my mind and start asking—the same way as the students—'Why am I saying that the health system in the U.S., for example, is

better than it is [here]? Is that true?' I did with myself what now I try to do with students (...). I was in Reversal [so] I was treating myself as I would now treat a student in Reversal. [...] It was a learning experience not just for them, but personally for me as well.

Malik first took the IDI in 2007 and was in high Minimization, just on the cusp of Acceptance. He had not yet taken it a second time when we spoke, but did so shortly after my visit (in early 2011) and scored at the top of Adaptation. During one of our interviews, he mentioned that the administrators had asked him if he wanted to retake the IDI to see if his score had changed since he first began teaching the Seminar. He said he was curious to know if it had, adding, "I wouldn't be surprised to see myself in Acceptance." When asked whether he thought that had anything to do with teaching the Seminar, Malik responded:

I think so. [...] Because (...) one thing that I have managed to do through this is to actually know that [my] value system is just one. One thing that I have really learned here is to recognize that there are *so many* possible [ways] of seeing one thing. Regardless of how dogmatic one can be, there are always several ways of seeing one reality. And this is actually the attitude that I try to have, even when my initial reaction may be contrary to that.

Teaching the Seminar Affects Instructor's Approach to Students Beyond the Seminar

Not only did instructors at both sites feel that teaching the Seminar helped them develop their own intercultural sensitivity, they also said it affected their approach to students even outside the Seminar. Paolo and Malik both said their experience teaching the Seminar had influenced how they taught other courses as well. For example, Paolo explained how he tries to incorporate ideas from the Seminar into a course he teaches at the local university for future English language instructors:

Every single unit takes into use something [from] the Seminar. [I] try to open [local] students' minds and let them know that there are other opinions and other points of view that they have to consider, especially if they are going to teach in a class where they are going to have students from different nationalities, different learning styles, things like that.

Malik explained how his teaching style had changed as a result of his experience with the Seminar:

I used to be the type who would just lecture. [...] Realizing that teaching [could] go the other way around—that is to say, coming from the students and pushing them to understand the meaning of those experiences—was huge. And I think this informs my teaching in other courses as well. [...] Maybe my role is more now to facilitate and help them make connections than produce and generate those connections for them.

While Malik and Paolo said teaching the Seminar affected how they taught other courses, Andre spoke extensively about the influence it had on his approach with all of his students, as well as his staff, even outside of the classroom. For example, he brought up a conversation that I witnessed him have with another staff member regarding a student (not in the Seminar) who was having difficulties in her homestay:

When [my colleague] was saying, ‘We are going to meet with this person and we are going to talk about what’s going on in the family,’ from my perspective, the way they were going to approach the situation—from my experience in the Seminar—was not the best way to do it. [...] From my experience (...), if you tell students what to do, some people will do it, but most people will react. What you have to do is you have to lead the students to where you want them to go.

Andre explained that instead of confronting students about issues they might be having, he had learned to instead ask questions and try to encourage students to think about why they were having problems and what they could do to try to solve them.

As is suggested in the previous quote, Andre encouraged his staff members to try taking a different approach with their students than they had in the past. He also mentioned he would like to begin to conduct more formal trainings with his staff using materials from the Seminar. He commented, “Something that I’ve realized with my staff (...) is that they normally don’t put themselves in the shoes of the students.” In order to understand how students work, Andre said, you need to try to put yourself in their position. He continued:

And [that’s] difficult (...). Obviously your values are going to affect how you perceive the situation. But if you train yourself to do that kind of stuff, I think when students come to you (...) and they are crying because they have an issue, you can understand better how they feel.

When asked about his final thoughts, Andre again discussed how teaching the Seminar had affected his approach to students, summarizing:

The Seminar is modifying the students' experience [here], but it's also modifying my approach in a more intercultural way. [...] There's no magic way to solve issues. [...] But at least the Seminar is helping me understand that things can be done in a different way (...); the only thing that you have to do is see who you're talking to, understand why the situation is happening from both sides, and eventually try not to tell them what to do, but rather make them say what they need to do, and lead them to where you want to go.

In summary, the instructors felt that teaching the Seminar had helped them develop their own intercultural sensitivity, and this theme is supported by the IDI data as well. They also said the experience was positively influencing how they taught other courses and interacted with students even outside of the Seminar.

Challenging Students, But Not Too Much

The next theme, which emerged at both sites, is 'Challenging students, but not too much.' Instructors in both Western Europe and Africa talked about wanting to "challenge" or "push" the students in the Seminar, but also indicated they were careful not to go too far.

In Western Europe, Paolo and Andre spoke mostly about pushing students to participate, both in the Seminar and in the local culture. For example, Paolo commented:

I don't want to get students into stressful situations. If you don't like participating (...), I will ask you to participate at certain points, but I'm not going to make you talk all the time. Because it's stressful and I'm of the [mind] that if you're in a stressful situation, you don't learn. It creates a negative view of the material and you disconnect.

Andre echoed this idea, explaining:

I want to push them, but I don't want them to feel so pushed that they will feel, 'This is not worth it.' [...] If you push them too hard they will distress and (...) they may not want to participate.

While Andre and Paolo said they push students to participate, Malik talked about pushing Seminar participants outside their comfort zone. Yet he too recognized the importance of not overly challenging the students:

I try to organize this course in such a way that they will be pushed. I do it in a way, of course, that makes the students not feel cornered and tracked down like

beasts. But it's important for them to understand why certain things make them comfortable or uncomfortable.

Encouraging Students to Think and Question

Another theme regarding instruction is 'Encouraging students to think and question.' This theme emerged only from the interviews with Andre in Western Europe; however, it was a very strong theme for him. As he explained, "We're not here to give them answers, but we're here to make them think." Andre's main method for doing so was to repeatedly ask 'Why?' and encourage the students to do the same. As he explained:

My main goal is, 'Are you sure about that? Why is this happening like this?' [...] I like to question everything. And the way I question them, it's not that I want to give them the right answer. There's no right answer.

For example, Andre explained the approach he took when a student in the Seminar complained about the fact that her host mother went straight into the living room to watch TV after eating, rather than engaging in conversation with her:

I said, 'Why [do you think] she do[es] this? Is it because she doesn't like you?' Because [the student] was pretty annoyed about this, and I said, 'Why don't you, one day, do the same thing she does? Go and sit with her in the TV room and you may understand why she does this. Ask her.' (This lady is around 60 years old, a widow; she lives by herself.) [...] 'Why don't you think about: How long has she been doing this? How long ago did her husband die? [Has] she [had] any company [since then]? Ask her, and probably you will see that one reason that she does that is because she's not used to having someone in the house with her.'

Andre explained that by asking 'Why?' so often, he hopes to inspire students' curiosity. He talked about why this is important to him:

They need to look beyond their reality (...) [and] really find out more information that explains why things are happening in the way that they're happening. And it may seem obvious, but from my experience over the last ten years with CIEE, students tend not to go [beyond] that first step; they just see something and say, 'Well, I don't know why this is going on like this, but this is bad.' And they never think, 'Why? Why is it happening like this?'

To summarize, Andre felt very strongly that he had a responsibility not to give students answers, but to make them think and question, and to inspire their curiosity. He emphasized the importance of encouraging his students to think about why things are the way they are in the local culture and trying to lead them to find answers for themselves.

Helping Students Recognize and Understand Other Perspectives

Much of what the instructors stressed with regards to their goals and objectives for particular class sessions or the Seminar in general had to do with ‘Helping students recognize and understand other perspectives.’ This was discussed across sites by all three instructors, although in somewhat different manners. They talked about the importance of being “open-minded,” the notion of multiple perspectives, the idea that “reality is constructed” and that students must look beyond their “own reality,” and the concept of shifting one’s frame of reference.

Paolo, for example, explained, “We try to transmit that they have to be open-minded, not just try to see things in just one way.” Andre talked a lot about the idea that one’s reality is only one of many. When asked about the objectives of a specific Seminar session, he answered:

Look beyond reality. Every image has two components: what you can see and what’s behind that. [...] If you really want to understand the whole picture, you have to do two things. You have to observe the picture, but at the same time you need to understand that behind that picture there are many contexts that you need to understand in order to see the whole picture.

Malik referred to this idea as helping students understand that reality is constructed. He commented, “I think they have the basics and that they understand that looking at reality is not just natural; it is constructed. This is something that we’ve been stressing since the beginning of the semester.” Malik gave several examples of situations in the Seminar in which he—sometimes with the assistance of other students—tried to help a student understand how interpreting something in the local culture according to his or her own perspective or construction of reality could be detrimental. For example, he explained:

When [Zoey] mentioned how [people here] are really direct and [they] will tell you, for instance, if you’re fat that you’re fat, I thought [about] how I could communicate in a way that would make her understand what people meant. [...] I think I tried to stress the fact that people may actually be talking about the same thing (...) but not meaning the same thing. And that the misinterpretation in that particular case is easy simply because instead of having the skills to try and

understand the meaning of the message from the [other] person's perspective, we are interpreting what the other person says from our own perspective using our own lenses.

Malik talked not only about the need to recognize that different perspectives exist, but also about the importance of learning to shift one's frame of reference to better understand those other perspectives. He explained:

What the Seminar is about is for the students to learn and recognize the importance of moving towards the other—that is to say, shifting your frame of reference (...) in order to understand from another person's perspective and culture. And we try to give them the conceptual tools, but also the skills for them to not just have a conceptual knowledge of that, but to develop hopefully the skills to behave in a culturally-appropriate way.

Marketing the Seminar

A minor yet noteworthy theme with regards to the instructors' approaches to the Seminar has to do with the way they market the course. Although references to this were minimal, particularly in Africa, a site-specific difference was notable. While instructors at both sites confirmed they market the Seminar through their online pre-departure orientation (OPDO) and on-site orientation, in Western Europe the focus was on 'Selling the Seminar,' whereas in Africa it was more about 'Recruiting committed students.'

Selling the Seminar

In Western Europe, Andre commented, "I think the way I sell [the Seminar] really attracts people." When asked to elaborate, he explained how he talks about the Seminar, as well as a language commitment program, for the first time during their online pre-departure orientation (OPDO) and on-site orientation:

I try to build up that relation[ship] [of trust] during the online pre-departure orientation, as well as during the orientation. And then when you talk to them you say, 'What about the [language commitment] program? This is such a fantastic opportunity! You are the only ones who can really do this. The other students, they cannot do it. You are so special that we have designed this program for you. [...] This is optional. [...] But if you do it, believe me, your

experience is going to be much better than everyone else's.' And the same thing with the Seminar.

Andre discussed the effects of this approach:

After the OPDO—and this is something that I work really hard to achieve—they all trust me. I know that if I send them an e-mail saying, you know, 'It's me, [Andre], they guy who was in the OPDO the other day. And I want you to know that we have these two really important aspects of the program. You need to take them.' [...] The effect that I have is that these two projects, if there was no conflict with the schedule, I would have 24 people in the Seminar.

According to Andre, one of the key aspects of the approach to marketing the Seminar in Western Europe is emphasizing the fact that it is for a select group of students who want to make the most of their time abroad. As he explained:

I always try to tell them that this is for a small group of people (...) who are really interested in study abroad rather than in travel abroad. Kind of like a mental process with them—'If you are going to be in this group, you need to be one of the best.' [...] And by doing that, sometimes you catch the attention of some people.

Recruiting Committed Students

In Africa, although Malik did not mention many specifics about how he markets the Seminar, he did emphasize the fact that he focuses on attracting committed students. He commented, "I want to attract students who are interested. Rather than just make it a question of numbers, make it a matter of commitment." Malik said he talks about the Seminar in both the online pre-departure and on-site orientations and then asks interested students to write a one-page proposal explaining why they would like to take the Seminar. This requirement helps him limit the numbers and ensure that the students who enroll in the Seminar are committed.

Initial Implementation Challenges

Another minor, yet nonetheless important, theme is that both sites experienced 'initial implementation challenges' with the Seminar. Both lead instructors said that the first semesters were very much about experimentation and it took time for them to really buy into the Seminar (the co-instructor in Western Europe was not involved in the Seminar at the outset). Malik mentioned some of the areas in which they had to experiment:

When CIEE introduced this pilot program, we were not sure whether we should offer it as a required course, how many credits it would be, and whether it would be a separate course or part of the required ‘Society and Culture’ [class].

In Africa, the Seminar was first introduced as a required, core course (which took the place of the ‘Society and Culture’ class). Malik commented, “That was a disaster because students felt that the approach to the Seminar—and the *content*—did not really cover everything they would like to see in a course on [the local] society and culture.” After that initial experience, the Seminar was changed to an elective course in Africa with a cap on the number of students who could enroll.

Malik explained:

With those adjustments it went much better because we had students who were motivated and were interested in the issues that were covered in the class, and then from there we just decided that that’s the right format for us to follow.

Andre discussed the fact that one of the initial challenges for him had to do with his own attitude toward the Seminar. He explained how he began to buy into the Seminar as he became more experienced in teaching it:

My first semester was really, really difficult (...) because I wasn’t really sure *why* I was doing this. But eventually, as the semesters went by (...), I really believe what we’re doing has meaning and has an impact on how students eventually return home. [...] And now I just enjoy doing it.

He explained this evolution in more depth, saying:

At the very beginning the [Seminar] materials for us—from our perspective—were a little bit confusing. Everything was explained, but it was just basically, ‘There you have [it], all the materials. You teach it.’ So first it was a lot of work. Second, we didn’t understand why we were doing these things. [...] My first semester I did poorly; my students didn’t really gain that much, or nothing. The second semester, since I already knew all the materials, I started to teach (...) in a better way. The students enjoyed my instruction [more]. [...] And that made me feel better. At the same time I was feeling better, I was learning about myself as well.

To summarize, there were several challenges when the Seminar was initially implemented. A good deal of experimentation was necessary in order to find the best format for the Seminar at each site. It also took instructors time to learn the materials, become comfortable with the Seminar’s approach, and buy into what they were being asked to do.

Curriculum

Another category that the instructors discussed is the ‘Curriculum.’ This refers to the lesson plans, activities, and other materials that are pre-designed by the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad administrators at CIEE headquarters. The instructors talked about which lessons and activities tend to be the most and least successful and about the Cultural Partner component of the curriculum. Two of the instructors also identified what they see as the primary weakness of the curriculum in general, its repetitiveness. Table 21 outlines in greater detail the themes and sub-themes in this category and indicates where each emerged.

Table 21. Instructor Interviews: Curriculum Category

‘Curriculum’ Themes	<i>Where did the theme emerge?</i>	
	Western Europe	Africa
• Lessons and activities	X	X
○ Most successful lessons and activities	X	X
○ Least successful lessons and activities	X	X
○ Semantic nature of the stereotypes lesson	X	X
• ‘Cultural Partners’ connect inside- and outside-the-classroom learning	X	
• Repetitiveness	X	X

Lessons and Activities

I asked instructors about the strengths and weaknesses of the Seminar curriculum and in many cases they discussed specific lessons and activities they felt were the most and least successful. They also discussed particular lessons and activities during the observation-specific interviews. Three sub-themes emerged within this category: ‘Most successful lessons and activities,’ ‘Least successful lessons and activities,’ and ‘Semantic nature of the stereotypes lesson.’

Most Successful Lessons and Activities

There did not appear to be any strong themes with regards to particular lessons and activities that the instructors found most successful. In Western Europe, Paolo mentioned two activities. The first is called the Obvious/Curious photo activity (which I observed there), in which students identify and take photos of things in the host culture they find particularly obvious or curious, then they discuss in class why these things may be obvious or curious to them and

vice versa for others. The second activity Paolo cited as particularly successful is the well-known intercultural training activity called Describe–Interpret–Evaluate (D-I-E), in which participants learn to describe an object or scene objectively before moving on to interpret and evaluate it (which I also observed). Andre mentioned these two activities as well, and added the Cultural Detective activity (Hofner Saphiere, 2004) and conversation about reverse culture shock to his list of the most successful aspects of the curriculum.

In Africa, the lessons and activities that Malik identified as most successful include the D-I-E activity, the lesson on learning styles based on Kolb’s (2005) Learning Style Inventory, and a discussion of students’ own subjective or U.S. culture. He mentioned, “When we did the learning styles, students particularly loved it. I think it was very well done.” About the D-I-E exercise, Malik commented, “I think [it] is very important in helping students understand that chances are that they will not get the right picture if they just jump to conclusions without trying to understand the different perspectives that may be involved.”

Least Successful Lessons and Activities

The instructors did not have as much to say about lessons and activities they found less successful. Although Paolo mentioned the Obvious/Curious photo activity as one of the most successful, both he and Andre also said it was not as effective that semester as they would have hoped. Andre explained:

Personally I didn’t like many of the photos [the students took]; I think they were pretty plain. It tends to happen in that way. [...] I think some of [the students] didn’t really understand the difference between curious and obvious. Some of them thought curious meant curiosity—like, ‘I have the curiosity to know what’s behind that photograph.’ [...] That was not really the concept.

In Africa, Malik cited the lesson on stereotypes and cultural generalizations as the least effective, explaining:

When we did the stereotypes (...) the students felt the importance of not stereotyping, but sometimes I felt it was overly simplistic. Even though we put things on a continuum [from stereotypes to cultural generalizations], some students felt that it doesn’t just take rephrasing to change a stereotype into a cultural generalization, and so on and so forth. And I can understand that, but I felt that the way the material is presented may also be changed. So I would say if there was anything that wasn’t so successful, that’s it.

Semantic Nature of the Stereotypes Lesson

The last comment by Malik leads into the next theme, which is the ‘Semantic nature of the stereotypes lesson.’ Malik’s quote suggests that the lesson on stereotypes and cultural generalizations focused heavily on how phrasing or language can make a comment one thing or the other. Malik was critical of this fact, which is why his quote is cross-referenced between the last theme and this one. Paolo and Andre spoke more extensively about that particular lesson—in large part because I observed them teach it and therefore it came up in our observation-specific interviews—and did so in a way that also emphasized the semantic differences between stereotypes and cultural generalizations. Whereas Malik spoke negatively of this, Andre and Paolo were more neutral, which is why this became its own theme rather than being a sub-theme under ‘Least successful lessons and activities.’

Paolo began the stereotypes and cultural generalizations lesson toward the end of one of the sessions I observed and therefore had to cut it short, saying that, time permitting, they would continue on the topic in the next session. His explanation of what he had intended to do if given more time highlights the semantic focus of this lesson:

We would have analyzed the homework that we gave to them to do at home. We’d have analyzed every single sentence and [whether] it was a stereotype or a cultural generalization and why. Which are the modifiers? Why that sentence is one thing or the other.

Andre also alluded to the semantic nature of the lesson, stating, “The handout was pretty clear: stereotypes are very rigid; whereas if you do a cultural generalization, it tends to open and more flexible.” With regards to what he felt students took away from this lesson, Andre commented:

The idea that they got is that they had to stop grouping people by having these disconnected thoughts about, you know, ‘[Locals] are like this’ or ‘Americans are like this.’ Now they know they can modulate their language in order to present a more contextualized vision of the culture or the situation they’re describing.

In other words, the instructors at both sites recognized an emphasis on the semantic differences between stereotypes and cultural generalizations in this particular lesson. While Malik mentioned this as an aspect needing improvement, Paolo and Andre were more neutral about the lesson.

'Cultural Partners' Connect Inside- and Outside-the-Classroom Learning

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Seminar participants are required to choose someone from the local culture to serve as a 'Cultural Partner,' someone they can talk to about the topics covered during the Seminar and with whom they can confer about specific 'Cultural Partner' assignments. Although neither Paolo nor Malik spoke at much length about the Cultural Partners aspect of the Seminar curriculum, this topic came up repeatedly in my interviews with Andre, who also encouraged students to talk to their partners about topics brought up in class several times during the sessions I observed. Andre discussed the benefits of the fact that Seminar participants are required to have a local Cultural Partner with whom they speak on a regular basis. He said he felt it helps students get more engaged with the local society, link what they learn in class to the reality around them, and simply have a better experience. He explained how the Cultural Partner component works:

We're asking them to get engaged with the society. Now we ask them to have a [Cultural Partner] who they can meet once or twice a week whenever they have time and talk about what they saw in the Seminar. You know, 'Can you help me with this assignment? What is your perspective on this?'

Andre explained how he feels this benefits the students:

It's a way to link the intercultural notions that we learn in class with the reality, (...) to talk about what we cover in class, (...) [and] to reflect on whether what we covered in class is completely correct, or how that can be applicable to this particular culture.

