

Linking the Distinct Value of Intercultural Lessons Learned – Five years of Susquehanna University Global Opportunities Requirement

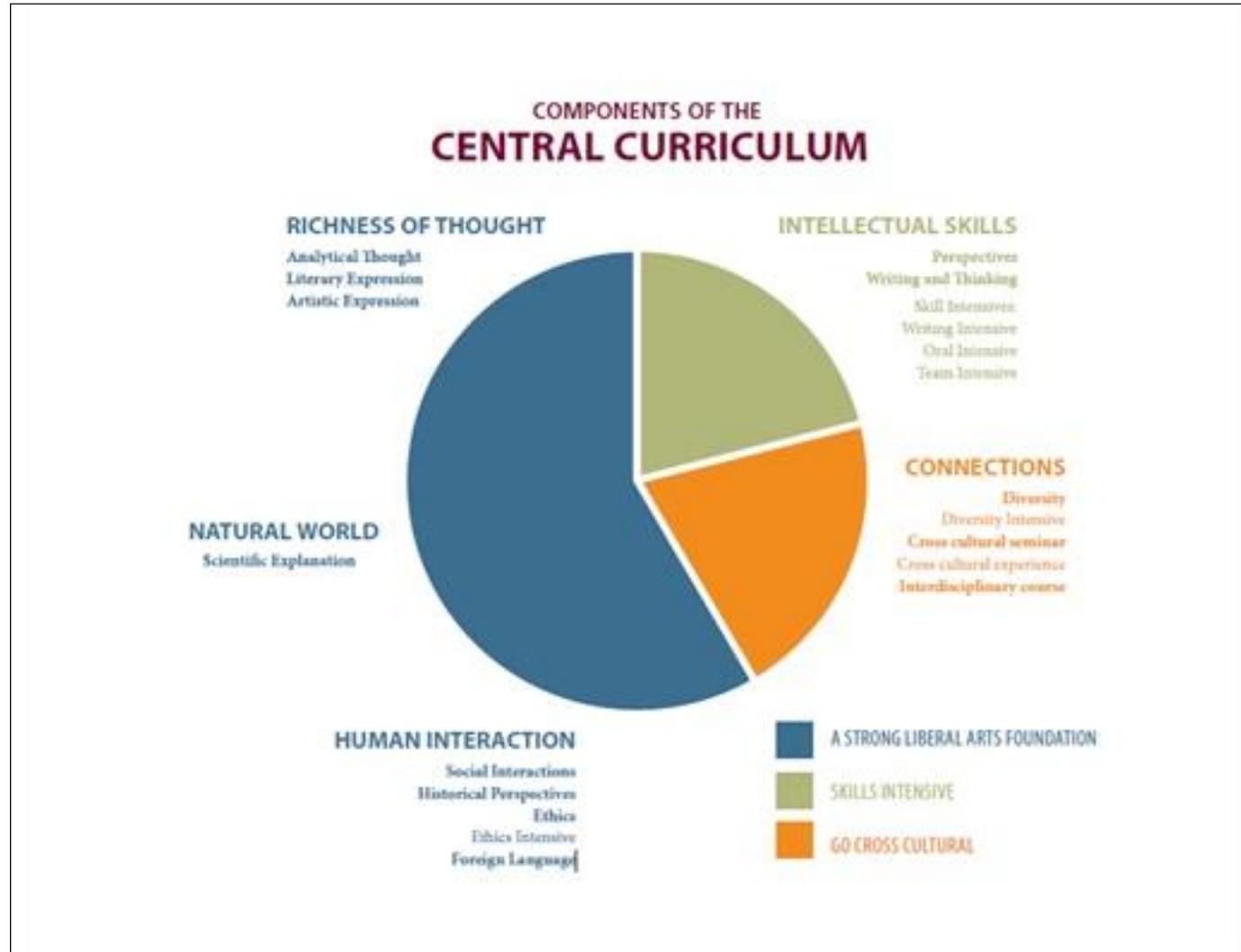
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The 1st Commitment: Strategic Plan 2003

“Making Connections: Provide for all students educational opportunities that connect practice and experience to scholarly reflection, integrate liberal and professional education, and foster civic engagement. This experience could take many forms – off-campus study, service learning, internships, self designed experiences – but would be bounded by some structure of oversight and accountability that would include temporal minimums and reflective components.”