Andre felt strongly about the benefits of the Cultural Partner component of the Seminar and emphasized that it was a means by which to get students more immersed in the local culture. He explained:

The more we promote that part of the Seminar and the program, the more integrated into the city [students will become], the less time they will spend with other Americans drinking in all the American bars that we have in town, and that solves many, many problems. They'll have better grades [and] better experiences with their homestays.

Repetitiveness

Another theme that emerged with regards to the curriculum was ‘Repetitiveness.’ Paolo remarked on several occasions that he felt the Seminar curriculum is somewhat repetitive, and this was also mentioned by Malik. This was not, however, brought up by Andre, the lead instructor in Western Europe.

Paolo summarized this theme when he said, “I think it’s going [through] the same things over and over with different terms, different words.” He further explained, “The materials are, from my point of view, very repetitive. [...] It’s always more or less working on the same thing. Different examples, different texts, different materials, but it’s always the same.” Similarly, Malik commented:

[One of] the things that seems not to work so well [is] the redundancy (...) that students have pointed out. For instance, this [mid-semester student evaluation] says, ‘I occasionally feel that the material is repetitive and simplistic. Particularly the stereotypes and the number of times we have talked about trying to not judge, and value lenses.’ [...] So, yes, the repetitiveness, or the feeling of redundancy, is something that they feel could be avoided.

Students

The fourth category about which the instructors spoke is ‘Students.’ As mentioned previously, I not only asked the instructors about the Seminar participants in general, I also asked them to tell me a little more about each of the individual students. Four themes emerged from their answers: ‘Characteristics of Seminar participants,’ ‘Seminar positively impacting students,’ ‘Student motivation,’ and ‘Students connecting theory and experience.’ Several of these themes have their own sub-themes, which are outlined in Table 22.

Characteristics of Seminar Participants

Much of what the instructors said about the students had to do with the ‘Characteristics of the Seminar participants.’ When I asked instructors to tell me about the Seminar participants, what they focused on differed in some ways and also shared several similarities. Five sub-themes emerged—some across sites and others at only one site—within this theme: ‘Students’ background factors that influence their experience,’ ‘Students’ intercultural worldviews,’

‘Students’ learning styles,’ ‘Good students committed to making the most of the experience,’ and ‘Varying engagement in the Seminar.’

Table 22. Instructor Interviews: Students Category

‘Students’ Themes	<i>Where did the theme emerge?</i>	
	Western Europe	Africa
• Characteristics of Seminar participants	X	X
○ Students’ background factors that influence their experience	X	X
○ Students’ intercultural worldviews	X	X
○ Students’ learning styles	X	X
○ Good students committed to making the most of the experience	X	
○ Varying engagement in Seminar	X	(1 reference)
• Seminar positively impacting students	X	X
○ Increases understanding and reduces complaints	X	
○ Helps students cope with and adjust to cultural difference		X
• Student motivation	X	X
○ Motivation for enrolling in the Seminar	X	X
○ Students ultimately responsible for their experience	X	X
• Students connecting theory and experience	(1 reference)	X

Students’ Background Factors that Influence their Experience

At both sites, the instructors discussed aspects of the Seminar participants’ backgrounds that they felt may be influencing the students’ learning experience both inside and outside the Seminar. Instructors in both Western Europe and Africa mentioned students’ ethnicity, religion, and learning strengths (such as listening skills and open-mindedness) as factors that played an important role in their experience. In Western Europe, the instructors also mentioned students’ introverted or extroverted nature, language levels, and personality. Other influential factors brought up by the instructor in Africa include students’ political leanings, their desire to help others, and their race.

Andre explained, for example, how he felt one student’s introverted personality was affecting her experience:

She’s a very quiet person, very [in] her own space. I think that will probably put her in a more lonely situation; there won’t be too much interaction. [...] I’m not even sure if she has friends outside of the program.

Andre's comments about another student—one who he predicted would develop her intercultural competence considerably while abroad—differed considerably:

The first thing that I would need to say about her, I think her ethnicity, her religion, and her personality explains a lot who she is. [She] is a [religious minority in the U.S.], [although] she doesn't follow really strict [religious] traditions. She has traveled a lot. I think she considers herself to be sort of like two cultural entities together. [...] So she's very open-minded about everything.

In Africa, students' beliefs—be they political, social, or religious—seemed quite influential on their experience, at least from the instructor's perspective. Malik mentioned, "A lot of our students are really very progressive in a political sense." He also said several students on the program had strong religious beliefs, which he felt were impacting their experiences. There is some overlap between this theme and the next, so more examples are provided in the next section.

Students' Intercultural Worldviews

When discussing the Seminar participants, the two lead instructors also made reference to students' intercultural worldviews, although Malik did so much more than Andre (as a reminder, Andre did not have students' IDI scores at the time).

With regards to his students' intercultural worldviews, Andre commented, "They're not that far one from the other. Most of them, I would say, are either in Reversal or Minimization." When speaking about individual students, Andre did not typically emphasize their intercultural worldview, although he did occasionally comment on where he thought they might fall on the Intercultural Development Continuum. For example, about one student he commented:

I think he's in Minimization, definitely. Or he's by the end of Minimization...because when he first came in (...) pretty much he was in a state where everything is the same. [...] And now he's more (...) about, 'I want to know how different [this country] is. And why [do] people live in this way?' [...] He has that curiosity.

In Africa, Malik regularly mentioned students' intercultural worldviews when describing them and their experiences abroad and in the Seminar. For example, he commented:

If I did not have [Jane's] IDI results, but only interacted with her, it would be very easy to put her in Acceptance or even Adaptation...because she has this intercultural flexibility in her that actually prepares her for looking at both sides, for accepting the possibility of seeing things differently. [...] And this is true for

[Ann] as well. When I take a different example with [another student]—his IDI says that he's in Defense—(...) he tends to see things as clearly cut between black or white. [...] And that gray zone seems not to exist for him.

In several cases, Malik discussed how he felt that aspects of the students' backgrounds mentioned in the previous section were related to their intercultural worldview. For example, about one of the more religious students, he commented, "He's very Christian and makes sure that he makes that known to everyone....which I wouldn't say explains his worldview as a person in Minimization, but may also be a factor in that." About a student who he said was quick to see racial polarities, Malik commented that this made him "wonder the extent to which she's in Minimization" and suggested she had perhaps regressed to Defense. He explained further:

I think I saw this coming after a trip that we took at the beginning of the semester to a place that was run by a writer who is very Afro-centric. I think that experience and encounter with the writer made her withdraw a little bit within herself and see the writer as her model, and sort of—I wouldn't say that she is necessarily in Defense, but that has, I think, had a [strong] impact on her attitude and her behavior.

Students' Learning Styles

Another thing that the instructors brought up when discussing the Seminar participants was their learning styles. Although all three instructors mentioned this, Andre did so more frequently than the other two. Both Paolo and Andre mentioned on several occasions that the majority of the Seminar participants that semester were "doers" or "experiencers." As mentioned earlier, Andre also considers himself a "doer," so he found it relatively easy to relate to this particular group. He gave an example of how he sees this influencing the students' experience in the Seminar:

It is really hard for them to read something, especially this particular group; I've noticed that. I gave them the handout for the Cultural Detective a week before we were going to cover it and only one person read it. [...] So I know that this group, because of their learning style, they don't really like to read that much; they like to do things.

Malik also spoke about his students' preferred learning styles, although on an individual basis rather than the group's primary preference. That is, when he offered his perspective of each on his students' experiences abroad, he often led by mentioning their intercultural worldview and

preferred learning style, stating, for example, “She’s a CE and in Adaptation...” In the case of at least one student, he had obviously thought about how well the LSI results aligned with his experience of that individual. He commented:

[She] is, I would say, an AC. [...] I think she’s very AC and forcing herself to be CE, rather than being CE and being pushed to become AC. [...] The reason why I say that is [because] when we are in class, she’s not really the type that would enjoy relating to people. She (...) doesn’t mind whether what she says shocks or hurts people. She says what she thinks. [...] And (...) she would tell me right away the type of activity she likes, which are very, very AC-oriented.

Good Students Committed to Making the Most of the Experience

In Western Europe, Andre and Paolo characterized their group of Seminar participants as ‘Good students committed to making the most of the experience.’ They described the participants as “proactive,” “open-minded,” “very clever,” “motivated,” and “committed,” particularly in comparison to the students who chose not to enroll in the Seminar. Paolo explained:

From my point of view, they are students (...) who are very concerned about their GPAs, their grades, (...) the materials, (...) the courses. [...] I think they are [intelligent] students who are interested in making the most of being here in [this country]. There are a group of students who, from the very first day, I know they are not going to take the Seminar because they prefer going to the beach or going to drink coffee with someone (...). So, basically most of the students that we usually have in the Seminar are—(...) outside class they are more timid; they are not people who are [very disruptive].

Varying Engagement in the Seminar

Within ‘Characteristics of Seminar participants,’ another sub-theme to emerge is ‘Varying engagement in Seminar.’ The instructors—primarily in Western Europe—mentioned on several occasions that some of the Seminar participants are more engaged and participative than others, and that some students appear “bored.” After one of the sessions I observed, Paolo remarked:

Yesterday what I saw is there were different types of students. There was one student (...) who was pretty passive. [...] There [was] another group of students (...) [who] were very proactive.

When talking about each of the Seminar participants, Andre often commented on their level of engagement or participation in the Seminar. For example, about one student he said, “Her [language] level is pretty low. [...] She doesn’t participate that much—not because she doesn’t want to, but because she cannot really express much.” About the same student, Andre later commented, “Now, because her language barriers are decreasing—she’s speaking much better—she participates more.”

The instructors also expressed a concern that some of the students were perhaps becoming bored with the Seminar, due at least in part to the repetitiveness theme mentioned earlier. When I asked Paolo how he thought students had received a particular session, he commented, “I think they are a little bit bored about talking about the same topic with different words. There are some students who—from their faces I feel they think they are listening to the same things [again] and again.” While Andre and Malik did not express as much concern about students being bored as Paolo did, they did each mention one student at their site whom they felt might feel this way. About Amelia, Andre said, “I think, for her—probably with this group of students—it’s probably getting a little bit short. I mean, she should probably go in a faster way; she would probably advance more.” Malik made the following comment about Zoey, after noting that she is a very strong Abstract Conceptualizer: “She’s a good student, actually. She reflects very hard and thinks about the material very critically. But I can see that she gets bored very easily thus far.”

Seminar Positively Impacting Students

Another theme to emerge in the ‘Students’ category is ‘Seminar positively impacting students.’ All three instructors said they felt the Seminar was having a positive effect on participants and their experiences abroad. Andre commented, “I really, really, truly believe that what we do has an impact, a very positive impact on the students.” Two different sub-themes emerged within this theme, each specific to one of the two sites: ‘Increases understanding and reduces complaints’ and ‘Helps students cope with and adjust to cultural difference.’ The first emerged in Western Europe and the second in Africa.

Increases Understanding and Reduces Complaints

In Western Europe, both Andre and Paolo made numerous references to the fact that the Seminar seemed to help participants better understand their experience in the host culture and, as a result, complain less than the students not enrolled in the Seminar. Andre commented, “I think the Seminar is providing them through us... [a] way [to] understand what’s going on in their lives while they’re in [this city].” He explained how this differs from students who are not in the Seminar:

I would say the biggest difference is that the students who are in the Seminar— (...) I have never had to talk to them outside the Seminar because they had issues. [...] I think the Seminar is a way for them to reflect on their issues so that they can solve them without coming to us. Whereas students who are not in the Seminar, the very basic and simple situations appear to be real critical conflicts that they cannot solve because (...) they are still in a U.S. mindset.

Paolo made similar comments. For example, he discussed how a student from the Seminar participated in a recent optional excursion and, unlike many of her peers, did not complain during the experience. He concluded:

[Students in the Seminar] don’t get mad if something isn’t the way they expect it to be. [...] They don’t complain. They just take things the way they are and they understand that if they are this way, it’s because it works here; probably in the States or in another place that doesn’t work, but instead of getting mad, they try to see why things are the way they are, and they try to accept.

Helps Students Cope with and Adjust to Cultural Difference

In Africa, Malik emphasized the fact that the Seminar helped participants cope with and adjust to the cultural differences they experienced and the emotions those caused. He explained:

[Seminar participants] understand that if they go through certain emotions and have their stress level rise, it’s not just because they are weak, that it is actually (...) a normal part of the process and there are mechanisms that they can use in order to face those factors and try to use skills that they have learned.

He further commented:

I think [the Seminar] also helps students have a more balanced experience by understanding how to cope with this experience. [...] It’s very easy to be

unhappy when you don't know how to react or when you don't have the appropriate tools to react. Yet when you understand that this is actually part of a normal process of adjusting to a culture or living in a different culture, I think it gives you some preparation. And also it makes you put into context your experiences. And because we have [learned and] practiced (...) coping mechanisms (...), I think students have the tools that they would need to have in order to face some of those cultural challenges and become more interculturally competent and culturally literate.

Malik offered an example of how he saw students using the skills they had learned in class when I asked him if he had any thoughts about how the experience of students in the Seminar might compare to the experience of students who are not in the Seminar. He responded, "Oh yes, I do, I do." He proceeded to explain that the larger group had recently watched and discussed a film about female circumcision in the 'Cultural and Society' course, and that later that same day he asked students in the Seminar what they thought about that discussion. One of the Seminar participants said she felt it was unacceptable that some of the students had referred to the practice as "genital mutilation." About this response, Malik commented:

I realize that this student did not agree with the practice, but she was aware of the language she should use to refer to a culture that has a different value system and different norms. And when I see that, it really makes me realize that students understand (...) or this Seminar has had an impact on the way they (...) can actually talk about a culture without necessarily stereotyping it. And this is, I think, a good [thing].

To summarize, all three of the instructors felt the Seminar has a positive impact on the participants. In Western Europe, the primary benefit identified by the instructors is that the Seminar increases students' understanding and causes them to complain less. In Africa, Malik felt participation in the Seminar was helping students cope with and adjust to cultural difference.

Student Motivation

Instructors discussed 'Student motivation' in two respects: 'Motivation for enrolling in the Seminar' and 'Students ultimately responsible for their experience.'

Motivation for Enrolling in the Seminar

In discussing why students at his site might choose to enroll in the Seminar, Andre mentioned that one student was able to meet one of her school's core requirements by taking the Seminar, while the other students seemed to be taking the Seminar for various other reasons. He explained:

We have a student (...) who really needs this course because [her school] will transfer this as one of the intercultural courses that they need to take. Everyone else, it's because they either thought that it was fun or because they thought that what we explain about the Seminar and how we were going to help them understand [this place] was going to be very beneficial for them. Or sometimes just because [they think], '[Andre] and [Paolo] are nice guys and [so] why not?'

Andre also said several of his students enroll in the Seminar to be "unique" or "different" from their peers. As touched upon in a previous theme, Andre emphasizes the elite nature of the Seminar, as well as the language commitment program, when marketing the two programs. Andre commented:

For example (...) [Jake] and [Maeve] are two people who definitely want to be different (...) from everybody else. They want to be very unique. And by being in the Seminar, they're going to be able to accomplish that objective.

When asked why he felt students at the Africa site typically choose to enroll in the Seminar, Malik focused on how it enhances their experience abroad, noting:

I think students are curious to know how they can reflect on their own experience in a safe environment with people who go through the same experiences. Because I think it can be overwhelming for them to have a lot of things they don't understand and [not] have any way or space to release their frustration or debrief and try to make sense of those experiences. And I think first it is that curiosity and also the need to try and have a better understanding of the experiences they go through that make them want to take this course.

Students Ultimately Responsible for their Experience

The second sub-theme in 'Student motivations' is 'Students ultimately responsible for their experience.' Both of the lead instructors emphasized the fact that there is only so much they

can do to help students make the most of their experience abroad, and that ultimately the responsibility lies with the students themselves. Andre explained:

I don't want to tell them, 'You need to be spending time with [locals].' I don't want to tell them, 'You need to really, really work hard to get A's.' It's their choice. You cannot force people to do something they don't want to do. You can suggest. You can probably facilitate something to convince them of that. But, in the end, it's their own personal experience.

Both instructors talked about this specifically in reference to the 'Cultural Partners' aspect of the curriculum, suggesting that what students get out of it depends on what they put into it. In this regard, Andre commented:

Obviously I cannot be a policeman saying, 'Okay, did you meet with him today? Why didn't you meet with him today? Call him.' But I always keep asking them. And if they haven't, I make them feel a little bit uncomfortable. Say, 'Oh, you're not meeting with them? But (...) you expressed on day one that one of your goals was, you know, to do so-and-so things. Does [this] mean that you're not really doing that? Why aren't you doing that?'

After discussing some of the challenges involved with the 'Cultural Partners'—one being that students sometimes do not have time for the other person—Malik commented:

In general, it's okay. It could be improved, I think. [...] But I don't think there's much the facilitator could do. As they say, you can take a horse to the fountain, but it's probably more challenging to make them drink.

When asked to elaborate, Malik continued:

I think the major motivational aspect lies on the shoulders of the students to actually do what they need to do in order to maximize their experience with their Cultural Partners or their experience through this Seminar. We can continue suggesting ways of doing things (...), but in the end, I think—like any other experience—it is up to the person to actually take responsibility for their experience and for whatever they want to get out of [it].

Students Connecting Theory and Experience

Another student-related theme to emerge is 'Students connecting theory and experience.' This theme is relatively minor, yet interesting nonetheless, particularly given how it parallels the previously-discussed theme (in the 'Instructors and Instruction' category) of trying to find a

balance between focusing on the curriculum and letting the Seminar be guided by students' interests and experiences. This theme was primarily present in Africa, although there is one relevant reference from Andre.

During our observation-specific interviews, Malik highlighted the students' ability to connect the theory and concepts covered in the Seminar with their own personal experiences. After one session, for example, he commented, "Based on how students reacted and tried to make connections between what they experienced and the theory, I felt that they had a good understanding of what the theory is about." Following another session, Malik noted:

What went well, I think, was the students' ability to relate the concepts to their experiences. And I think a few of them gave very good examples to illustrate how those concepts apply to what they have been through [here] or back home.

Andre's only comment pertaining to this theme was made in reference to a student who he felt had recently begun to participate more in the Seminar. He stated, "If she participates in the Seminar and she's willing to say something, it's because she is somehow applying the ideas that we have [covered in the Seminar] to her personal experience."

Instructors' Conclusions about the Seminar

The final category, which is the only one from the instructor interviews not derived from the conceptual framework based on Schwab's (1983) four commonplaces of education, is 'Instructors' conclusions about the Seminar.' Toward the end of my last interview with each of the instructors, I asked about their final thoughts regarding the Seminar, including what was going particularly well and what was most challenging at that site. Three themes emerged, which are outlined—along with a number of sub-themes—in Table 23. Many of the references in these themes are cross-coded elsewhere in other themes as well, but this category highlights what the instructors felt were the most important points to make about the Seminar. I have tried not to quote references more than once and instead refer back to earlier themes when appropriate.

Table 23. Instructor Interviews: Instructors’ Conclusions about the Seminar Category

‘Instructors’ Conclusions about the Seminar’ Themes	<i>Where did the theme emerge?</i>	
	Western Europe	Africa
• What is going well with the Seminar	X	X
• Challenges of the Seminar	X	X
○ Logistical challenges	X	(1 reference)
○ Time-consuming job	(1 reference)	X
○ Instructor’s learning curve	X	X
○ Maintaining student interest	X	
• Seminar about more than the materials	X	X

What is Going Well with the Seminar

When asked what was going particularly well with the Seminar at their site, the instructors in Western Europe lauded their student-driven approach (see ‘Student-driven approach’ in the ‘Instructors and Instruction’ category). For example, Paolo commented, “What I think goes well here (...) is that we try to get their opinions and talk about their experiences in class.” Andre also discussed the positive impact the Seminar was having on students’ experiences, which was mentioned in an earlier theme (see ‘Seminar positively impacting students’ in the ‘Students’ category). He explained:

What’s going really, really well is that the Seminar is providing the [participants] a more complete experience. I think we are providing the space where we can sit down in a very friendly atmosphere and we can present ideas that they need to consider in order to reflect on their experience here. [...] So I think the Seminar is helping in that way. Students have a more complete vision.

Malik also mentioned that providing students the space to reflect on their experience is one of the things going particularly well with the Seminar in Africa. Specifically, he said that having this space to reflect helps students adjust to the cultural differences as they are experiencing them (see the theme ‘Helps students cope with and adjust to cultural difference’ in the ‘Students’ category). He explained:

The Seminar gives them the space to reflect on their experiences, especially with host families. It gives them the tools to think about the meaning of their interactions with (...) classmates inside the class or outside or [local people] on the streets. And I think that’s something that the Seminar has managed to achieve.

Malik concluded by saying:

What is going particularly well, I think, is how—despite the multiplicity of stress factors that students face here—the Seminar has managed to push them or to challenge them to withhold judgment and observe this distance and look at their experiences from this meta-level space to make sense of it. [...] It also makes students understand the different and complex dimensions that are involved in any given issue—cultural issue—that they may learn in class or experience in their real life situations.

Challenges of the Seminar

In addition to recognizing what was going well, the instructors at both sites identified a number of challenges they had experienced with regards to the Seminar. The following emerged as sub-themes: ‘Logistical challenges,’ ‘Time-consuming job,’ ‘Instructor’s learning curve,’ and ‘Maintaining student interest.’ As explained previously, there is some cross-coding of the references in this theme with previous themes, but the main focus here is on what instructors highlighted as the primary challenges they faced with the Seminar during our final interview together.

Logistical Challenges

Several of the challenges the instructors identified with the Seminar, particularly in Western Europe, were related to logistics. Some of these are touched upon in the ‘Seminar context’ theme within the ‘Milieu’ category. For example, Andre explained what he sees as one of the major challenges, which relates back to scheduling (see ‘Scheduling challenges’ in the ‘Milieu’ category). He concluded, “The biggest challenge that I face no matter what I do [is] finding a place or finding a time to be able to group them; that is definitely a challenge.”

Another logistical challenge that was particularly emphasized by the instructors in Western Europe, but also mentioned by Malik in Africa, has to do with covering the materials in the allotted time. Both Andre and Paolo mentioned on several occasions that they were often not able to complete all the components of a lesson because they spent more time on one activity than planned. Paolo explained:

[Andre]’s challenge for sure is to use [only] the time that they have [allotted] for each activity. [Andre] speaks a lot. And something which is prepared for five minutes can take fifty—not fifteen, *fifty*—minutes because he’s going over and

over it and speaks long. [...] Sometimes we have to stop the class before we finish with the objectives or the materials for that class because time's over.

Paolo cited enrollment as another logistical challenge they faced that particular semester. He explained, "We usually have, like, ten, twelve, fifteen students in the Seminar. And this semester we have only six. So probably to increase the numbers of people in the Seminar."

Time-Consuming Job

A sub-theme that emerged primarily in Africa with regards to the challenges of the Seminar is that it is a 'Time-consuming job.' While Andre mentioned that the Seminar involved a lot of work, particularly in the first year or so (see 'Initial implementation challenges' in the 'Instructors and Instruction' category), Malik talked about the Seminar as a continued demand on his time, particularly in addition to his other responsibilities. (Of note is the fact that there were approximately 50+ students on program in Africa and only two full-time staff members, along with two part-time staff. In Western Europe, there were more than a half dozen full-time staff members to serve an only slightly larger number of students across the three programs available there.)

Malik referred to teaching the Seminar as "a very, very time-consuming job." He further elaborated:

It's actually a lot of work, especially when you combine it with administration, teaching another class, and grading papers for the 'Society and Culture' class for all the students in the program. So I don't have the time really to be doing everything that I would like to do with the Seminar, otherwise all my time would be devoted to the Seminar.

When asked about the challenges involved in the Seminar, Malik responded:

Well, the challenge lies on my part because, as you can see, everybody here is very busy. [...] What is challenging for me [is] not [having] enough time to prepare as well as I would like to prepare the Seminar because of other responsibilities. So the challenge is also one related to staffing...and not having all the time that I need to have.

Instructor's Learning Curve

One challenge discussed mostly by Malik, but also mentioned by Paolo, is the 'Instructor's learning curve.' While Andre mentioned it took him awhile to learn how to teach

the course initially (see ‘Initial implementation challenges’ in ‘Instructors and instruction’), Malik and Paolo said learning how to teach the Seminar effectively was an ongoing process for them. For example, Paolo said one of his challenges is adapting his teaching style to the more participative and interactive nature of the Seminar. He explained, “I’m more like a lecturer. [...] So I have to think of ways to make the students talk more instead of me speaking all the time.”

Malik said that learning to adapt to his students’ intercultural worldviews was particularly challenging and is something that took time, practice, and experience to learn. He explained:

I think I’ve worked hard over the semesters. At the beginning it was easier for me to work around learning styles than it was for me to work on students’ IDI scores. [...] And this is something that comes with teaching experience. It is not something that I got at first, as I said. I had a really hard time trying to use the IDC in my teaching.

Furthermore, Malik said the learning process was ongoing, explaining:

I think another challenge is maybe still to be as comfortable as I would like to be in teaching this. Because I would say I’m still a student in intercultural communication. In the past two or three years I have learned a lot, I have gained a lot. I still have some way to go. So the challenge is also about having better command of the material that I teach. And I feel that is another challenge that can be overcome, but there’s still some room for growth.

Maintaining Student Interest

One final notable, although minor, sub-theme within ‘Challenges of the Seminar’ is ‘Maintaining student interest.’ Reported only by Andre in Western Europe, this relates to several previously-discussed themes, such as ‘Emphasis on participation and enjoyment,’ ‘Adapting materials to the students’ (both in the ‘Instructors and Instruction’ category), and ‘Desire to break with the idea of a traditional academic class’ (in ‘Milieu’). Andre explained, “In terms of how the Seminar works, my biggest challenge is to make sure that students enjoy what we do and that we make sure that this is not just another class.” He also commented:

You need to adapt [the amount of work] to make sure that they will want to come back next week. Because we need to remember, this is optional. And we had two people this semester that dropped it. [...] So, keeping them motivated so that they get to the very end, that’s probably the biggest challenge.

Seminar About More Than the Materials

The final concluding thought about the Seminar, which was expressed by both of the lead instructors, is that the ‘Seminar is about more than the materials.’ That is, the curriculum alone—no matter how good—cannot guarantee that the Seminar achieves the desired outcomes. Andre summarized this theme when he said, “This Seminar is not just about the material, but it’s about who teaches the materials and about who are the students who are learning (...) and experiencing those materials.” He further explained:

As Mick [Dr. Vande Berg] told us at the very beginning of this project, the Seminar is not just about learning all the materials, but it’s about how you’re going to teach it, how the students are going to learn, and how you are going to learn from the students, from the materials, and from a global experience of the Seminar. And I’m completely convinced about that.

Malik also alluded to this theme when he discussed how teaching the Seminar differs from his past teaching experiences:

The difference here is actually to understand that the course, even though its format has already been structured, the actual content is generated by students themselves. And it is their experiences and their reflection on those experiences that makes the course what it is.

To summarize this category, the instructors at the two sites had different conclusions about what was going particularly well with the Seminar. In Western Europe, the instructors emphasized what they saw as the success of the student-driven approach. In Africa, Malik focused on the fact the Seminar gives the students a space to reflect and helps improve the student experience. The instructors also identified numerous challenges involved in teaching the Seminar. They discussed logistical challenges, the fact that teaching a course of this nature is particularly time-consuming, the challenge of maintaining students’ interest, and the large and ongoing learning curve for someone teaching such a course. Last, but not least, the instructors concluded that the Seminar is about much more than the curricular materials.

Findings from the Administrator Interviews

The third group I interviewed were the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad administrators. They include the three people at CIEE headquarters who were involved in the Seminar oversight and coaching during the semester in which I conducted my study. One of

these administrators, Dr. Michael (Mick) Vande Berg, was responsible for conceiving and creating the Seminar. He agreed to be identified by name in this study and is the only participant for whom I do not use a pseudonym. The second administrator, Leslie, had been working with the Seminar since its inception and was responsible for much of the curriculum development. Both Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie were involved in coaching Seminar instructors. The third administrator, Margo, started in her position shortly before I interviewed her (although she had previously worked for CIEE). At the time, she had gone through training in preparation to coach Seminar instructors, but had not yet started coaching.

Table 24. Administrator Interviews: Overarching Coding Structure

<p>Seminar Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous experimentation and refinement • Pedagogical framework of the Seminar <p>Teaching the Seminar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large instructor learning curve • Requires theoretical and pedagogical understanding • Many factors influence how Seminar plays out • Opportunity to help students make the most of their experience abroad <p>Instructors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andre • Paolo • Malik <p>Coaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution of Seminar coaching • Assessing and addressing instructors' knowledge gaps • Challenges of coaching <p>Curriculum</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most successful aspects of the curriculum • Least successful aspects of the curriculum <p>Administrators' Conclusions about the Seminar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good curriculum necessary but insufficient condition for success • Issues of student pushback and the importance of marketing • Assessment • Impacts of the Seminar

I interviewed all three of the administrators, once each, in early December 2010, within weeks of returning from my site visits. Due to their differing experience with and knowledge of

the Seminar, the interview questions differed somewhat; they focused on the aspects of the Seminar about which each administrator knew the most. Table 24 includes the overarching categories and primary themes that emerged from these administrator interviews. As in the previous sections, some of these themes have further sub-themes that are not included here, but are instead elaborated on in the appropriate sections.

Seminar Background

The first category from the administrator interviews is ‘Seminar Background.’ This includes references to the creation and history of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. Two themes emerged within this category: ‘Continuous experimentation and refinement’ and ‘Conceptual and theoretical framework of Seminar.’

Table 25. Administrator Interviews: Seminar Background Category

‘Seminar Background’ Themes
• Continuous experimentation and refinement
• Pedagogical framework of the Seminar

Continuous Experimentation and Refinement

Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie both discussed the fact that the Seminar involved ‘Continuous experimentation and refinement.’ The curriculum, the format, the credit structure, the way the Seminar is imparted, and the way in which instructors are trained had all undergone some form of experimentation. Dr. Vande Berg remarked, “I feel like this whole project is a series of on-going pilots and experiments.”

Leslie mentioned that the curriculum underwent numerous revisions during the first several years of the Seminar’s existence. She explained, “I think the curriculum itself is better sequenced than it used to be. It’s clearer and it’s much less crowded. We’ve streamlined it quite a bit from its first incarnation, which helps a lot.” Leslie also hinted at how various instructors had experimented with different forms of the Seminar at their sites when she talked about some of the people she was coaching:

Those who aren’t new have tried various iterations. One of them started out with the Seminar and then integrated it into a larger course called Intercultural Communications. [...] Then another person (...) moved from teaching the non-

credit version to the credit version and that was a great improvement (...). [...]

In one of the places we're doing it sort of experimentally with only one student.

About these experiments, Leslie concluded, "I think doing all these different versions in different places helps us figure out what's possible and what doesn't work so well."

Pedagogical Framework of the Seminar

Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie also discussed the 'Pedagogical framework of the Seminar.' That is, they talked about the pedagogy that influences how the Seminar is designed and taught.

For example, Dr. Vande Berg explained:

When I describe what we're doing, here's how I describe it: I tell people that the foundation of what we're doing (...) is developmental and it's experiential and it's holistic. And by holistic I mean that we're appealing to engaging not only peoples' cognitive abilities, but also their affective and their behavioral or sensorial—the ways that they respond in those ways too.

Leslie spoke in particular about the experiential education framework that influences how the curriculum was designed and plays out:

There's a couple of different sequencing patterns going on in the design of the curriculum. One is that it goes from simple concepts to more complex concepts. Another is that it goes from more concrete to more abstract, generally speaking. Another is that we design it so that the instructor takes the lead and presents more in the beginning, and kind of backs off on that and there's more dialogue amongst the students and more group work as the semester continues. [...] And that's just kind of a basic tenet of experiential education in general, is that you want to try to push students further and further towards taking responsibility for the class.

Teaching the Seminar

Unlike with the previous two interviewee groups, with the administrators there did not emerge an 'Instructors and Instruction' category. Instead, there are the categories 'Teaching the Seminar' and 'Instructors.' The first is a very broad category that includes four themes related to the general act of teaching the Seminar. These themes are: 'Large instructor learning curve,' 'Requires theoretical and pedagogical understanding,' 'Many factors influence how the Seminar plays out,' and 'Opportunity to help students make the most of their experience abroad.' The

category ‘Instructors’ includes specific references to the three Seminar instructors involved in this study and is explained in a later section.

Table 26. Administrator Interviews: Teaching the Seminar Category

‘Teaching the Seminar’ Themes
• Large instructor learning curve
• Requires theoretical and pedagogical understanding
• Many factors influence how the Seminar plays out
• Opportunity to help students make the most of their experience abroad

Large Instructor Learning Curve

All three of the administrators mentioned that the learning curve for the Seminar instructors is large. Dr. Vande Berg said instructors typically have to teach the Seminar for several semesters before they begin to see results in the students’ IDI scores. He explained that he tries to make this clear to new instructors:

What I said to people when they first started doing this, and subsequently with each new group what I’ve said to them, as loud and clear as I can, is, ‘We have no strong expectation that this is going to go real well for you the first or second time that you do it.’

In fall 2010, when this case study was conducted, the Seminar instructors who had been part of the original pilot program—including Andre and Malik—had been teaching the Seminar for approximately three years. The administrators discussed the fact that many of those instructors were just beginning to “hit their stride” with the Seminar. For example, Margo commented, “I feel like for a lot of RDs that were in the early waves, I think that they are finally starting to shape the Seminar to be their own.” Leslie explained that it took some time before instructors were able to focus on the deeper pedagogical goals of the Seminar:

I think that the people who have been teaching it for two to three semesters now are able to move from focusing on delivering the material itself to a closer focus on the actual development and guiding the development of the students (...) interculturally speaking.

Dr. Vande Berg summarized this theme well, and also highlighted its importance, when he concluded:

I may have underestimated really how much work it is for somebody who hasn’t done this kind of stuff before to relatively quickly come up to speed. What I’ve

seen is that typically, under the best of circumstances, in almost all cases it takes about a year. And if somebody doesn't do the background reading, for example, that they need to do, then that gets in the way of their performance.

Requires Theoretical and Pedagogical Understanding

Another strong theme to emerge, which overlaps somewhat with the previous one, is that teaching the Seminar 'Requires theoretical and pedagogical understanding.' All three administrators emphasized that Seminar instructors need to understand not only the intercultural theory and concepts they are teaching, but also the pedagogy that underlies the Seminar. The complex nature of doing this is at least partly to blame for the large instructor learning curve mentioned in the previous section. Leslie explained, "Most people (...) focus a lot on 'How do I teach the class?' and it takes them a long time to come around to how important it is to understand the theoretical underpinnings."

With regards to the pedagogical aspect, Dr. Vande Berg explained, "The foundation of this is developmental and it's experiential and it's holistic." He emphasized the importance of the instructors understanding this, stating, "I believe what's finally going to determine whether people are successful in teaching the course that we've designed is their ability to do those three things. It sounds so easy, doesn't it? And it's not." Margo explained that it takes time before instructors are typically able to begin to do this, stating:

I think that a lot of our instructors (...) need a certain amount of time to just sink into the content before they're able to do such specific, targeted, individual coaching of single students where they are both interculturally and in terms of their learning styles.

Leslie discussed some of the specific challenges involved in learning to teach experientially and developmentally. With regards to the former, she explained:

The Kolb stuff is deceptive because it's very easy to understand it on a shallow level, but there's a lot more to it if you keep working at it. [...] The other thing about Kolb is that there are two aspects. One is the learning styles, which most people understand pretty quickly and easily because it's not that complicated. But the more complex aspect of it is the wheel of learning and going around what Mick [Dr. Vande Berg] likes to call the spiral. That and how important debriefing is in that process—that is a much more difficult concept to get across

to people. And debriefing itself takes a lot of skill. [...] And that's critical to the success of the class (...).

With regards to teaching developmentally (i.e. taking students' intercultural worldview into consideration), Leslie commented:

The IDC is less obviously accessible. So I think sometimes people will just look at [the IDC] and be like, 'Forget it. I can't even deal with this right now. I just need to learn to teach.'

Dr. Vande Berg explained what he believes it takes for instructors to learn to tailor their instruction to individual students' intercultural worldviews:

There are three things here (...). The first thing is do [the instructors] conceptually get it? Do they get what the Intercultural Development Continuum actually means? [...] Secondly, to what extent are they able to use that frame to interpret the student comments, student behavior, student demeanor, including (...) both spoken and written comments? That is a large leap from getting it conceptually to perceiving that. [...] But ultimately the hardest thing, of course, is what do you do about it? How do you apply that?

Many Factors Influence How the Seminar Plays Out

Another theme to emerge regarding teaching the Seminar is that 'Many factors influence how the Seminar plays out.' The administrators discussed the fact that the Seminar is influenced by many things, such as the instructor's teaching style and background, the physical space, the size of the group, the students' personalities, and the extent to which the students feel challenged by their host culture.

Margo had recently visited two different programs within the same host country, where she was able to observe the Seminar—the same lesson even (on cultural dimensions)—at the two sites. "That was actually quite fascinating," she said, "to see back-to-back the same lesson but taught through two very different individuals." She talked about the instructors' backgrounds and the fact that one had a more "didactic" teaching style, while the other "taught in a more learner-centered fashion." Margo also discussed how the physical space in the two Seminars differed, explaining, "One class was conducted in a pretty noisy, windows-open, typical Latin American university room. And the other was in a very quiet space, just four students." When asked how she felt the Seminar was received by the students at these two sites, Margo commented:

I think [in] the larger class of students, there's a certain momentum that builds. [...] There's a lot of concurrent voices and discussion without necessarily a single resolution (...). [...] And in the smaller class of four, there was a certain hesitation, a certain observation. [...] And they sort of wanted to sit with it, I think, a little bit more before jumping to conclusions. And I think part of that may be based on the teaching style, and then part of that based on the individual students' learning styles, as well as the group culture that had developed by that point.

About her experience observing the Seminar at these two sites, Margo concluded:

It was just a great example of the fact that a single curriculum (...) can play out so differently in different places, with different teachers, under different conditions, with different voices, and different leaders, and different experiences at the table. So as much effort as goes in to a universal curriculum, there is the inevitable, wonderful, and spontaneous reality of the class as it plays out.

Leslie mentioned some additional factors that influence how the Seminar plays out differently at each site. After explaining that a basic tenet of experiential education is to push students toward taking responsibility for the class, she added, "Boy, it's a great theory, but it's pretty hard to pull off in practice." When asked why she thought that was, she explained:

It doesn't work unless you get full engagement from the students, and that relies on a lot of different (...) conditions. One being the rapport the instructor has with the students. [...] Another is how challenged the students feel outside of the class by the culture. If they feel overly challenged then they're not going to feel safe enough or feel confident enough to take control, and they want someone else to tell them about the culture, rather than discovering it on their own or through these different processes. Another might be just the general attitude [of] the students.

Opportunity to Help Students Make the Most of their Experience Abroad

Another theme that emerged from the administrator interviews is that instructors viewed teaching the Seminar as an 'Opportunity to help students make the most of their experience abroad.' Although this was a relatively minor theme, Dr. Vande Berg mentioned that many instructors, including the two lead instructors participating in this study, had indicated that teaching the Seminar allowed them to interact with students and help them maximize their

experience abroad in ways they had originally envisioned doing when they began their jobs. For example, Dr. Vande Berg commented:

I think that [Andre] for a long time wanted students to be able to get more out of the situation than they were typically getting. And so I think for him, the Seminar is a vehicle that allows him to channel some of that hope in ways that says at least part of my students are going to be able to learn better than they used to.

Similarly, Dr. Vande Berg also noted:

One of the things I've heard [Malik] say several times about this—and he's not the only RD who tells us this—this is what [Malik] was hoping he could do with students when he took this job, but that the management aspects of being a Resident Director don't easily translate into having these kinds of learning and teaching relationships with students.

To summarize this category, the administrators highlighted the large learning curve involved in teaching the Seminar, and emphasized that instructors need to understand both the intercultural concepts and theory they are teaching, as well as the pedagogical underpinnings of the course. They also acknowledged that there are many factors that influence how the Seminar plays out at a given site. Lastly, the administrators mentioned that several instructors, including the two lead instructors involved in this study, had said that teaching the Seminar gave them an opportunity to interact with the students and help them make the most of their experience abroad in ways they had not previously been able to do.