Susquehanna University Learning Goals The learning goals of Susquehanna University articulate a vision of our students as confident, liberally educated persons who are committed to the ongoing processes of cross- and multidisciplinary education, who are capable of thinking not only in the terms of their major area, but from the perspectives of other disciplines as well, and who bring together all facets of their educational experience in order to frame a way of thinking about their vocations, their major area of study and their lives as a means to achievement, leadership and service in the world.

<p>1. SU graduates possess an awareness of the creative, natural, societal and cultural forces that shape the world around them, including a knowledge of</p>	<p>2. SU graduates possess an integrated set of intellectual skills providing them with the ability to</p>	<p>3. SU graduates possess a mature understanding of self—mind, body, spirit—including</p>	<p>4. SU graduates possess an integrated sense of personal ethical responsibility focused on their</p>
<p>a. The richness of human thought and expression. b. The ways humans have sought to explain the natural world. c. The breadth of human interactions throughout the world, across time and into the present, and of the belief systems, values and practices through which those interactions are manifested.</p>	<p>a. Think creatively and critically in order to analyze issues and make effective decisions. b. Incorporate the methods of analysis from a range of academic disciplines in the natural and social sciences and humanities to understand and solve problems, and explore conflict. c. Listen effectively and to articulate an informed opinion and argument orally and in writing. d. Gather and evaluate information. e. Work effectively with a team to analyze and solve problems. f. Function with professional competency in a chosen discipline. g. Understand that problems often elicit complex, conflicting and ambiguous responses.</p>	<p>a. Knowledge of the limits and contexts of their own experience, and the ability to value the different experiences of others. b. The ability to examine their own strengths and weaknesses critically and realistically. c. Willingness to strive for responsible actions personally and interpersonally.</p>	<p>a. Interaction with the natural environment. b. Continued growth and development as a contributing member of a number of communities within human society. c. Recognition and understanding of the diversities of human experience. d. Commitment to an ongoing development of the life of the mind</p>



Learning Goals:

Students complete a Cross-Cultural experience that contains preparatory, experiential, and reflective components that enables them to

1. demonstrate a complex understanding of culture including the ability to
 - a) develop a critical working definition of culture. (ULG 2a, 2b)
 - b) articulate awareness of differences and similarities between their culture of origin and the one in which they are/were immersed. (ULG 3a, 4b)
 - c) define and recognize ethnocentrism and ethnocentric assumptions (ULG 3b, 4c)
 - d) demonstrate critical awareness of their own cultural values and identity. (ULG 3b)
2. recognize how their attitudes, behaviors, and choices affect the quality of their cross cultural experiences. (ULG 2a, 3a)
3. reflect on their personal growth, social responsibility, and the value of active participation in human society. (ULG 3c, 4c)

Cross-cultural requirement has 3 components:

- Preparatory course on campus (1 SH)
- Cross-cultural experience off campus (0 SH)
- Reflection course on campus (1 SH)



Cross-cultural *experience*:

- is off-campus
- 2 weeks minimum on site
- does *not* carry credit – but can include taking courses for transfer credit



Cross-Cultural Experience Options

GO Long

Traditional semester study abroad/study away

GO Short

Faculty-led; summer or winter break

GO Your Own Way (GYOW)