Instructors

The 'Instructors' category specifically refers to the administrators' discussion of the three instructors involved in this study. I asked all three administrators about their involvement with each of the participating instructors. Since Margo was new to her position at the time, her experience with these instructors was limited. Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie had each been involved in Andre's and Malik's training and coaching at one point, and they discussed this with me. However, they also explained that since Andre and Malik had been teaching the Seminar for some time, they were no longer receiving ongoing coaching. Therefore, Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie both prefaced their comments about the instructors by saying that they were based on past interactions and would not necessarily reflect the current situation of those instructors. Paolo,

who was co-facilitating with Andre, debriefed his IDI with Leslie, but had not received ongoing coaching. Table 27 outlines the themes and sub-themes within this category.

Table 27. Administrator Interviews: Instructors Category

'Instructors' Themes
• Andre
○ Andre's history with the Seminar
○ Andre's strengths
○ Andre's challenges
• Paolo
• Malik
○ Malik's history with the Seminar
○ Malik's strengths
○ Malik's challenges

Andre

Three sub-themes emerged with regards to Andre's involvement with the Seminar: 'Andre's history with the Seminar,' 'Andre's strengths,' and 'Andre's challenges.'

Andre's History with the Seminar

As mentioned previously, Andre had been teaching the Seminar at the Western Europe site since its inception. Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie discussed 'Andre's history with the Seminar.' Leslie explained, "Andre (...) started out from the beginning, [so] like all the other pilot folks, he had to contend with [the] confusion and disorganization that is inherent to the beginning of any project." Leslie mentioned that she had difficulties corresponding with Andre when she was coaching him because he was slow to respond to e-mails and often had to cancel their appointments. She commented, "So I can't say that I gave him a lot of coaching in that first year. I don't think he received as much as he should have, and I didn't press him as much as I should have."

Dr. Vande Berg also coached Andre for a time. He explained why he chose to end that coaching relationship when he did:

You reach a point (...) where it's no longer productive to have these conversations. For me personally, (...) that happened earlier with [Andre] than it did with [Malik]. It has much to do, I think, with [Andre's] own learning style. It got to the point, finally, where [Andre's] interest in just sort of moving forward

and taking the thing and doing it in his own way was overriding whatever suggestions I was making. And I saw that and so backed away from it.

Dr. Vande Berg also commented on how he felt this impacted the IDI scores at the Western Europe site:

Judging from the IDI gains of his students, [Andre's] results have been better than if the students had been left to their own devices. Do I think that the results would be better still if [Andre] were somewhat more receptive to training? Yeah, absolutely. But I can't make that happen, so...

Andre's Strengths

When asked about Andre's strengths as a Seminar instructor, Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie both emphasized Andre's energy and enthusiasm. For example, when asked about Andre's strengths, Leslie responded:

Oh, definitely enthusiasm, for one. And he gets very positive feedback, so I think he must have a very good rapport with the students. I think it's a great strength to not feel intimidated by the material (...) [because] you kind of have to act as if you know [the material] while you're learning about it. It's very much a performance in the beginning for most people. [...] I think [Andre] is definitely willing to go that performance route and really play it up and go for it and not worry too much about whether he's getting the theory right or even getting the lessons in the right order and all that. [...] Eventually he will get it.

Dr. Vande Berg reiterated Leslie's comments about Andre's enthusiasm, relating it to his learning style. He also explained how this enthusiasm helps Andre market the Seminar:

I think [Andre] brings a lot of energy to what he does. [...] He is able to motivate people. [...] He's a very strong Active Experimenter/Concrete Experiencer, and in many respects he's a textbook example of it. [Andre] can take a relatively complex idea, learn it well enough to be able to make something of it, and hold it up and say, 'Follow me!' and people will follow him. [Andre's] success in marketing the Seminar has been better than any other RD that I've seen. [Andre] is able, with a brand-new group of freshly-arrived students, to stand in front of them and say, 'This is going to be so good for you,' and to do it with so much enthusiasm, so much conviction, that students say, 'Oh, well, okay, I'll have to do that.'

Andre's Challenges

While Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie recognized several strengths related to Andre's learning style, they also attributed many of the challenges he faces in teaching the Seminar to his learning style. For example, Leslie commented, "He's definitely an [Active Experimenter]. He's kind of all over the place and very, very enthusiastic, but not always the most organized, or not always the best at following through (...)." She also mentioned, "I have a feeling that [Andre] probably doesn't necessarily spend as long on the debriefing as he might because of his tendency to go fast and be a little bit impatient." Active Experimenters such as Andre are known for being the type who would take a computer or other complicated machine out of the box and begin using it without consulting the instructions. Referring to Andre as a "classic case" of someone who would do this, Dr. Vande Berg commented, "My hope for [Andre] is that, over time, [he] takes the time to read the directions in the computer guide when he opens the box and pulls out that computer."

As mentioned in the previous section, Leslie felt Andre had a very good rapport with students. While she saw this as a strength in the sense that it helped students enjoy the Seminar more, she also added:

But it could be negative (...). [...] A person who places a lot of emphasis on rapport might sacrifice challenging the students in order to keep the class fun and engaging and keep all the students kind of on the same page and with them...and be a little scared or reluctant to push them a little bit more. So I could see that happening with [Andre].

Dr. Vande Berg mentioned one final challenge of Andre's related to his ability to perceive what's not working with the students:

I'm not sure that [Andre] sees (...) when he's doing something that's unproductive (...). It's interesting. He sees the stuff he does that works well; he doesn't see the stuff that he does that doesn't work well. [...] In the normal course of events, I don't think that (...) he is as perceptive about what is happening with students as he needs to be.

To summarize, the administrators characterized Andre as an instructor with great enthusiasm and strong rapport with students. They identified his challenges as needing to slow down a bit, take the time to understand the materials, not let an overemphasis on rapport prevent

him from challenging students, and increase his awareness of when the students are perhaps not connecting with what he is doing.

Paolo

The administrators did not have a lot to say about co-instructor Paolo since, mentioned previously, he had not received any formal coaching from them. Leslie, however, recalled having a few conversations with Paolo and debriefing his IDI with him. She said that Paolo was very different from Andre and speculated that they probably complement each other as co-instructors. She commented:

I remember thinking that [Paolo] was really different from [Andre]. [...] He seemed to be much more oriented toward structure. [...] I think [Paolo] is much more playful. So, in that sense, I think they're a good team.

Leslie also said, "I remember thinking that [Paolo] had a really unusually strong grasp on the theory early on in a way that is rare." She commented on how this might complement Andre's teaching style:

My sense of [Paolo] from the few conversations we've had is that he will not be as likely to take things lightly. And in that sense, I think he's a good complement for [Andre] because I think (...) if he felt like he didn't understand the theory, he would read the documents and try and ask questions....and try to make it as clear as he could.

Malik

As with Andre, three themes emerged with regards to Malik's involvement with the Seminar: 'Malik's history with the Seminar,' 'Malik's strengths,' and 'Malik's challenges.'

Malik's History with the Seminar

Like Andre, Malik had been teaching the Seminar since it was first offered. He had also received coaching from Leslie and Dr. Vande Berg in the past, but was not being coached during the semester in which I conducted this study.

Both Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie mentioned that Malik had a very difficult time with the Seminar in the beginning, but that he had improved dramatically and, on average, his students were making impressive gains on the IDI. For example, Leslie commented:

I know that in the beginning he had a really hard time. And at this point I would say he's probably the most successful of all of the teachers of this course...in terms of it seems he clearly and richly understands what we're doing, and in terms of the feedback that he gets from the students. So it's been remarkable to watch [Malik] go from the beginning.

Asked about what she felt helped Malik improve, Leslie responded:

I think [Malik] himself. I think he worked really, really hard to figure it out and learn it and try different things. And he took a lot of risks and—like, personally-speaking, in his teaching style—he was willing to say, ‘This isn’t working. What else could I do?’ and actually listen to suggestions from Mick [Dr. Vande Berg] or from me and try them out. I also think his first student group was kind of challenging, maybe more so than most of them. [...] But I think I would say most of the credit goes to [Malik] himself...just for working [very hard] to try to get it right.

Dr. Vande Berg talked about his experience coaching Malik and the instructor’s remarkable growth:

I took [Malik] on as (...) somebody to be among my list of people who were going to be coached. And it was *remarkable*. I mean, I could hear it. It was one of those times in coaching where I could literally hear him frame-shifting sometimes in conversations. It was amazing.

Dr. Vande Berg talked more specifically about his perceptions of Malik’s development during the first several semesters in which he was teaching the Seminar. He explained that Malik was originally a good, but very didactic, teacher. Dr. Vande Berg said he knew Malik “wasn’t going to (...) stumble suddenly into becoming an experiential teacher,” so he began working with him.

As a result:

Where [Malik] is now is he’s not really an experiential teacher, (...) but he is in a place where he’s become comfortable with a level of interactivity (...) in this sense: I think what [Malik] has become sensitive to is he has to pay attention to what’s happening to the learners. He has to respond to the learners. And that’s absolutely not what he was trained to do. [...] [Malik] was trained in a tradition that says it’s all about transfer of information; what counts here is whether I know the material. [...] So (...) he had to stop treating it as an abstraction and start (...) paying attention to individuals.

Dr. Vande Berg further commented:

[Malik] is in a *real* different space than he was when we started this project two-and-a-half years ago. [During] his semester with the coaching, [Malik] just turned it around. That second semester, [Malik's] students got eight or nine points of improvement on the IDI. And that's where [Malik] has stayed.

Malik's Strengths

Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie identified numerous strengths that Malik demonstrates as a Seminar instructor. For example, Leslie said Malik is “calm,” “humble,” and “thoughtful.” Both Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie described him as “intelligent” or “intellectual” and said they feel he has a strong understanding of the theory and “comes across as convincing.” Leslie explained some of the implications of this:

[Malik] has very clearly seen [the Seminar] as an integral part of his program. And because he understands the theory, I think he sees the potential for a different approach to students overall. So it's more holistic for [Malik]. [...] He can see the connections between what he's doing in the Seminar and what's happening with all of the students on the program in general. I think that's actually a crucial piece for instructors to be really successful.

In addition to understanding the theory, the administrators indicated Malik also understands the pedagogy of the Seminar. For example, Dr. Vande Berg commented, “[Malik] understands very well, conceptually, the idea of challenge and support, which is *so* fundamental to success in this kind of teaching.”

The administrators also discussed Malik's strengths in interacting with the Seminar participants. For example, Leslie commented:

I think he's also a good listener. So students sense that and they know (...) that he's willing to hear hard things that they might have to say about [the host country] or [host country nationals] and not freak out. So he walks (...) that line of rapport where he can challenge them or even let them feel like they're challenging him, which takes a lot of personal self confidence. That's a good thing.

Dr. Vande Berg discussed a strength that he felt Malik had gained during his experience teaching the Seminar:

What I sense is this: [Malik] is more at ease with himself; he's more centered; he's more authentic. You know, he doesn't look nervous; he's *there*. Boy, that's a powerful thing! If you bring that into a classroom situation, that's huge.

Dr. Vande Berg also said that one of Malik's strengths is that he is "a good example of somebody who is very coachable." He commented, "[Malik] is very, very willing. He's very, very collaborative." He further explained:

This is a very, very good quality for [Malik] as a teacher—he's a really, really good learner in the sense that he's flexible (...). When you change something from one semester to the next, he's fine with that. And he will listen to an explanation. [...] And it's not just because he's in some abstract way accommodating in his personality. It's that I think he's really genuinely interested in learning himself.

Malik's Challenges

When asked about Malik's challenges with regards to the Seminar, both Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie prefaced their answers by saying it had been awhile since they had worked with him. Leslie mentioned one of Malik's initial challenges with the Seminar:

I know that in the beginning he had a hard time with the experiential model. He was educated in the French tradition, which is even more distant and formal than the traditional U.S. Western or even British tradition. So I think he had a hard time adapting to that at first, and just seeing where the line was between being the instructor and being a guide or a coach...and even being a friend (...). [...] I think it's challenging for him to find a way to balance letting the students express themselves and knowing when to take control of the class. And I don't think that is particular to [Malik]; I think that's true for anybody who's teaching a class in which dialogue is a large part of it.

Leslie also mentioned how one of Malik's strengths might also present a challenge:

I think it can be frustrating for him that he has a very, very deep and rich understanding both of [the host] culture or cultures and U.S. American culture, but the students are coming in at such a shallow level. And sometimes it's hard because he wants to go deeper and talk with them about more abstract and complex approaches to understanding things that are happening. But he can't. He has to stay somewhat on the surface because he has to meet the students

where they are. And that's probably very hard for him because he sees so much more.

On several occasions, Dr. Vande Berg mentioned how busy Malik is and that this presents challenges in teaching the Seminar. He commented, "[Malik] is *extremely* busy. [...] My sense is that if [Malik] were able to focus more attention and energy on the Seminar, I think he'd be really, really good at it."

Dr. Vande Berg also commented that he felt Malik (as well as Andre) had more challenges surrounding his awareness of students' intercultural worldviews than he did with their learning styles. He explained:

[Malik] is very, very good at speaking intelligently about his perceptions of the students' learning styles. That he gets. [...] What he has a lot more trouble with is perceiving if somebody is in Minimization and not confusing that with personality characteristics. It's also true, by the way, of [Andre].

Lastly, Dr. Vande Berg also suggested on two different occasions that Malik may have difficulties addressing students' emotional needs. He explained:

I don't think (...) he's all that aware of the affective dimension outside people who are extremely important to him. [...] With the students, I don't think that's who he is at this point. And so (...) I think if I were to coach [Malik] at this point and work with him seriously, one of the things that I would try to work with him on is occasions for him to become more perceptive about other peoples' feelings...and to take that seriously, to take it *really* seriously, so that when students are distressed or uncomfortable, it's not a detrimental thing. [...] So I think that's maybe kind of a next challenge for [Malik].

To summarize, the administrators described Malik as someone who initially had difficulties with the Seminar and struggled with the experiential model, but said he had developed a great deal and had become one of the most successful instructors. They identified Malik's strengths as his intelligence and understanding of the theory as well as certain aspects of the pedagogy, the fact that he is rooted and sure enough of himself to be able to challenge the students and allow them to challenge him, and his interest in learning. On the other hand, the administrators said that Malik was challenged by the fact that he was extremely busy and could not dedicate as much time to the Seminar as he might like, and they also guessed that he likely still had difficulties sensing and addressing students' emotional needs.

Coaching

Another important topic that the administrators addressed is ‘Coaching.’ This refers to their own roles and experience in coaching the instructors of the Seminar. Three themes emerged in this category: ‘Evolution of Seminar coaching,’ ‘Assessing and addressing instructors’ knowledge gaps,’ and ‘Challenges of coaching.’ This last theme has several sub-themes as well, which are outlined in Table 28.

Table 28. Administrator Interviews: Coaching Category

‘Coaching’ Themes
• Evolution of Seminar coaching
• Assessing and addressing instructors’ knowledge gaps
• Challenges of coaching
○ Challenges of the medium
○ Train-the-trainer limitations
○ Negotiating cultural differences
○ Training someone to teach something you have not personally taught
○ Challenges around intercultural worldview

Evolution of Seminar Coaching

The administrators—particularly Dr. Vande Berg, but also Leslie—discussed the ‘Evolution of Seminar coaching.’ They explained that individual coaching had not been part of the original plan, discussed why they decided to start such coaching, and also talked about how their coaching methods had evolved over time.

Originally, Dr. Vande Berg explained, he started by conducting training abroad, which was for the benefit of the Seminar instructors, but also local teachers. He eventually realized, however, that although such training was helpful, “it clearly was not going to be enough to get people where they needed to go to be able to deliver the Seminar in the ways that I knew that it had to be delivered.” So after one semester, he decided to start individual coaching. At first the coaching was fairly unstructured, but over time became more structured. Dr. Vande Berg explained:

The conversations started off in a fairly unstructured way. [...] After a year of doing that, (...) I said, okay, let’s treat this as a formal teaching situation and come up with learning outcomes, and that will structure what it is that I believe that they have to do. [...] And we have a set of learning outcomes; there’s a goal that we now have when we sit down and we try to train somebody. And it’s

very outcomes-oriented. And it says in order to teach this Seminar well, the teacher will have to be able to know the following, and know how to do the following, and understand the following.

Dr. Vande Berg also referred to ways in which their coaching practices have continued to evolve:

One of the things that we're changing right now in the way we're doing coaching (...) [is] we're talking a lot more with people and asking people a lot more about their emotional experience in the classroom. Not just theirs, not that so much as what are they feeling from the students? How is that expressing itself?

The administrators recognized that this type of individualized coaching is a lot of work and that it would be difficult to expand the Seminar with only three coaches. Dr. Vande Berg explained:

In order to have this project be extended to all of our semester programs—which is where we're heading—we've got to bring in more trainers. [...] I mean, three people to do this much training is just absolutely not realistic.

For that reason, they had recently begun a “pilot within the pilot” by having approximately eight or nine experienced Seminar instructors (including Andre and Malik) begin to coach newer Seminar instructors. A discussion of that project is beyond the scope of this study, except to say that Dr. Vande Berg acknowledged that it presents numerous additional challenges.

Assessing and Addressing Instructors' Knowledge Gaps

Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie talked about the fact that an important part of coaching is ‘Assessing and addressing instructors' knowledge gaps.’ As discussed in a previous section, teaching the Seminar requires both theoretical and pedagogical understanding. Instructors come from a wide variety of backgrounds and so the coach's job is to assess the instructors' knowledge and skills in these areas and help fill in the holes. Leslie explained:

Some folks have lots and lots of teaching experience but don't know anything about things intercultural, other than their obvious life experience. Some folks have [a] background in intercultural training, but (...) it might be coming out of a different tradition than where we're coming from—in some ways that can be harder—but then they maybe don't have any teaching experience. So we're working always on two fronts. One is helping people understand how to teach experientially, which is new for almost everyone (...). [...] And then the other side is teaching of the theory—the intercultural stuff—which is difficult because

it can seem very obvious on the surface, but then it isn't really when you get into it.

Dr. Vande Berg emphasized the importance of helping instructors fill in the gaps in their pedagogical knowledge and skills:

The great majority of people coming into this project (...) don't have any personal experience with experiential approaches to teaching...or learning, for that matter. And so there are two different ways that this is a real challenge to try to train and coach people. [...] I think what is behind our training, ultimately, is helping people understand what it means to teach developmentally and to teach experientially... not only what it means, but how they can actually do that.

Furthermore, Leslie noted multiple types of awareness Seminar instructors need to have, and that the coaches need to assess and address any gaps in this regard:

And then there's like this double mindfulness [in that] the teacher has to be mindful of their teaching, where they stand interculturally, but then also try to be aware of where the students are as a group and even individually, which requires a pretty solid knowledge of how these things work. And very often one thing or another has a big hole in it in terms of their experience, their knowledge. So the challenge of it mainly is to try to figure out where the gaps are and help fill them in.

Challenges of Coaching

This last quote begins to hint at the next theme, which is 'Challenges of coaching.' The administrators identified five distinct challenges they have encountered when coaching the Seminar instructors: 'Challenges of the medium,' 'Train-the-trainer limitations,' 'Negotiating cultural differences,' 'Training someone to teach something you have not personally taught,' and 'Challenges around intercultural worldview.'

Challenges of the Medium

The coaching challenge administrators mentioned most often was that presented by the medium. That is, they felt challenged by the fact that they were coaching instructors from afar via telephone and Skype, rather than in person. For example, Margo, commented, "I tend to be a more face-to-face, person-to-person, active orientation learning [type]. And so doing this process

over Skype and phone is going to be a little bit challenging.” Similarly, Leslie said ideally she would prefer to train people in person:

We do trainings at our annual conference. [...] And there are some places where we visited and we actually did training in-person. And that was great. If I could do that all the time, that’s what I would do because I think it’s the most effective. But we have limits on our budget and time.

Both Leslie and Dr. Vande Berg mentioned that it is particularly challenging to train people to teach experientially from a distance. Leslie explained:

The idea of experiential learning in general is very difficult to communicate verbally. It’s easier to communicate if you can do actual training and put people through activities and things to make it clear. I think something fails when you try to just explain it, especially over internet or e-mail and in someone else’s second language and all of that.

For this very reason, CIEE had sent many Seminar instructors to workshops at the Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication (SIIC) (Intercultural Communication Institute, n.d.).

Dr. Vande Berg explained:

SIIC has become extremely important in this project. [...] Because what [instructors] need is the kind of grounding that we all need conceptually in this stuff, and they need a space in which people are operating experientially just to feel what that feels like. [...] Without that, boy, it’s really tough (...). There’s no substitute ultimately for that shared experience of learning in a situation like SIIC provides.

Dr. Vande Berg also mentioned that he and his colleagues were beginning to focus more on helping instructors become more perceptive of students’ feelings, and that this was particularly difficult to do one-on-one and via this type of coaching medium. In discussing a workshop he had recently co-led, Dr. Vande Berg commented:

We did a workshop focused specifically on the affective and the sensorial, or behavioral, aspects. [...] One of the takeaways for me from that event was we’re 25 people who are cooking within the context of 25 people. The reason it got to where it got to was because there were 25 people (...) on the same mission. But if you’re going to deal with affect, it’s *so* much easier to do it in a group context than it is individual. So it’s those ways that I’m feeling the limitations of coaching.

Train-the-Trainer Limitations

In addition to challenges related to the medium, the administrators also discussed several challenges inherent to the train-the-trainer model. Dr. Vande Berg commented, “I’m satisfied in some respects with where our training is going. But I’ve also come to the point where I recognize some of the inherent limitations of a project like this.” He elaborated by discussing an interview he once conducted with interculturalists Janet and Milton Bennett about a teacher-training project they ran:

So [Janet and Milton Bennett] were doing training of teachers and the teachers were doing pre-departure training of students. And so it was a very complex thing. [...] A couple of things that both of them told me at the time, when I interviewed them—and I think this is really an important point—is that the person who creates the course, if they’re a good teacher themselves—if they’re a good trainer—they’ll get maximum performance out of that. The people that they are training, even if they are good trainers, there’s a drop-off in performance. It’s one of the real, real sobering parts about doing what we do for a job.

Leslie provided an example of this “drop-off in performance” when she discussed the complex goals that underlie one particular Seminar lesson plan. After explaining the aim of the stereotypes lesson, she commented:

But I think (...) sometimes I’ve failed in communicating that to the instructor, and then the instructor, of course, doesn’t communicate it to the students. And then the students are like, ‘Well why are we talking about stereotypes? We all know they’re bad.’

With regards to the train-the-trainer limitations, Dr. Vande Berg drew a parallel with his past experience teaching writing. He explained:

One of the conclusions that I drew is that in working with students, I could help someone become a *competent* writer. I could not normally help someone become a *great* writer. [...] If somebody became a great writer, I had to admit that while what I could do was raise them to the level of competence, I probably couldn’t go beyond a certain point; that the rest of it they had to bring to the table themselves. And, so, that’s an awareness that for me has grown in the last year a lot. [...] After a certain amount of coaching and training, [the instructors] are going to

have to do it themselves. They're going to have to engage the material (...) [and] figure out whether or not they want to go through the hard work of getting better at this. So that's one *big* realization for me this year.

Negotiating Cultural Differences

Another coaching challenge discussed by the administrators is that of 'Negotiating cultural differences.' Leslie, as well as Dr. Vande Berg, mentioned several challenges caused by the cultural differences between themselves and the instructors they were coaching. For example, Leslie commented:

There are cultural differences—huge cultural differences sometimes—with regards to educational culture or even hierarchy and communication. I have one person I work with who (...) is very cognizant of U.S. versus Latin American relations and is very suspicious of anything that smacks of imperialism. And anything where I'm trying to guide her smacks of imperialism. Not just me personally, but the whole project in general. And yet she's also very enthusiastic about the idea. So negotiating that can be very challenging. And I don't mean that specific case, but I just mean negotiating the idea that here we are as your American bosses telling you the American way to teach and the American approach to intercultural studies. [...] So that's a big challenge in some cases, although I would say the minority.

Leslie also mentioned cultural differences in communication style. She explained:

I work with folks in China for whom direct communication isn't always the best way of approaching a subject. But that's (...) how I normally communicate. So I have to think more strategically about how to talk with them about their challenges, or even find out what their challenges are because they might be more loathe to tell me what they are. Or they might say something indirect that seems to them direct but I'll miss because I'm not tuned in to what they're trying to say.

Training Someone to Teach Something You Have Not Personally Taught

A minor, yet still significant sub-theme with regard to the challenges of coaching is 'Training someone to teach something you have not personally taught.' Both Leslie and Margo

said the fact they had not previously taught the Seminar or a similar course presented challenges when coaching. Margo explained:

I've had a lot of experience in experiential education and intercultural education and orientations and ongoing orientations, but not in the Seminar specifically. So I am anticipating that both the pedagogical and the theoretical coaching for me will be a little bit challenging in that regard because I haven't had personal experience with it yet.

Similarly, Leslie commented, "I decided last year that I didn't want to talk about teaching it anymore without teaching it myself." So when someone asked her if she could teach a course in a Global Studies certificate program at a local high school, Leslie said she jumped at the opportunity and basically taught a condensed version of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad.

Challenges around Intercultural Worldview

One last sub-theme, which was mentioned only by Leslie yet still seems qualitatively significant, is 'Challenges around intercultural worldview.' In talking about the challenges of the Seminar, Leslie brought up the role of the instructor's intercultural worldview, particularly in comparison to the intercultural worldview of the students or the coach:

If [an instructor] is, relatively speaking, not as interculturally developed, then of course it's more difficult to help them learn how to work with students, especially students who are more developed than they are. That's very tricky... politically and personally. And even for me, working with someone who might be at my level [of intercultural development] or higher—(...) I can kind of see where we want them to go, but I can't necessarily help them more than they can help themselves; I can only act as a mirror.

In summary, coaching Seminar instructors involves numerous challenges. Most significant are the challenges of coaching from afar, rather than in-person, and the inherent limitations of the train-the-trainer model. Administrators also mentioned challenges related to cultural differences, intercultural worldview, and training someone to teach something they had not personally taught.

Curriculum

Another category about which the administrators spoke is ‘Curriculum.’ This category includes two themes: ‘Most successful aspects of the curriculum’ and ‘Least successful aspects of the curriculum.’

Table 29. Administrator Interviews: Curriculum Category

‘Curriculum’ Themes
• Most successful aspects of the curriculum
• Least successful aspects of the curriculum

Most Successful Aspects of the Curriculum

The administrators offered their perspectives on what they feel are the ‘Most successful aspects of the curriculum.’ Lessons and activities that were mentioned by at least two administrators include the Cultural Detective (Hofner Saphiere, 2004), the learning styles lesson (which includes taking Kolb’s Learning Styles Inventory and doing and discussing several related activities), and an activity where students write up and analyze critical incidents from their own experience. Other lessons and activities also mentioned include the obvious/curious photo activity discussed in a previous section, the Describe–Interpret–Evaluate activity also referred to earlier, a lesson on cultural dimensions, a lesson about being a global citizen, and a mock interview activity.

About the Cultural Detective (Hofner Saphiere, 2004), Leslie said it “usually works well because it’s very clear and easy to follow, especially for new people.” Margo also described the Cultural Detective as “a huge success,” explaining:

I think it’s in some ways because it comes early in the curriculum and students are just so hungry for the culture-specific stuff. Like, ‘Help! Give me the lenses through which this culture sees things and functions and the values that (...) underpin the culture.’

Both Leslie and Margo commented that the learning styles lesson goes particularly well. Margo said she feels “it’s very accessible to students” and the follow-up activity to the LSI “tends to render pretty affirming results.” Leslie added, “The learning styles class works *really* well pretty much every time and for everyone. Because (...) once they take the LSI and they do that activity, it’s very rare for a person not to kind of buy into the idea.”

About the critical incidents activity, which comes toward the end of the semester, Leslie said, “It’s supposed to be sort of a capstone activity. Once they’ve got all their concepts and skills under their belts, the idea is to apply all of those things in the critical incident class. Usually that works pretty well.” Margo also commented:

The process of critical incident creation and reflection is something that students talked about being really helpful for them. When I was [on a site visit], I talked to some students about that and they said they kind of started to...in some ways live their everyday life as a series of critical incidents. And somehow even just the process of labeling something as, ‘Oh, this is one of those incidents. Okay, now what should I do about that? What does that mean for the way I should think or react?’, that has been good.

With regards to other activities, Margo mentioned, “The D-I-E activity is really successful.” She added, “It’s a great visceral, tangible way of suspending judgment.” Leslie also commented:

The global citizens class always goes well too. [...] I mean, it’s a pretty straightforward thing. We read an article and they talk about it. And everybody’s got something to say about that because it’s kind of personal. Like, ‘Why are you on study abroad? And do you deserve to be there?’ That’s a pretty intense question. So...it’s good.

Least Successful Aspects of the Curriculum

The administrators also mentioned some of the ‘Least successful aspects of the curriculum,’ although they did not have nearly as much to say about this as they did about the most successful aspects. Both Margo and Leslie discussed challenges with the lesson on stereotypes versus cultural generalizations. Margo explained:

Stereotypes—from my conversations with [Resident Directors] informally, they’ve talked about a certain resistance from certain students. Oftentimes the students choosing to take the Seminar are students who have done some aspect of equality training (...) and they feel somehow (...) like, ‘Check. I’ve got those done. I’ve figured stereotypes out.’

Similarly, Leslie commented:

The stereotypes class we’ve struggled with. [...] It’s very difficult to convince people that they don’t already know what’s wrong with using stereotypes. So

kids hear it and they're like, 'Oh yeah, stereotypes are bad. I don't stereotype.' And so you have to do all this pre-work to show folks how stereotypes work and how engrained they are in everyday life. And also (...) the issue is not so much that they're bad because they're not nice, which is true, but also the effect of stereotyping on your perceptive processes. And that's what we're really trying to get across.

Somehow though, Leslie said, this message was often not successfully communicated to the instructors and therefore did not reach the students.

The only other lesson or activity cited as not particularly successful is the class about frame-shifting, which was mentioned by Leslie. She explained:

The frame-shifting class—which is values in context—I have heard people have a hard time with that. I'm not sure exactly why. I think because it's quite abstract. Although it's meant to be concrete in the sense that they're finding concrete examples of abstract concepts.

Administrators' Conclusions About the Seminar

The final category from the interviews with the administrators is 'Administrators' conclusions about the Seminar.' This includes the administrators' overarching or concluding thoughts about the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. There are four themes within this category: 'Good curriculum necessary but insufficient condition for success,' 'Issues of student pushback and the importance of marketing,' 'Assessment,' and 'Impacts of the Seminar.'

Table 30. Administrator Interviews: Administrators' Conclusions about the Seminar Category

'Administrators' Conclusions about the Seminar' Themes
• Good curriculum necessary but insufficient condition for success
• Issues of student pushback and the importance of marketing
• Assessment
• Impacts of the Seminar

Good Curriculum Necessary but Insufficient Condition for Success

Both Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie talked about the fact that initially the main objective was simply to create a strong Seminar curriculum, with the assumption that on-site staff could then teach the Seminar independently. They eventually realized, however, that more was required. A good curriculum was a necessary but insufficient condition for success. Leslie explained:

In the beginning, when we first developed this stuff, Mick [Dr. Vande Berg] was very worried about letting the curriculum go public because our competitors might copy us or whatever. And then gradually we realized there was *absolutely* no danger in doing that because the training involved is just so profound and long-term that (...) *that* is the challenge. The challenge is not developing the curriculum; it's in the training of the folks who teach it. And that much became clear after about a year.

Dr. Vande Berg emphasized this lesson as well when asked his final thoughts about the Seminar.

He explained:

The importance of the curriculum here is *real*. [...] And yet, the field, I think, has a (...) very bad habit of believing that this is primarily a curricular challenge. [...] One of the things that this project brings home to me hugely is that yes, you absolutely have to have [a good curriculum], but it's a necessary and not a sufficient condition. [...] [A strong curriculum] is really, really important. But once you've got that, you have to have people who can teach it in ways that will actually benefit people. I think [that's] a huge lesson. And (...) all of us who are doing this kind of work, I think it's really important that we say that. I don't think you can say it often enough or loudly enough.

Issues of Student Pushback and the Importance of Marketing

Another theme that emerged in this category is 'Issues of student pushback and the importance of marketing.' Both Dr. Vande Berg and Leslie discussed student resistance to the Seminar, which they said was especially acute during the early semesters of the project. In addition, Dr. Vande Berg talked at length about the "sobering" reality of how students typically perceive a course such as the Seminar and how this highlights the importance of marketing. He explained:

Coming into this, what I imagined is that we would come up with a project that would benefit all the [CIEE] students going abroad. [...] [But] in requiring this as a one-credit course (...) the first semester, boy did the teachers get kicked in the teeth. It was really quite extraordinary. [...] Unfortunately (...) a majority of students push back pretty hard when you try to push this at them. [...] And I think that's a tough lesson, but it's a really important lesson for the field to

understand that a lot of the success that any of us will have doing this kind of work depends on our ability to market this to our students.

Dr. Vande Berg also added:

Moving down the road, the success of this ultimately has to do with how successful we are helping students understand that it's in their best interest to take a course in which they have no interest. [...] This is not why students go abroad, let's face it. [...] So the original idea that I came into this with is unrealistic. So really the issue has become can we help *some* of the students learn and develop more effectively than would have been the case if we didn't offer this.

As Dr. Vande Berg concluded, "Those of us who are trying to do this on a large scale (...)—that challenge of getting students into the classes, boy it's a tough one."

Assessment

A third theme in this category is 'Assessment.' Both Margo and Leslie emphasized the need for additional assessment measures, yet recognized the complications of trying to assess learning outcomes in such a course. Margo explained:

I feel (...) that we need to expand our assessment and evaluative tools. And the challenge (...) is how do you set a specific outcome when students are arriving to the table with such diverse orientations and backgrounds that have led them to those orientations? So setting an outcome such as 'I will be able to adapt to a culture-specific dimension' may be inaccessible to students who are, for example, in Denial or Polarization. It's just such a level of personal development that the Seminar is really focusing on.

Similarly, Leslie commented:

Really the only assessment practice we use is to look at the IDI scores, which I think is a little limiting...a lot limiting, actually. [...] And all along I've said I thought we need measures other than the IDI, but logistically it's very difficult.

Impacts of the Seminar

Lastly, the administrators discussed how the Seminar was impacting them, the students, the instructors, and even the programs and organization on a broader level. Margo, for example, commented on her own growth, along with that of the instructors:

Certainly in my process of learning about the Seminar and the theories that underpin it, there's a certain level of personal growth that's making me a better teacher, really. And I think that [the instructors] are experiencing that as well. It's led to some of their own personal reflections as well as an improved Seminar and intercultural experience for their students.

Dr. Vande Berg commented, "It's very satisfying to work with people and to see them (...) learn how to do this, and to do it well, and to have their students benefit from it. I mean that's pretty incredible."

The administrators also talked more specifically about how they felt the Seminar was benefiting students. For example, Leslie commented, "Just having a cultural mentor who can help you interpret things is invaluable. And that's one of the main great things about the Seminar beyond anything else, is just the students having access to those kinds of conversations." Dr. Vande Berg emphasized the students' IDI gains, explaining, "If you look at the top half dozen or so programs that are running right now, it's very impressive. The gains are up in the order of nine, nine-and-a-half points." He added, "One of the Resident Directors (...) just had an improvement of—he only had eight or nine students—but it was an improvement of fifteen points on the IDI. That's truly extraordinary."

Margo also touched on some broader impacts of the Seminar, commenting, "I think (...) this process of facilitation and intervention is not by any means limited to the Seminar course itself, but it seems to be overflowing into other aspects of the program, which I think is exciting." She offered an example and further explanation:

Some of the instructors being recently trained at the [annual CIEE] conference in Philadelphia on the Seminar said, 'Wow, I'd love to use some of these materials with my host families.' And they start to think, 'Oh, I'd really like to do this with our core faculty. I'd love for them to start thinking in these terms.' [...] Sort of just opening up windows of how intercultural development could be addressed to varying degrees in other program components—housing, teaching, internal staffing thoughts. You know, how does it apply to our organization as a whole? To the ways that we interact with our own staff all around the world? [...] So I guess those are sort of the ripple effects that have potential as well.

To summarize this final category, one of the biggest lessons the administrators said they had learned is that while it is important to have a strong curriculum, even more critical to the Seminar's success is the training of the instructors. The administrators also came to realize over

time that many students are resistant to attempts to facilitate their intercultural development; therefore, marketing is fundamental to the success of a project such as this one. The administrators also suggested additional means of assessment are needed, but recognized this type of learning and development is challenging to assess effectively. Lastly, the administrators said they felt the Seminar was positively impacting students, instructors, and themselves, and the effects even seemed to be overflowing into other aspects of the programs and organization.

CHAPTER VI: DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine the process of facilitating students' intercultural learning and development during study abroad. I conducted a mixed-methods case study of CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad at two different sites during the fall 2010 semester. I collected students' pre-/post-semester Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) scores, as well as IDI data from the three instructors. I also observed the Seminar at each location two to three times and interviewed the participants, instructors, and administrators. In doing so, I sought to address the following research questions:

1. In what ways does a study abroad intervention affect students' intercultural development?
 - a. What aspects of the intervention do the administrators, instructors, and students each consider the most supportive of intercultural development? What aspects do they consider the most challenging?
 - b. Regarding intercultural development, what are the administrators', instructors', and students' perceptions of the role of the following four specific aspects of the intervention: the milieu, the instructor, the students, and the curriculum?
2. Apart from the intervention itself, what other aspects of the experience do the students consider to be supportive of their intercultural development?

In this chapter, I summarize the findings with regards to these research questions and relate these to the existing literature and research. First, I review the major findings from the students' IDI data. Second, I discuss some of the most salient findings from the qualitative data. Of particular note is the fact that a book was recently published on student learning abroad and study abroad interventions (Vande Berg, Paige, & Lou, 2012b). It not only highlights the timeliness and importance of this topic, but also supports and reinforces many of the findings from this study. Relevant points from that book are incorporated throughout this chapter.

Summary of Quantitative Findings

The results from the students' pre- and post-semester IDI scores address the first broad research question: In what ways does a study abroad intervention affect students' intercultural development?

One of the most notable findings from the quantitative data is that *the majority of students in this study gained significantly more on the IDI than would be expected if they were not participating in a study abroad intervention*. Twelve out of 16 students posted gains, and eight of those students had a change score of ten or more points (on the IDI's 90-point continuum). Ten students gained more than 20% of their Achievable Progress (AP). All of the students who started the semester with a monocultural mindset moved up an entire worldview, with an impressive average gain of 17.98 points. The average change score across the two sites was 6.73. In comparison, in the Georgetown Consortium Project (GCP) study (Vande Berg et al., 2009), study abroad participants averaged a 2.37-point gain on the IDI. Some of these students, however, had received an intervention in the form of intercultural instruction; when their scores were removed, the average gain dropped to 1.32 (Vande Berg, 2011). In other words, the average IDI change score for students in this study who were participating in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad was approximately five times larger than that of the students in the GCP study who were not participating in an intervention. Thus, this study demonstrates an intervention such as the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad can have a significant and positive impact on participants' intercultural development.

A second major finding from the quantitative data is that *there were significant differences between the two sites, with students in Africa posting larger, more consistent gains*. The average IDI change score in Africa (8.32) is not only statistically significant, it is also substantially larger than that demonstrated by students at the Western Europe site (3.23). In fact, the average change score in Western Europe was less than two points higher than that of study abroad participants in the GCP study (Vande Berg et al., 2009) who were not participating in a formal intervention. Nine out of 11 students in Africa gained, whereas only three out of five students in Western Europe gained. In Africa, five students gained over 30% of their Achievable Progress (AP), whereas no one in Western Europe gained more than 25% AP. Furthermore, the students' scores in Western Europe became much more homogeneous over the course of the semester, with all of the students converging around low- to mid-Minimization by the semester's end.

The differences in IDI gains between these two sites could be due to a number of factors, such as student differences and/or the cultural context. For example, Seminar participants at the Africa site began the semester with a significantly higher average IDI score (102.21) than those in Western Europe (90.39). The fact that these students chose a more culturally different location, as well as the actual cultural context itself, could perhaps predispose them to greater intercultural

development. While there are a number of factors that could have contributed to the difference in intercultural gains, there is also the possibility that the Seminar was more effective in facilitating students' intercultural development at the site in Africa than it was in Western Europe. This could be due to the fact the instructor in Africa more closely followed the Seminar curriculum and/or because he was more intentional about teaching around the experiential learning cycle and to students' intercultural worldviews. Another possibility is that students in Africa learned more because they experienced a more optimal balance between the challenge of the cultural milieu and the support provided by having a place to debrief their experience, namely the Seminar. These possibilities will be discussed in greater depth in the summary of the qualitative findings.