Non-SU or self designed; academic or experiential

Campus culture: A change in focus

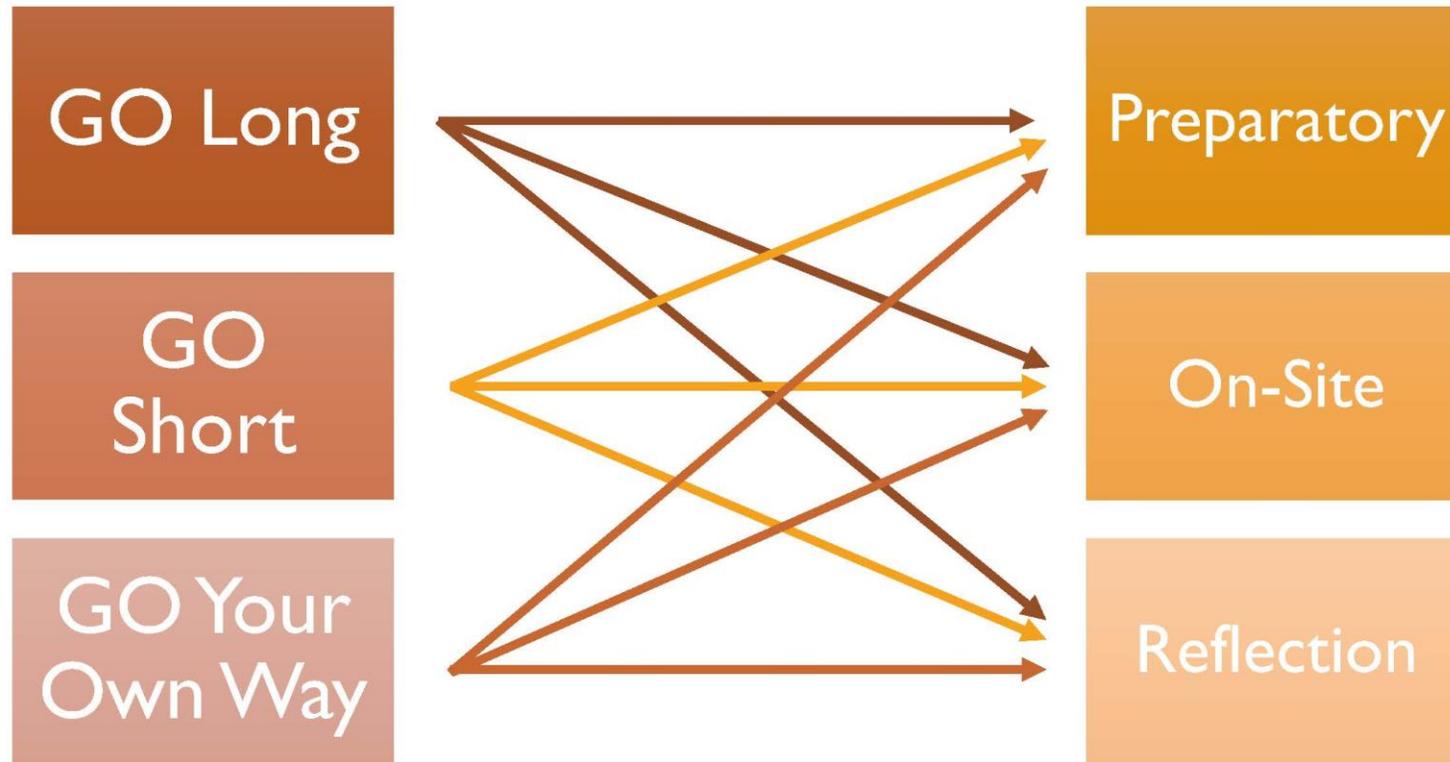
- From study abroad...
to cross-cultural experience
- From time away from campus...
to experience embedded in coursework on campus
- From simply completing a program...
to working toward learning goals
- From a privilege...
to a required expectation

Question

- Do study away programs at your university connect to institutional mission or goals?