A third finding with regards to the IDI is that *all of the students who regressed began the semester in Minimization, which has been identified as a "transitional" stage* (Hammer, 2009, 2012). This supports and adds to an earlier finding made by Hammer (n.d.) in his assessment of the impact of the high school study abroad experience. In that study, Hammer reported that such an experience "has a significant impact with students that begin the program in more Ethnocentric (less intercultural competent) stages and has little impact on students who begin the program in the more developed stage of Minimization" (p. 4). Hammer's study did not include a sufficient number of students who started the program in Acceptance or Adaptation to make claims about the impact on such students. While the number of students participating in the present study is also limited, it is nonetheless noteworthy—particularly given Hammer's previous findings—that all of the students who began in the more monocultural orientations (in this case, Polarization) and intercultural orientations (Acceptance and Adaptation) gained on the IDI, while the only students who regressed were those who started in the transitional stage of Minimization. This suggests it may be more challenging to help individuals in Minimization develop their intercultural sensitivity compared to those who hold other intercultural worldviews.

Summary of Qualitative Findings

In this section, I discuss the most prominent qualitative findings, which address the more in-depth research questions 1a and 1b, as well as question two. Appendix 7 includes a side-by-side comparison of the themes and sub-themes (although not sub-sub-themes) that emerged from the student, instructor, and administrator interviews. This chart highlights some of the most important themes from this study and helped inform the writing of this section.

The Role of Cultural Mentoring in Balancing Challenge and Support

With regards to research question number two, the aspect of the experience that students resoundingly identified as the most supportive of their intercultural development was the homestay experience. However, the way in which students talked about their homestay—as well as the experience abroad in general—was qualitatively different at the two sites. Perhaps not surprisingly, the students in Africa felt much more challenged by the homestay and the broader experience. This was in large part due to the more drastic and obvious cultural differences—especially regarding race and gender, but also religion and language—which were mentioned by both the students and the instructor. In comparison, only one student in Western Europe spoke at any length about challenges she was experiencing. It is critical to note, however, that although the students in Africa spoke extensively about the difficulties they faced, they described these in largely positive terms. They recognized these challenges as learning experiences.

This finding is particularly interesting when considered in conjunction with the IDI findings previously outlined, and compared to findings from the Georgetown Consortium Project (GCP) study (Vande Berg et al., 2009) with regards to challenge and support in study abroad. For example, as mentioned in chapter two, the GCP study found that study abroad participants who described their host culture as “somewhat dissimilar” or “dissimilar” had larger IDI gains than students who described the host culture as “very similar,” “similar,” or “very dissimilar.” The study also found that students who lived with other students from the United States showed statistically significant gains in intercultural learning, whereas those who lived with a host family did not (Vande Berg et al., 2009). Vande Berg et al. suggest that the challenge/support hypothesis (Sanford, 1966) provides a way of interpreting these data sets, explaining that too much challenge—such as that presented by a highly dissimilar culture or the extensive immersion of a homestay—may be counterproductive to students’ intercultural learning and development. The authors also state that these and other findings from their study “provide (...) indicators of the critically important role that on-site cultural mentors can play in helping students balance intercultural challenges with appropriate and timely forms of support” (Vande Berg et al., 2009, p. 26).

In the study at hand, the comments from the students in Africa suggest they would classify their host culture as very dissimilar; furthermore, they were all participating in homestays. The fact that they talk about the challenges they faced in relatively positive terms and that nine out of 11 of these students made significant gains on the IDI provides substantial

evidence in favor of Vande Berg et al.'s claim that on-site cultural mentoring can provide the necessary support to balance such a challenging situation and thus encourage students' learning.

Teaching the Seminar More Challenging than Expected

Another important finding from this study is that teaching a study abroad intervention such as the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad can be extremely challenging for numerous reasons. As discussed in chapter two, an intercultural seminar of this nature requires a different set of skills than those that are required to teach most other types of courses. This became evident through the interviews with the Seminar instructors and administrators.

This study found that Seminar instructors need to understand not only the intercultural concepts and theory they are teaching, but also need to understand and be able to effectively apply the pedagogical underpinnings of the course. That means they have to know how to teach developmentally, holistically, experientially, and in a way that balances challenge and support. With regards to teaching developmentally, they need to understand the Intercultural Development Continuum and be able to tailor their approach to individual students according to their intercultural worldview. In terms of teaching holistically, instructors need to be able to effectively incorporate cognitive, behavioral, and affective forms of learning into their teaching. Teaching experientially means not just creating an interactive environment, but actively helping students move through the cycle of experiential learning—from having an experience to reflecting on that experience, connecting that to concepts and theory to pull meaning from it, and applying what has been learned through new experiences. All of this must be tailored to each individual student so that each one experiences the right mix of challenge and support to facilitate his or her intercultural learning and development. This can be incredibly challenging for instructors, especially given this is in addition to the regular responsibilities of their position, often as a Resident Director.

It is perhaps not surprising then that while this study demonstrates the importance of skilled facilitation in a study abroad intervention, it also suggests there can be a relatively large learning curve for instructors teaching a course such as the Seminar. This was discussed by both the instructors and the administrators. This is due, at least in part, to the fact that the instructors are coming in with different backgrounds and often have a knowledge gap in at least one area necessary for teaching the Seminar. Dr. Vande Berg specifically said that he does not expect to see much in the way of student IDI gains until the instructor has had at least a year of experience teaching the Seminar.

The Student-Driven versus Curriculum-Driven Conundrum: Balancing Student Interests and Learner Needs

Another important finding from this study has to do with the difference in the way the instructors at the two sites imparted the Seminar. This was discussed by the students and instructors at both sites and it is particularly interesting to note how their perspectives compare.

In Western Europe, the students described the Seminar as highly “student-centered.” More specifically, they felt the atmosphere was very informal and the Seminar was primarily a place where they could come together with their peers and directors to discuss their experiences. Similarly, the instructors in Western Europe described the Seminar as very “student-driven.” They emphasized participation, enjoyment, and friendliness. Students’ interests and discussion of their experiences often took precedence over following the designated curriculum.

Regarding the course pedagogy, the instructors in Western Europe only loosely followed the pedagogical framework of the course, as evidenced by their focusing more on teaching to their students’ preferred learning styles than teaching around the experiential learning cycle and by their taking a more general approach when it came to teaching to students’ intercultural orientations.

On the other hand, the students in Africa described the Seminar as more “teacher-centered” and called the instructor’s approach “curriculum-driven” or “agenda-driven.” They said they desired more sharing, discussion, and group reflection, particularly so that they could better connect the theory and concepts to their own experiences. The instructor in Africa, however, said he tried to balance the need to cover the curriculum with the students’ desire to discuss their experiences. In other words, he tried to walk the line between being overly curriculum-driven versus overly student-driven. The discrepancy between the students’ description of the instructor’s approach and his own perception of it suggests that while the instructor in Africa worked to try to follow the outlined curriculum and help students use the theory and concepts to make sense of their own experiences, the students either did not recognize this attempt at balance or they simply wanted to focus even more on discussion than on the theory and concepts. However, as discussed in chapter two, Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) suggests just having an experience and discussing it is insufficient; students need to have the concepts and theories necessary to make meaning of those experiences. The instructor in Africa appeared to understand this, since he commented that students do not always know what is best

for their learning. At least one student (Josh) recognized this as well, stating, “Oftentimes what’s better is what’s harder.”

The instructor in Africa also appeared to follow the pedagogical framework of the Seminar more closely than the instructors in Western Europe; he talked about teaching around the experiential learning cycle and teaching to students’ individual intercultural orientations. In other words, he was paying attention to what he felt (and the curriculum suggested) the learners needed in order to develop interculturally as opposed to focusing on what the students wanted the Seminar to be.

A comparison of the students’ IDI results across these two sites suggests which approach might be more effective. As mentioned earlier, the average IDI change score for students in Western Europe was not much higher than might be expected of study abroad participants not enrolled in an intervention of this kind. This suggests that an overemphasis on discussion of students’ experiences and catering to the students’ interests may not necessarily produce the desired results. As reported previously, the IDI results of students at the Africa site were significantly better than those of the students at the Western Europe site. Of course, this study cannot prove whether or not the method of Seminar instruction is causally related to the students’ IDI results. The difference in intercultural development could stem from a whole host of things, from the students themselves to the cultural milieu to other program components. Nonetheless, it seems worthy of note that the instructor who adhered more closely to the curriculum as well as the pedagogical framework of the Seminar seemed to be more successful in achieving the goals of the course. Thus, this study suggests that while it is important to help students connect the concepts and theories from a course such as the Seminar to their own personal experiences, instructors should be careful not to allow the course to become so focused on discussing students’ experiences that the theory and concepts that help students make sense of those experiences are neglected. In addition, these findings support the use of the challenge/support hypothesis, Experiential Learning Theory and Kolb’s Experiential Learning Cycle, and the Intercultural Development Continuum in study abroad interventions. These theories have also recently received similar support from other accounts of study abroad interventions (for example, see L. Engle & Engle, 2012).

Importance of Having Skilled Facilitators

The challenges of teaching a course such as the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad that were just discussed highlight the incredible importance of having skilled instructors doing

this work. This study found that, contrary to what the creators of the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad assumed from the outset, the success of this project depended on much more than a strong curriculum. What they found was that a good curriculum is a necessary but insufficient condition for success. Just providing this curriculum to on-site staff and expecting them to impart it and for it to positively impact students' intercultural development was not enough. Much more important was the need to provide instructors with extensive training—in this case primarily in the form of ongoing, individual coaching—so that they would have the theoretical and pedagogical understanding necessary to teach such a course.

This finding was recently reported by Vande Berg, Quinn, and Menyhart (2012) in a chapter that discusses the development of CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. In that chapter, they explain that the original plan focused on the curriculum and did not include a coaching element. However, as the project progressed, they began to realize that "most instructors struggle in learning to teach a course that is experiential, developmental, and holistic" (p. 396). As a result, they report they have since come to understand that "the key to unlocking the Seminar's success lies in individually coaching each instructor" (Vande Berg, Quinn et al., 2012, p. 399).

Recent research and literature on other study abroad interventions also highlights how critical it is to have skilled facilitators. For example, in their review of the University of Minnesota's Maximizing Study Abroad (MAXSA) project, which led to the development of an online course designed to facilitate students' learning while abroad, Paige, Harvey, and McCleary (2012) declare, "One of the major lessons learned from the MAXSA project is [that] a rigorous intercultural curriculum is a necessary but insufficient condition for fostering student learning and development during study abroad. Skilled facilitation is the key" (p. 309). Lou and Bosley (2012), who created the online study abroad intervention at Willamette and Bellarmine universities that was discussed in chapter two, decided to experiment one semester by letting the students "self-guide" through the assignments, receiving only minimal supervision from the instructor. Although the average IDI gain for this unfacilitated group (3.51) was slightly higher than the baseline measure provided by the GCP study (in which students not participating in an intervention averaged 1.32 points), it was much lower than the average for students in the regular facilitated version of the same online course (8.08). As a result, Lou and Bosley conclude, "We can suggest that the key element in an intervention strategy is the instructor/facilitator. [...] In short, the more facilitation each student receives, the better" (p. 355).

Reaching Students Is More Difficult than Expected

Another lesson that can be learned from the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad is that it is more difficult than expected to reach students and get them to willingly participate in an intervention like this. Originally the Seminar was intended to reach all students enrolled in CIEE study abroad programs, but it was soon discovered that many students push back against a program that attempts to intervene in their intercultural learning, especially if participation is mandatory. This is similar to what was experienced at the University of Minnesota, where “there was considerable opposition to the mandatory nature of [the Maximizing Study Abroad intervention]” and the course was also quickly changed to an elective (Paige et al., 2012, p. 325). Of course, if such intervention courses are not mandatory, the issue of self-selection arises and the students who are in most need of such a course are the least likely to enroll.

Seminar Positively Impacting Students

CIEE has obviously made a major commitment to and investment in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad in the hopes it would contribute to student learning and development. This study provides positive evidence—both quantitative and qualitative—that the Seminar is achieving that goal. While the IDI data affirms that participants are indeed developing interculturality, the qualitative data sheds light on why and how that is happening. The students, instructors, and administrators all discussed ways in which they see the Seminar positively impacting student learning.

The students, for example, said they were benefiting from the Seminar because it forced them to step back and reflect on their experience while it was happening, gave them a space in which they could discuss what they were going through, and provided them with frameworks through which to examine the experience. In addition, participants reported the Seminar was helping them process and more effectively engage the experience. Students said they had increased their self-awareness and gained skills that helped them suspend judgment. Furthermore, they said the Seminar helped push them to be curious, try to understand why things were the way they were in the local culture, and view their experiences from another perspective.

The instructors also spoke about the positive ways in which the Seminar impacted their students. In Western Europe, the instructors said the Seminar helped increase participants’ understanding of the local culture, which caused them to complain less than their peers not

enrolled in the Seminar. The instructor in Africa said the Seminar helped his students cope with and adjust to the cultural differences they experienced.

The administrators' perspective on the Seminar's impact on students was, perhaps not surprisingly, further removed and based primarily on IDI results, yet was also very positive. This highlights the fact that the administrators are at a level once removed from the end-users of the Seminar, the students.

Teaching the Seminar has a Profound Impact on Instructors

Another finding is that teaching the Seminar has a very positive effect on the instructors. Instructors said they felt teaching the Seminar had helped them develop their own intercultural sensitivity, and a comparison of their IDI scores from when they started teaching and when this study was conducted strongly supports that claim. All three instructors moved up at least one intercultural worldview between when they started teaching the Seminar and the time of this study, and they all managed to cross the difficult 115-point threshold into the more intercultural mindsets of Acceptance and Adaptation. Vande Berg, Quinn, and Menyhart (2012) recently reported that when 30 instructors who had taught the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad for at least two semesters completed the IDI for a second time, they improved their scores by an average of 14.54 points. The authors write, "The data suggest, then, that an effective way for instructors to develop interculturality is to engage actively and regularly with students who are themselves focusing on their own intercultural development—and to do this while being coached to teach experientially, developmentally and holistically" (p. 404).

Not only did teaching the Seminar affect the instructors' intercultural development, they also said it positively impacted how they interacted with their students, how they taught other courses, and even how they considered training their staff. At least one of the administrators noted similar "ripple effects" resulting from the instructors' experiences teaching the Seminar.

Importance of Including the Affective Aspect

Another, perhaps less obvious, finding that emerged, particularly in Africa, is the importance of the affective aspect in a course such as the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. Dr. Vande Berg emphasized that the Seminar must be taught in a way that is holistic, including cognitive, behavioral, and affective learning. Much of the literature on intercultural training supports this idea (M. Bennett & Castiglioni, 2004; Ward, 2004). Students in Africa demonstrated how badly they needed the affective component in particular when they talked

about some of the cultural challenges they faced and said they really wanted the Seminar to be a place where they could work through these issues together. This was likely related to the fact that the cultural milieu was much more challenging and intense for the students in Africa than for their peers in Western Europe.

Importance of Creating an Intimate Atmosphere

Another finding—one that although relatively minor is particularly significant with regards to practice—concerns the Seminar context. Both students and instructors highlighted the importance of creating a sense of intimacy in the Seminar through class size and configuration. They emphasized the need to keep the group relatively small and create an inclusive, intimate atmosphere by sitting in a circle or similar.

Conclusion

To conclude this section, I briefly summarize how the major findings address the original research questions. I also highlight an unexpected, yet important, finding that was revealed through the research.

1) In what ways does a study abroad intervention affect students' intercultural development?

Arguably one of the most important findings from this study is that the students participating in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad at these two sites made significantly greater gains in their intercultural sensitivity than would be expected if they were not participating in a study abroad intervention. This adds to the growing evidence that intervening in students' learning abroad can produce better results than immersion alone. It provides support for the argument that the study abroad field needs to reject the idea that most students will learn and develop as much as we would like simply by being exposed to or immersed in another culture; instead, as Vande Berg, Paige, and Lou (2012a) contest, study abroad educators need to fully embrace the move to a more “constructivist/experiential” paradigm.

1a) What aspects of the intervention do the administrators, instructors, and students each consider the most supportive of intercultural development? What aspects do they consider the most challenging?

1b) Regarding intercultural development, what are the administrators', instructors', and students' perceptions of the role of the following four specific aspects of the intervention: the milieu, the instructor, the students, and the curriculum?

The findings with regards to research questions 1a and 1b are too extensive to summarize here, but are explained in detail throughout chapters four and five. What stands out, however, is that employing skilled facilitators is fundamental when developing and implementing a study abroad intervention. The initial focus in developing the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad—as is often the case in the study abroad field—was on choosing the right activities and creating an effective curriculum. While this is imperative, an even more important, yet often overlooked, component is the instructor's knowledge, understanding, and ability to teach a seminar of this unique nature.

This study also sheds light on the numerous challenges involved in teaching a course such as the Seminar. Chief among them is the fact that instructors need to not only understand the intercultural content of the course, but they also must learn how to balance challenge and support, and teach experientially, developmentally, and holistically. In addition, they must tailor their approach to each individual student. This can be a daunting task, yet the findings in response to the first broad research question demonstrate the incredible value that can come from doing so.

2) Apart from the intervention itself, what other aspects of the experience do the students consider to be supportive of their intercultural development?

While this was a minor research question, it led to an interesting finding. The fact that all of the students in this study identified their homestay as one of the most beneficial aspects of their experience with regards to their intercultural learning and development runs counter to previous quantitative findings on student housing and intercultural development (Vande Berg et al., 2009). This finding and others, when considered in conjunction with findings from the GCP study (Vande Berg et al., 2009) and the students' IDI scores, suggests that the cultural mentoring provided through a study abroad intervention can play an important role in providing the ideal mix of challenge and support that students need in order to more effectively learn from their experiences abroad.

Unexpected Finding

One important finding that emerged from this study that does not directly address the research questions has to do with the profound impact teaching the Seminar has had on the instructors. All three said they had been positively impacted through the experience of teaching the Seminar in ways that not only benefited them, but also benefited the Seminar participants, other students, and the instructors' colleagues. In addition, the instructors' IDI scores reveal all three significantly increased their intercultural sensitivity since starting to teach the Seminar. As mentioned previously, skilled facilitation is critical to the success of a study abroad intervention such as the Seminar. This finding suggests the process of teaching such a course—in conjunction with significant training and support—can positively impact instructors' intercultural sensitivity, which plays an important role in their ability to facilitate others' intercultural development.

Implications

In this section, I discuss the implications of this study in terms of theory, future research, and practice.

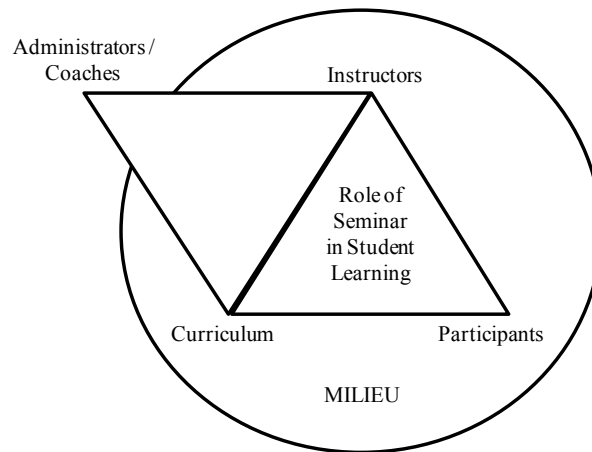
Implications for Theory

Support and Adaptation of Schwab's Four Commonplaces of Education

This study supports the relevance of Schwab's (1983) four commonplaces of education—which include the milieu, the curriculum, the students, and the instructor—to a study abroad intervention such as the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. To fully address the learning context involved in the Seminar, however, the framework should be expanded to include the role of the administrators/coaches. Basically, the coaching aspect was added when the four commonplaces alone proved insufficient on their own to ensure the success of the Seminar. Figure 10 demonstrates how the administrators/coaches fit into Schwab's model. While the students, instructors, and curriculum still form a triangular, interconnected relationship operating within the local milieu, there is an additional triangular relationship between the administrators/coaches, instructors, and curriculum, which places the administrators/coaches outside of the milieu in which the Seminar is operating at each site and at a level once removed from the students. This demonstrates that the administrators/coaches have some influence on the curriculum and the instructors, but only indirect influence on the students. It also suggests the

administrators/coaches need to work to understand the milieu (including the host culture and the study abroad program) in which each of the individual Seminars is operating and take that into account when coaching the instructors and planning the curriculum.

Figure 10. Adaptation of Schwab's Four Commonplaces of Education to CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad



Adapted from Schwab, J. J. (1983). The practical 4: Something for curriculum professors to do. *Curriculum Inquiry*, 13, 239-265.

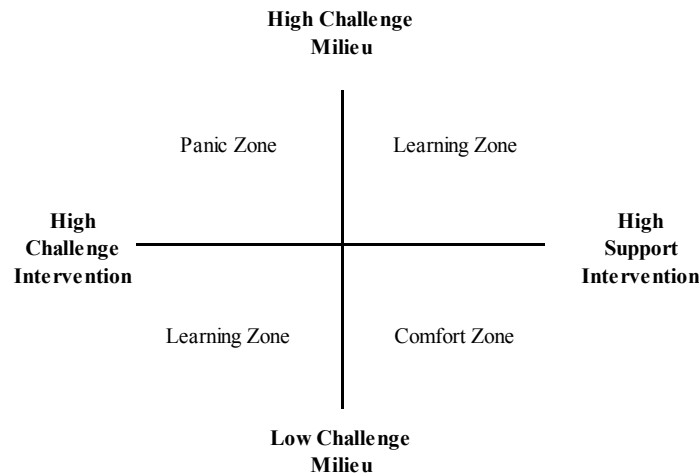
Applicability of the Challenge/Support Hypothesis and Incorporation with Intensity Factors

This study also demonstrates the applicability of Sanford's (1966) challenge/support hypothesis to study abroad interventions and suggests Paige's (1993b) intensity factors should indeed be considered in this regard. As explained in chapter two, Sanford suggests educators need to balance the level of challenge learners face with the amount of support they receive in order to keep them engaged in the learning process. Also discussed in chapter two, Vande Berg (Vande Berg & Medina-López-Portillo, 2010) applies the challenge/support hypothesis to study abroad, explaining that with the right balance of challenge and support, students will remain in what he calls the "learning zone." If they are under challenged, however, they find themselves in a "comfort zone," where little or no learning takes place. On the other hand, if they are over challenged, they go into the "panic zone," where they are also unlikely to learn; instead they may retreat from the challenge, for example, by spending less time immersed in the local culture and more time with other U.S. Americans (thus finding themselves back in the "comfort zone").

In this study, it seems that the students in Africa felt highly challenged, in particular by Paige's (1993b) cultural difference and visibility factors. While some students said the Seminar provided a supportive environment in which to discuss these challenges, others felt it did not offer enough such support. In other words, although the milieu provided plenty of challenge for most students in Africa, the Seminar was only able to balance this with sufficient support for some of them. As a result, while some students likely remained in the "learning zone" during much of their time abroad, others may have spent more time in the "panic zone." On the other hand, most students in Western Europe did not seem to be particularly challenged by the cultural milieu or the experience itself. The challenge/support hypothesis would therefore suggest the Seminar ought to challenge these students further. However, it seems the students in Western Europe did not find the Seminar particularly challenging. This would suggest many of the students in Western Europe probably spent a good deal of time in the "comfort zone." Therefore, it is perhaps not surprising that the average IDI gain by Seminar participants in Western Europe was not much higher than the gain achieved by students in the GCP study who were not participating in any such intervention (Vande Berg, 2011; Vande Berg et al., 2009). Of course, once again, this study cannot demonstrate a causal relationship between the levels of challenge and support and the IDI results, but it does provide some interesting insight in this regard.

Figure 11 represents my interpretation, based on this study, of one way the challenge/support hypothesis could be used in study abroad interventions. On one axis is the challenge level provided by the milieu (which includes the program and cultural milieu). Paige's (1993b) intensity factors, as well as relevant research such as the GCP study (Vande Berg et al., 2009), can help gauge the level of challenge a student may experience in any given program and cultural milieu. This also depends, of course, on each individual student (for example, Paige's intensity factor "visibility" might cause more or less stress for a certain student in a given cultural context depending on that student's race). Depending on the level of challenge presented by the program and cultural milieus, the extent to which the instructor of the intervention seeks to support and/or challenge students can be adapted to provide an appropriate balance for each individual participant according to their personal experience on the given program. This, of course, would require a very skilled facilitator.

Figure 11. Balancing Challenge and Support through a Study Abroad Intervention



Adapted from (1) Bennett, J. M. (2009). Transformative training: Designing programs for culture learning. In M. A. Moodian (Ed.), *Contemporary leadership and intercultural competence: Exploring the cross-cultural dynamics within organizations* (pp. 95-110). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications; and (2) Vande Berg, M., & Medina-López-Portillo, A. (2010). *Learner-centered study abroad: What students are learning over there, what they're not, and what we can do about it*. Portland, OR: Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication workshop materials.

Implications for Future Research

Role of the Challenge/Support Hypothesis in Study Abroad Interventions

This study suggests that research ought to be conducted on the relationship between the challenge/support hypothesis and Paige's (1993b) intensity factors and how this information can be used to create and implement the most effective study abroad interventions possible. Which cultural milieus present the biggest challenges to students? Which intensity factors cause students the most stress? What kind of support will best help them turn those challenges into learning experiences? How can educators more effectively challenge students who do not find the cultural milieu particularly challenging? Are there certain cultural milieus that are more or less appropriate for different students, perhaps given their intercultural worldview?

In the case of this study, it seems the challenge and support presented by the cultural milieu and the Seminar was somewhat unbalanced for at least some students at each site. In Western Europe, the students felt minimal challenge from both the cultural milieu and the Seminar. In Africa, the cultural milieu presented a much greater level of challenge; however, the

Seminar was not supportive enough for some students to balance out that challenge. Figure 11 depicts how this combination of challenge/support between the cultural milieu and an intervention like the Seminar might, based on this study, affect a student's learning. Future studies could test the validity of this model. For example, it would be interesting to conduct an investigation similar to this study in which those factors are reversed. In other words, what would a study like this one find at a site that is relatively culturally similar to the United States—thus presenting little challenge in that regard—but where the Seminar instruction challenges participants much more? And what would we find at a more culturally challenging site such as Africa if the students all felt the Seminar was a place where they had the support they needed to work through the issues they were facing? This type of research could shed more light on how the challenge/support hypothesis can be used more effectively to inform practice with regards to implementing study abroad interventions.

Research on Study Abroad Interventions

This study is the first to examine the process of facilitating students' intercultural development during study abroad. The findings highlight both the challenges involved in teaching a study abroad intervention such as the Seminar and the critical importance of having skilled facilitators to do so. This suggests more research ought to be conducted in this area—not just measuring the outcomes of a study abroad intervention, but examining the process involved. This study looked at one intervention at two sites. A future study could take a broader approach to examining this subject within the context of CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, for example by interviewing a large number of instructors about the process of facilitating students' intercultural learning. Or it could be interesting to follow one or two instructors new to the Seminar during their first several semesters teaching the course to examine how they learn and develop through the process.

In addition, there are other study abroad interventions from which we could learn more about the process of facilitating students' learning abroad. The number of such interventions is growing, as is the diversity in approaches, and it could be beneficial to compare different types of interventions. For example, it would be interesting to compare the process of facilitating students' intercultural development through an online intervention versus an on-site intervention. What are the similarities and differences? What are the advantages and disadvantages?

Research on IDI-Guided Development

As mentioned previously, the findings from this study support previous research that suggests Minimization is a complicated intercultural worldview out of which it can be challenging to move. I would recommend that future research that uses a pre-/post-test IDI design be sure to break down the data by initial intercultural orientation—as done in this study—in order to further examine which orientations are and are not developing. Furthermore, I would suggest that more research be conducted to examine the process and effects of IDI-guided development (i.e. tailoring one’s teaching approach according to the student’s intercultural worldview), specifically looking at initial intercultural worldviews, the specific IDI-guided development methods used, and results. It would be difficult to completely control for other factors, of course, but such a study would still be incredibly useful since little to no research currently exists regarding IDI-guided development practices.

Implications for Practice

Arguably the most important implication of this study for practice is that study abroad interventions such as CIEE’s Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad can indeed have a positive impact on participants’ intercultural learning and development. This suggests that we as a field need to eschew the assumption that students will learn and develop automatically as a result of being in the vicinity of cultural difference. We must instead embrace what Vande Berg, Paige, and Lou (2012a) recently labeled the new “experiential/constructivist” paradigm in study abroad. In addition to providing immersive intercultural experiences, we need to build into our programs components that help students reflect on and discuss their experiences as they are happening, make sense of those experiences and extract new knowledge from them, then test out what they have learned through continued experience.

Another important implication of this study is that it strongly emphasizes the fact that creating and implementing a successful study abroad intervention requires more than an effective curriculum. Having the right activities or materials is not enough; what is just as important, if not more so, is how those are implemented and taught. Instructors need to receive high-quality training and coaching that focuses not just on the theory and concepts they will be teaching, but also on the pedagogy they need to understand in order to teach such a course effectively.

I would suggest that if we really want to change the landscape of study abroad to one that focuses on students’ learning and development, we would provide such training not just for those

faculty and staff teaching a study abroad intervention, but for everyone involved with study abroad participants from initial application through re-entry. Obviously this would be a huge undertaking that would require a good deal of time and resources. However, this study suggests that doing so could not only help study abroad staff develop their own intercultural sensitivity, which indirectly affects students, but could also positively influence how they interact with students in general and cause broader ripple effects throughout their program and organization. If all staff members with whom a student comes into contact throughout the study abroad experience—from pre-departure to re-entry—have been trained to help students reflect on and make sense of their experiences, students will no doubt benefit as a result. As discussed in chapter two, Ziegler's (2006) research on the role on-site study abroad professionals play in students' culture learning found that staff with more training had a wider repertoire of models and theories to draw on when assessing and intervening in students' learning. As a result of her research, Ziegler recommended "providing additional intercultural training to on-site staff so that they can incorporate intercultural learning more intentionally into their programs" (p. 167). Based on the current study, I reiterate Ziegler's recommendation and extend it to all study abroad professionals.

In addition, study abroad educators need to figure out how to make intercultural learning and the work that is involved more appealing to students, and this requires better understanding students' attitudes in this regard. Study abroad interventions can only be successful if students willfully decide to participate, yet the students that have the most to benefit are probably the least likely to enroll. Vande Berg, Quinn, and Menyhart (2012) have identified several of the reasons students push back against the Seminar, suggesting that many students still hold positivist and relativist assumptions that they will learn simply from the experience of being immersed in the local culture. Vande Berg et al. suggest one possible solution, explaining, "Our lack of success in attracting more students has led us to redirect our focus toward helping Seminar instructors understand more fully how this course can help students achieve their own goals abroad, so that the instructors themselves will be able to make more direct and compelling appeals to the students" (p. 398). The University of Minnesota attempted to attract more students to their study abroad intervention by revising the course to make the material "more relevant to the students' own experiences abroad at different points in time" (Paige et al., 2012, p. 326). Paige et al. explain that the new course title, syllabus, and marketing materials all "emphasize the fact that the course not only will facilitate students' intercultural learning abroad, but also will help them

articulate what they have learned to family and friends as well as to potential employers or graduate schools upon their return” (pp. 326-327).

Just as CIEE and the University of Minnesota have done, study abroad professionals need to listen to the students, experiment, and conduct research—formal and informal—to better understand how to get more students interested and involved in study abroad interventions. It is not enough to increase the numbers of students going abroad if they are not learning and developing through the experience in the ways we previously assumed they were.

Lastly, the findings from this study could also be used to start a conversation about how to more effectively facilitate intercultural learning among international students studying in the United States. Much like with U.S. students studying abroad, it is often assumed that international students attending colleges and universities in the U.S. will learn and develop interculturally simply by virtue of spending time in another country. This assumption needs to be questioned and examined in the same way that is now being done in the study abroad field. As mentioned previously, Willamette and Bellarmine universities offer an online intercultural course that brings together U.S. students studying abroad and international students attending the home universities (Lou & Bosley, 2008, 2012). Pre- and post-semester IDI data demonstrate international students can also benefit from this type of targeted intervention.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of this study is its size. Numbers were small (with quantitative data from 16 students and qualitative data from 15 students, three instructors, and three administrators), there were only two cases, and neither the sites nor the participants were randomly selected. The purpose, however, was to examine the process of facilitating students’ intercultural learning in more depth than previous studies have done. The results are therefore not meant to be generalizable to a larger population, but hopefully they are informative to others doing this kind of work.

A second limitation, with regards to the quantitative data only, is that this study was not designed to prove causality between participation in the Seminar and intercultural development; there was no control group and factors other than the Seminar could have affected students’ intercultural development. However, it was designed in such a way that it is possible to make a strong theoretical argument that participation in the Seminar can positively impact students’ learning. Furthermore, with large-scale studies such as the Georgetown Consortium Project (Vande Berg et al., 2009) providing baseline numbers for average IDI gain during a semester

abroad, it becomes more feasible to make such an argument. As mentioned previously, however, the main point of this study was to examine the process of facilitating students' intercultural learning, not to prove causality.

Third, the practicalities involved in undertaking a case study of this nature were complex. Ideally, for example, I would have observed the same lessons at the two different sites and interviewed the students at each site only after completing all of my observations there. Obviously, however, that simply was not logistically feasible.

Fourth, students took the IDI at the beginning and end of the semester in which they participated in the Seminar. Medina-López-Portillo (2004) suggests it should also be administered a third time, several months after return to allow for further processing of the experience.

Closing Statements

This study examined a new and growing area of study abroad—study abroad interventions—through a case study of CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. It is the first study of its kind to look not just at the quantitative outcomes of such an intervention, but to also explore the process of facilitating students' intercultural learning and development while they are abroad. The findings suggest this is a complex but meaningful endeavor. They support the idea that a strong curriculum is a necessary, but insufficient condition for success, and emphasize the importance of developing skilled facilitators. In addition, the findings suggest educators must consider how to increase student buy-in in these efforts to facilitate their intercultural learning during study abroad.

Given the growing body of literature and research that demonstrates that just placing students in the vicinity of cultural difference is typically not sufficient to produce the type of learning we hope to see, I suggest we as a field turn our attention to creating the best possible opportunities for learning abroad. That means not only creating and implementing high-quality immersion experiences, but also providing participants with a place and a way to debrief those experiences and maximize what they learn from them. Study abroad interventions offer a way to do that, and this study paints a picture of what is involved in such an intervention. It is my hope that this study will inform practice and future research and thus contribute to the study abroad field and, ultimately, to students' intercultural learning.

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Appendix 1. Training for Intercultural Development through Challenge/Support According to IDC Worldview

IDC Worldview	DENIAL	POLARIZATION	MINIMIZATION	ACCEPTANCE	ADAPTATION
Developmental Task	To recognize existence of cultural differences	Mitigate polarization by emphasizing “common humanity”	Develop cultural self-awareness	Refine analysis of cultural contrasts	Develop frame of reference shifting skills
Learners’ Experience of Difference	High challenge	Maximum challenge (feel threatened)	Moderate challenge	Low challenge	Low challenge
Educators Should Emphasize	High support	Maximum support	Moderate support	Moderate challenge	High challenge

Adapted from Bennett, J. M., & Bennett, M. J. (n.d.). *Developing intercultural competence: A reader*. Portland, OR: The Intercultural Communication Institute.

Appendix 2. Interview Protocols

Interview Protocol for Students

Background

1. What made you decide to study abroad?
2. What influenced you to choose this program?
3. Tell me a little about your experience abroad so far.
4. What, if anything, do you feel like you are learning from your experience abroad so far?
5. What aspects of your experience abroad do you feel are most helping you develop interculturality?
 - Prompt: What aspects of the experience do you feel you are learning the most from?

The Seminar - General

6. What made you choose to enroll in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad?
7. How do you think participating in the Seminar is affecting your study abroad experience?
8. How do you think your experience abroad compares to the experience of students who are not enrolled in the Seminar?
9. What do you feel you're learning from the Seminar?
10. What aspects of the Seminar do you feel are having the biggest impact on your intercultural development?
 - Prompt: What aspects of the Seminar do you find the *most* beneficial?
11. What aspects of the Seminar do you find the *least* beneficial?
12. What role do you think the Seminar instructor(s), [name(s)], play(s) in your intercultural learning?
 - Prompt: Tell me about your relationship with the instructor(s) (inside and outside the Seminar).
13. What aspects of the curriculum (content, activities, assignments, etc.) do you feel are the *most* beneficial?
14. What aspects of the curriculum do you feel are the *least* beneficial?
15. Is there anything about the context surrounding the Seminar that affects your learning in any way?
 - Prompt: Is there anything about the environment in or around the Seminar—like when or where it's held, the class culture, etc.—that positively or negatively impacts your learning?
16. I know you took the Learning Style Inventory at the beginning of the semester. Do you remember what your preferred learning style is?
 - Do you feel your preferred learning style is impacting your experience abroad or in the Seminar at all?
17. Do you have a designated Cultural Partner for the Seminar? Tell me about your relationship with him/her.
 - Do you think your relationship with this person is different than it might be if they weren't specifically designated as your Cultural Partner?

Observation-Specific

After each session I observed of the Seminar, I added a few observation-specific questions and asked those to students in subsequent interviews. Some of these were general and asked of all students, while a few were more specific to an individual and asked only to the individuals involved in the interaction in question. The following are some examples of the observation-specific questions I asked of students.

At Both Sites

18. Tell me about your general impressions of the class?
- What went well?
 - What could have been improved?

In Western Europe

19. Tell me a little about your experience doing the Obvious/Curious Photo activity.
- What do you think you got out of that assignment, if anything?
 - What did you get out of the in-class conversation about the pictures, if anything?
20. During the second half of the class last Wednesday, [Paolo] talked about stereotypes and cultural generalizations. What do you feel you got out of that discussion, if anything?

In Africa

21. What do you feel you got, if anything, out of the part about the Intercultural Development Continuum?
22. What do you feel you got, if anything, out of the part about the intensity factors?
23. At one point, when talking about Defense, [a student] brought up the topic of [local] men being aggressive when pursuing female students on the program and [one student] said she'd like to ask [the U.S. American woman sitting in on the class] why she thinks [local] men are so aggressive. Tell me about your impressions of that whole exchange.

Concluding Question

24. Is there anything else you think I should know or that you'd like to share about your experience with the Seminar or abroad in general?

Interview Protocol for Seminar Instructors

General Interviews

Facilitation

1. Please tell me about how you got into this line of work.
2. Tell me a little about the style of teaching and learning you're most familiar with.
 - Prompt (if question is not clear): Tell me about what the learning environment was like when you were a student. Tell me about the learning environment you are most comfortable with as a teacher.
 - How would you characterize the approach the Seminar takes (to learning and teaching)?
 - So how does the Seminar approach fit with your own approach?
3. What things about the students in the Seminar influence how you work with them?
4. I understand that the students have taken Kolb's Learning Style Inventory. How does the Seminar attend to students' learning style differences?
 - What do you do, if anything, to try to attend to those differences?
5. They've also taken the Intercultural Development Inventory. How does the Seminar attend to students' varying levels of intercultural development?
 - What do you do, if anything, to try to attend to their intercultural worldviews?
6. Do you think your preferred learning style affects how you facilitate the Seminar in any way? If so, how?
7. Do you think your own intercultural development affects how you facilitate the Seminar at all? If so, how?

External Factors

8. Tell me about where the Seminar is held and if you think that environment affects the Seminar in any way.
9. Do you feel that the scheduling of the Seminar affects it in any way?
10. Are there any other factors we haven't discussed that you feel affect the Seminar either in positive or negative ways?

Student-Specific

I asked the following about each of the study participants, time permitting.

11. Tell me about [student]'s experience abroad so far.
 - What is your approach with this student in the Seminar?

Interview Protocol for Seminar Instructors

Observation-Specific Interviews

The observation-specific interviews focused on probing the instructors' perspectives on that particular session of the Seminar. They included some general questions that had been written ahead of time, and several more specific questions that were written just following the observation. Here are examples of the types of questions asked. This protocol also includes several closing questions I asked during the final interview with each instructor.