Cross-Cultural Learning Interventions



GO Short (faculty-led) greatest degree of intervention

- Cohort based - program directors and students together for all 3 components
- All components intentionally designed and approved by curriculum committee
- Focus on specific destination culture
- In house evaluations, program director debrief, support for program changes

GO Short interventions

- **Pre-departure**
 - Start group project to foster intercultural interaction
 - Journaling/Discussion
- **While Away**
 - Project frames meaningful interactions on site
 - Challenge Handbook structures free time / competitive
 - Journaling/Reflection
- **Post Experience**
 - Expectations vs. realities
 - Further group project work and presentation

Group Project – GO Cyprus

- Divide students to focus on different topics:
 - History
 - Traditions
 - Youth
 - Religion
- Incorporate visits during the program that relate to each topic.
- Includes journal questions related to learning goals.

Challenge Handbook

- Explore your neighborhood
 - Find the local bus
 - Play backgammon with locals
 - Take 5 friends and try a local meze
 - Ask a local about best local music
 - Try a Turkish bath
- Create your own challenge



GO Long (semester – provider/exchange) varying degree of intervention

- Pre and post components on campus - intentionally designed and approved by curriculum committee
- Prep class focus on intercultural learning skills, individual assignments on destination culture
- Interventions on site vary widely between programs
- Journal prompts and reminders from home campus
- Reflection is comparative, includes students from many different destination cultures

GO Long interventions

- **Pre-departure**

- Intercultural skills development: Bennett, What's Up With Culture?
- Personal travel guide / Site-specific plan to connect to local culture
- Wellness plan

- **While away**

- Journaling/Blogging/Portfolio (Blackboard/TerraDotta)
- Provider/Host institution cultural courses (e.g. IFSA Community & Culture)

- **Post Experience**

- Annotated Journal using portfolio evidence
- Connecting Local/National/International

Site-specific cultural entrée paper

- Topic based on academic or other individual interest
- How will you meet people with shared interests?
- Students research and describe clubs, classes, social gatherings, sports, etc.

- Examples

GO Your Own Way (short, self-designed or provider) least degree of intervention

- Provider option similar to GO Long
- Self-designed requires proposal with multiple drafts, evidence of learning goals
- Can be independent, very little intervention
- Same pre and post course with GO Long students

GO Your Own Way interventions

- **Pre-departure**

- Extensive proposal process with multiple drafts, evidence of cross cultural learning goals
- Preparatory course with GO Long

- **While away**

- Highly independent – self-directed
- Project-based learning
- Journaling/Blogging/Portfolio (Blackboard/TerraDotta)

- **Post Experience**

- Reflection course with GO Long

Self-designed GYOW proposal

- Independent study abroad/study away
- Research and propose specific plans, with contacts on site
- Independent research, service, creative project
- Must demonstrate progress on cross-cultural learning goals
- Labor intensive – for students and staff
- Highly flexible – offers platform for accommodations

Question

- Discuss examples of intercultural learning interventions that have worked for your students



GO Requirement as part of general education requirements

1. Study Away/Cross-Cultural Experience rooted in liberal arts education
2. Cycle and process of assessment
3. Preparatory and Reflection Classes
 1. Taught mostly by faculty members
 2. Student grades

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Assessment Process

- Class grades
- GO Short surveys
- GO Short Annual meetings – debrief of trip, budget and planning for future
- University cycle of assessing GO requirement as part of general education
- External tools
 - Sociocultural Adaptation Self-Efficacy Evaluation
 - Global Perspectives Inventory

Change based on assessment

- Original structure had all credit in Reflection class
- Student feedback from GO Long course evaluations
- Importance of prep classes in GO Short programs

- Now split credit between prep and reflection class
- Common assessment tools

Take-Away Points

- Use faculty to enhance assessment
- Connect study away programs to university goals
- Keep assessment simple and useful for you

Question

- What internal assessment methods or tools have worked at your institution?