- How do you feel yesterday's class went?
 - What did you feel were the objectives for the class? Do you feel those objectives were met?
 - What went well?
 - What, if anything, was difficult or challenging?
- How do you feel the Obvious/Curious activity went?
- How do you feel the conversation about stereotypes and cultural generalizations went?
- How do you feel students received the lesson?
- Toward the beginning of the class you reminded students you'd asked them to bring a "critical incident" to class. Tell me about what your goal was in having them do this.
 - [One student] gave the example of not eating very much and her host family calling her a [child] as a result. Tell me about what you were thinking as you tried to help them dissect this critical incident.
- When you handed out the link to the article, you brought up the issue of learning styles. Tell me about what you were thinking when you did that.
- Tell me about whether you feel the location where the Seminar was held yesterday affected the dynamic in any way.
- You've mentioned to me that you adapt the materials and don't always follow the curriculum exactly as prescribed. Do you have any examples from yesterday's class?
- Is there anything else we haven't discussed that you'd like to say about yesterday's class?

General Questions for Final Interview

- What do you think are the aspects of the Seminar that are really working well here?
- What aspects do you think are the most challenging?
- Is there anything else you want to say, or do you have any closing comments, about your experience with the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad?

Interview Protocol for Seminar Administrators

The interview questions for each of the administrators differed somewhat due to their different level and type of involvement with the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. This protocol includes questions asked of the three administrators, although all of these questions were not asked to all of the administrators.

General

1. First of all, could you just tell me a little bit more about what your involvement has been with the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad?
2. Broadly-speaking, how do you feel the implementation of the Seminar is going this semester?
3. What aspects of the Seminar curriculum do you think are working particularly well? What aspects of the curriculum do you feel need improvement?
4. What do you feel are the main challenges with regards to the training-the-trainers aspect of the Seminar?

Site-Specific

The following questions were asked first about one site, then repeated for the other site.

5. Tell me about the process of training and/or mentoring [instructor name] to teach the Seminar.
6. How do you feel the implementation of the Seminar is going [at that site]?
 - What's going well?
 - What are some of the barriers/challenges with this particular site?
7. What do you feel are the strengths of [instructor name] at this site in helping students develop their intercultural competence?
8. What do you feel are the areas where [instructor name] needs the most training and support?

Conclusion

Is there anything else you think I should know about the Seminar with respect to its role in facilitating students' intercultural competence—either generally or with respect to these two sites—that we have not yet discussed?

Appendix 3. Data Collection Timeline

Prior to Site Visits	
August/September 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewed Seminar curriculum materials on intranet website • Sent consent forms to instructors and received agreement to participate via e-mail
September/October 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar instructors forwarded e-mail from Researcher to Seminar participants and mentioned study during class session; received some student consent forms via e-mail
During Site Visits	
Late October/November 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collected instructors' IDI and LSI data (from when they first began teaching the Seminar) once they signed consent forms • Invited students in person to participate in study; scheduled interviews • Informal observations in and around CIEE offices and student spaces • Collected students' LSI and (Time 1) IDI data once students signed consent forms • Formal observation of Seminar (2-3 sessions) • Interviewed students • Interviewed instructors (3-4 times each)
After Site Visits	
December 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewed administrators (via Skype or phone) • Collected all student pre-/post-test IDI data from administrators
January/February 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collected instructors' second IDI results from administrators

Appendix 4. Consent Forms

CONSENT FORM – STUDENTS Facilitating Intercultural Development during Study Abroad: A Case Study

You are invited to be in a research study about CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. You were selected as a possible participant because you are currently enrolled in the Seminar at one of the sites participating in this research study. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Tara Harvey, PhD Candidate from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to examine the role the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad plays in your experience abroad and your intercultural development.

Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

- Agree to be interviewed 1-2 times during my site visit; these interviews would be audio recorded.
- Allow me access to all of the written assignments you turn in during the fall 2010 semester in the Seminar on Living and Learning.
- Allow me access to your Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and Learning Styles Inventory (LSI) scores taken during the fall 2010 semester.
- Allow me to ask the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad instructor about your participation in the Seminar.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

There are no immediate or expected risks for participating in the survey. The answers you provide will be kept confidential. If you agree to participate, you will be assigned a pseudonym and all data regarding your participation in the study will be linked to that pseudonym and reported either anonymously or under that pseudonym. Your answers will not be traceable to your true identity except by me, and that information will be kept confidential.

There are also no immediate or expected benefits to you for participating in this study. Your participation will allow the researcher to better understand the experiences of students studying abroad and participating in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, and to share this information within the study abroad field.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you. Research records will be stored securely and only I will have access to the records. Audio recordings of interviews will be

accessible only by me, and will be destroyed after the completion of this study, but no later than May 2013.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota or CIEE. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions

The researcher conducting this study is Tara Harvey. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at 763-473-1680 or harve162@umn.edu. You may also contact the researcher’s advisor, R. Michael Paige, at r-paig@umn.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects’ Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked any questions I had and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

CONSENT FORM – INSTRUCTORS

Facilitating Intercultural Development during Study Abroad: A Case Study

You are invited to be in a research study about CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. You were selected as a possible participant because you are an instructor of the Seminar at one of the sites participating in this research study. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Tara Harvey, PhD Candidate from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to better understand the process of intervening in students' intercultural learning and development in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad.

Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

- Agree to be interviewed (for approximately 60 minutes) 3-4 times during my site visit; these interviews would be audio recorded.
- Allow me to observe the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad that you teach three times during my site visit.
- Allow me to informally observe in and around the CIEE offices during my site visit.
- Permit me access to your Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) and Learning Styles Inventory (LSI) scores.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

The primary possible risk of your participating in this study is that your employer may be able to identify your responses in the final written report. However, all efforts will be made to keep your responses as confidential as possible with regards to all potential audiences. If you agree to participate, you will be assigned a pseudonym and all data regarding your participation in the study will be linked to that pseudonym and reported either anonymously or under that pseudonym. In addition, the specific site name (city and country) will be masked in any reports of this research.

There are no immediate benefits to you expected for participating in this study. Your participation will allow the researcher to better understand the process of intervening in students' intercultural learning and development in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, and to share this information within the study abroad field. A possible long-term benefit of your participating in this study, then, is that the findings could aid in the improvement of your programs.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will make every effort possible to remove any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only I will have access to the records. Audio

recordings of interviews will be accessible only by me and will be destroyed after the completion of this study, but no later than May 2013.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota or CIEE. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw at any time without affecting that relationship.

Contacts and Questions

The researcher conducting this study is Tara Harvey. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at 763-473-1680 or harve162@umn.edu. You may also contact the researcher’s advisor, R. Michael Paige, at r-paig@umn.edu.

If you have CIEE-related questions in regards to this research study, you may contact Dr. Mick Vande Berg, CIEE Vice President for Academic Affairs, at mvandeberg@ciee.org or 207-553-4217.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects’ Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; 612-625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have asked any questions I had and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

CONSENT FORM – ADMINISTRATORS
Facilitating Intercultural Development during Study Abroad: A Case Study

You are invited to be in a research study about CIEE's Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad. You were selected as a possible participant because of your involvement with and knowledge about the Seminar. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Tara Harvey, PhD Candidate from the University of Minnesota – Twin Cities, Department of Organizational Leadership, Policy, and Development.

Background Information

The purpose of this study is to better understand the process of facilitating students' intercultural development in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad.

Procedures

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

- Provide me with the data collected from the Learning Styles Inventory (LSI) and Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) taken by the Seminar on Living and Learning instructors from the sites included in this study and from the students enrolled in the Seminar at these two sites in fall 2010, provided they consent to allow me access to this information.
- Provide me with copies of the written assignments of the students who agree to participate in this study.
- Be interviewed via phone or Skype (for approximately 90 minutes) once during the semester; this interview would be audio recorded.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study

The risks of participating in this study are minimal. However, please be aware that readers of any reports on this research may be able to identify you.

There are no immediate benefits to you expected for participating in this study. Your participation will allow the researcher to better understand the process of facilitating students' intercultural development in the Seminar on Living and Learning Abroad, and to share this information within the study abroad field. A possible long-term benefit of your participating in this study, then, is that the findings could aid in the improvement of your programs.

Confidentiality

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely and only I will have access to the records. Audio recordings of interviews will be accessible only by me and will be destroyed after the completion of this study, but no later than May 2013.

Voluntary Nature of the Study

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota or CIEE. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions

The researcher conducting this study is Tara Harvey. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at 763-473-1680 or harve162@umn.edu. You may also contact the researcher's advisor, R. Michael Paige, at r-paig@umn.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent

I have read the above information. I have asked any questions I had and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 5. Explanation of How Issues of Validity and Reliability were Addressed

Term	Qualitative Approach	How this Study Addressed the Issue
<p>External Validity/Generalizability Concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations.</p>	<p>Idea is to provide rich detail about case and context so that readers can decide the extent to which findings transfer to their situation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide rich, thick description of the cases
<p>Internal Validity Deals with the question of how one’s findings match reality.</p>	<p>Researcher needs to demonstrate that s/he has represented peoples’ multiple constructions of reality adequately.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Triangulation (multiple sources and multiple methods) • Spent significant time on site • Reviewed findings as they emerged with an outside expert • Up-front about researcher biases and assumptions
<p>Reliability Refers to the extent to which one’s findings can be replicated.</p>	<p>More appropriate to think about the dependability or consistency of the results obtained from the data.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the assumptions and theory underlying the study • Triangulation (multiple sources and multiple methods) • Describe in detail how data were collected and how findings were derived from the data

Appendix 6. Lead Instructors' Approaches to Individual Students and Students' IDI Scores

Andre's Approach (Western Europe)					
Student	IDI Time 1	Instructor's Description of Student	Instructor's Approach with Student	IDI Time 2	Change Score
Jake	75.76 (P)	A stand-out in the Seminar; very curious and tries to understand why things are the way they are and accept rather than complain about differences; committed to having "a complete experience" (i.e. focused on immersion) and sees himself as unique in this way; proactive and engaged in experience; became less engaged in Seminar as semester progressed; great experience with host family and local friends; instructor felt the student was in high Minimization at the time of our interview.	To "put wood on the fire" (i.e. challenge him); instructor asked a lot of questions rather than giving student the answers; tried to expose him to new things; partway through the semester, tried to help student see he was prioritizing his social life over his academic life.	90.91 (M)	+15.15
Sofia	80.1 (P)	Introverted; prefers listening to speaking and doesn't participate much; tries to hide within the group; instructor doesn't expect great gains from her.	Tries to make her talk as much as possible and feel what she has to say is important; wants to increase student's participation.	96.08 (M)	+15.98
Sarah	95.27 (M)	Began with a very low language level, but has improved a lot; coming out of her shell more and more and has become quite engaged and participative; having a great homestay experience.	Encourages her to participate and be proactive; may eventually ask her to really push herself outside her comfort zone.	86.54 (M)	-8.73
Maeve	95.53 (M)	A stand-out in the Seminar; tries to understand why things are the way they are and accept rather than complain about differences; in Seminar because she wants to be unique; instructor felt she started somewhere between high Reversal and low Minimization; one of the students instructor thinks will gain the most.	When student questioned her host mother's behavior, instructor tried to help her figure out what was behind host mother's actions by asking questions rather than giving answers; pushes her to see beyond the obvious; suggested she ask questions of her host mother to better understand her.	98.89 (M)	+3.36

Andre's Approach (Western Europe)					
Student	IDI Time 1	Instructor's Description of Student	Instructor's Approach with Student	IDI Time 2	Change Score
Amelia	105.3 (M)	A stand-out in the Seminar; very extroverted; tries to understand why things are the way they are and accept rather than complain about differences; from a religious minority and has traveled quite a bit, which instructor relates to her being very open-minded; instructor thinks she is probably in Minimization and doesn't expect her to benefit too much from the Seminar because she is already so open-minded.	Uses her to engage and encourage others to participate in the Seminar.	95.69 (M)	-9.61
Jen	N/A	Engaged and open-minded; one of the students instructor thinks will gain the most.	Did not say much about an individual approach to this student.	N/A	N/A
P = Polarization; M = Minimization; Ac = Acceptance; Ad = Adaptation					

Malik's Approach (Africa)					
Student	IDI Time 1	Instructor's Description of Student	Instructor's Approach with Student	IDI Time 2	Change Score
Allison	90.2 (M)	Did not say much specifically about this student.	Hasn't done much to tailor approach specifically to her.	103.63 (M)	+13.43
Angela	93.3 (M)	Quick to see things in black and white; focuses on polarities and has difficulties managing dichotomous aspects of life; instructor questions whether she's in Minimization and feels her experiences with multicultural issues may have pushed her more toward Defense; a good listener, but it can be difficult to get her to see another perspective.	Validates importance of her views, but tries to help her see not everyone shares the same views; acts as a model for self-reflection and demonstrates respectful disagreement; uses their similarities to make her comfortable and at ease so that she can speak freely with him, which she seems more comfortable doing when one-on-one; tries to introduce the "complicated notion of differences within similarities"; tries to help her put things in context; uses other students with more intercultural worldviews to push her thinking in class.	84.12 (P)	-9.18
Emma	100.61 (M)	Didn't discuss her specifically.	Didn't discuss.	118.26 (Ac)	+17.65

Malik's Approach (Africa)					
Student	IDI Time 1	Instructor's Description of Student	Instructor's Approach with Student	IDI Time 2	Change Score
Zoey	106.04 (M)	Sometimes reacts more like she's in Defense; says what she thinks regardless of how it might come across to others; very reflective, good student who thinks about the material very critically; very AC, which may contribute to fact she seems easily bored in Seminar.	Uses other students with more intercultural worldviews to push her thinking; tries to use student's own examples to help her understand how different people might see the same thing differently; encouraged her to use the D-I-E exercise regularly.	119.69 (Ac)	+13.65
Josh	108.42 (M)	Very likeable; strong religious background and beliefs that may relate to his worldview; interested in helping others; even when he recognizes difference, he comes back to the similarities.	Uses religion as a reference through which to help student see differences ("trying to move him to an appreciation of differences within that sphere"); focuses on recognizing similarities <i>and</i> differences; tries to heighten students' awareness of his own worldview.	96.74 (M)	-11.68
Lucy	120.64 (Ac)	Didn't discuss her specifically.	Didn't discuss.	131.97 (Ad)	+11.33
Jane	122.76 (Ac)	Has an intercultural flexibility and strives to see things from different perspectives; obvious she holds an intercultural worldview; tries to step back, withhold judgment, and understand where others are coming from; very self-reflective; "not much of a talker, but always makes sense"; makes progress very fast because she is a mindful listener and quick at relating and empathizing with others.	Tries to get her "to think more about the possible layers that exist"; when he knows she's accepted something but hasn't adapted to it, he tries to push her to not just understand, but to <i>do</i> (i.e. act on what she's learned).	128.57 (Ac)	+5.81
Ann	133.33 (Ad)	Obvious she holds an intercultural worldview; has taken this type of course before and knows the basics; very creative and can adapt to different realities; more of a listener when in the big group and participates more when in small groups.	Tries to draw her out more in the large group because she has so much to offer; when he knows she's accepted something but hasn't adapted to it, he tries to push her to not just understand, but to <i>do</i> (i.e. act on what she's learned).	139.04 (Ad)	+5.71

P = Polarization; M = Minimization; Ac = Acceptance; Ad = Adaptation

Appendix 7. Thematic Analysis Comparison Chart

STUDENT INTERVIEWS	INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEWS	ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS	
		Seminar Background	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous experimentation and refinement 	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedagogical framework of the Seminar 	
Milieu	Milieu		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most beneficial aspects of the study abroad experience 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Homestay 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Programmatic elements 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Other engagement opportunities 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What students are learning from the study abroad experience 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Personal growth and self-awareness 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning about another culture 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning about their own U.S. culture 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language skills 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning about development 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning about being a racial minority 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenge level of study abroad experience 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Experience is challenging but good 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Experience is easier than expected 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cultural differences and challenges 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural challenges students experience
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Academically unchallenging 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar context 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar context
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Small, intimate size 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Importance of Seminar size
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Get outside the classroom 			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language of instruction 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Role of target language(s) in Seminar 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Sitting in a circle 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Importance of class configuration 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Scheduling challenges 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Question of location 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Place and time affect who enrolls 		

STUDENT INTERVIEWS	INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEWS	ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS
Curriculum	Curriculum	Curriculum
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lessons and activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Most successful lessons and activities 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most beneficial aspects of curriculum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Being forced (in writing) to reflect on and analyze personal experience ○ Goal setting ○ Personal inventories ○ Learning about cultural values (of their own and other cultures) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most successful aspects of the curriculum
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Least successful lessons and activities ○ Semantic nature of stereotypes lesson 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Least successful aspects of the curriculum
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum repetitive and simplistic • Learning Styles <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Benefits of the learning styles lesson ○ Level of understanding of relevance of LSI • Cultural Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Typically a family member ○ Positive aspect of curriculum ○ Not as value-added as it could be ○ Conversations with Cultural Partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repetitiveness • ‘Cultural Partners’ connect inside- and outside-the-classroom learning 	
Instructors and Instruction	Instructors and Instruction	Teaching the Seminar
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive regard for instructors • Student-centered vs. teacher-centered <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student-centered ○ Teacher-centered • Cultural background of instructor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Value of local perspective ○ Affects ability to relate to students ○ Cultural differences in educational system and teaching style ○ Students hesitant to appear culturally insensitive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum-driven vs. student-driven approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student-driven approach ○ Importance of balancing the two 	

STUDENT INTERVIEWS	INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEWS	ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailoring teaching approach to students' IDI and LSI scores <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teaching to preferred learning style vs. teaching around the wheel ○ Use of IDI data • Adapting Seminar lessons to cultural context vs. to the students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Adapting lessons to the students ○ Adapting materials to the local culture • Instructor's intercultural worldview and learning style affect teaching of the Seminar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Instructor's intercultural worldview affects teaching of the Seminar ○ Instructor's learning style affects teaching of the Seminar • Teaching Seminar impacts instructors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Teaching Seminar affects instructor's intercultural worldview ○ Teaching Seminar affects instructor's approach to students beyond the Seminar • Encouraging students to think and question • Helping students recognize and understand other perspectives • Challenging students, but not too much • Marketing the Seminar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Selling the Seminar ○ Recruiting committed students • Initial implementation challenges 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large instructor learning curve • Requires theoretical and pedagogical understanding • Many factors influence how Seminar plays out • Opportunity to help students make the most of their experience abroad

STUDENT INTERVIEWS	INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEWS	ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS
		Instructors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Andre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Andre’s history with the Seminar ○ Andre’s strengths ○ Andre’s challenges • Paolo • Malik <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Malik’s history with the Seminar ○ Malik’s strengths ○ Malik’s challenges
Students	Students	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motivation for studying abroad 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student motivation 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Always wanted to study abroad 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Language learning 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Desire to experience something new 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Motivation for enrolling in the Seminar 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students ultimately responsible for their experience 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar participants a diverse group 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of Seminar participants 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students’ background factors that influence their experience 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students’ intercultural worldviews 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Students’ learning styles 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Good students committed to making the most of the experience 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Varying engagement in Seminar 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar positively impacting students 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increases understanding and reduces complaints 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Helps students cope with and adjust to cultural difference 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students connecting theory and experience 	

STUDENT INTERVIEWS	INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEWS	ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS
		Coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution of Seminar coaching • Assessing and addressing instructors' knowledge gaps • Challenges of coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Challenges of the medium ○ Train-the-trainer limitations ○ Negotiating cultural differences ○ Training someone to teach something you have not personally taught ○ Challenges around intercultural worldview
Role of the Seminar in student learning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stepping back and reflecting 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussing experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Comparing experiences 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affects how students engage the experience 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Framework for experience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cultural differences framework ○ Diversity within cultural tendencies 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking 'Why?' 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeing from another perspective 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Processing the experience 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspending judgment 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased self-awareness 		
	Instructors' Conclusions about the Seminar	Administrators' Conclusions about the Seminar
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What's going well with the Seminar 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Challenges of the Seminar <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Logistical challenges ○ Time-consuming job ○ Instructor's learning curve ○ Maintaining student interest 	

STUDENT INTERVIEWS	INSTRUCTOR INTERVIEWS	ADMINISTRATOR INTERVIEWS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seminar about more than the materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good curriculum necessary but insufficient condition for success
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues of student pushback and the importance of marketing
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessment • Impacts of the Seminar