Unpacking Identity on Global Programs

Faculty & Program Coordinator Guide

Global Engagement
Santa Clara University

Table of Contents

Introduction

This resource guide was adapted from UC Santa Cruz and is designed to equip faculty with the knowledge, skills, and resources for leading diverse student cohorts in education abroad programs. Your connection to each student as the professional traveling through this experience with them, and their relationships with one another, are critical to their success. As such, this resource guide provides a comprehensive list of strategies and recommendations to lead diverse students through an education abroad program.

Santa Clara University is a Jesuit institution serving more than 6,000 undergraduate students annually. As of 2019, 59.3% of SCU's student population come from diverse backgrounds; meaning each student going abroad brings with them different values, beliefs, attitudes, communication styles, learning styles, expectations, and trepidations.[1] Due to these changing demographics, it is essential that we cultivate a welcoming and caring environment at home and abroad that properly supports student needs.

Sections covered in this faculty guide include

1. **Diversity and Identity** The multiple and intersecting identities of students (including racial and ethnic identities, gender identity and expression, spiritual affiliation, socioeconomic status, generational status in the U.S. and college, sexual orientation, and ability, to name a few) play a crucial role in the global experience. Thus, Section One focuses on strategies to support diverse students and understand the connection between diversity and identity abroad. It will also examine specific approaches for enacting culturally responsive classroom management and considerations for leading international students.

2. **Host Culture Climate** The climate of a host country or community can have an impact on both the student abroad and future participants. For example, if students have a negative global experience based on interactions with the host culture, they may be hesitant to recommend a global program to their peers.[2] Therefore, Section Two will provide country diversity climate resources and considerations for understanding students' perceptions of the host country's climate.

3. **Challenges And Discrimination Abroad** The literature on diverse student

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[1] https://www.scu.edu/diversity/diversity-dashboard/santa-clara-university-trends/
[2] Sweeney, 2013.

populations in education abroad reveal specific challenges that students may face during an education abroad program. Section Three examines what these challenges are and strategies faculty leaders can utilize to overcome them.

4. Group Dynamics Program climate is strongly determined by the dynamics of a learning group and its development over time.[3] Thus, creating a climate in which students feel welcomed and valued is of the utmost importance during a cohort-style education abroad program. Section Four concludes by providing recommendations on how to facilitate group development and cohesiveness among students from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Diversity And Identity Abroad

1.1 Intersectionality And Multiple Dimensions Of Identity

The first step in leading culturally diverse students abroad is to understand that each student has multiple and intersecting identity dimensions and that each dimension cannot be fully understood in isolation.[4] Intersectionality (a concept first developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1991) asserts that we are not a set of fragmented aspects of ourselves, but rather an amalgam at the convergence of our various social identities.[5] As Willis (2015) affirms, "We see the world through our own unique lens, and the world interacts with us based on the particular dynamic created by the convergence of our gender, race, socioeconomic class, and also our phenotype, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, spirituality, language, and myriad other aspects of our identities."[6]

Much of the literature on multiple identities references Jones and McEwen's (2000) model of multiple dimensions of identity. This model describes the dynamic construction of identity and the influence of changing contexts on the relative salience of multiple identity dimensions. As illustrated, the model portrays identity dimensions as intersecting rings around a core, signifying how "no one dimension may be understood singularly; it can be understood only in relation to other dimensions."[7] At the center of the model is a core sense of self, comprising "valued personal attributes and

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[3] Dörnyei & Murphey, 2003; Hadfield, 1992.
[4] Abes, Jones, & McEwen, 2007.
[5] Willis, 2015
[6] Ibid, p. 209.
[7] Jones & McEwen, 2000, p. 410

characteristics."[8] Surrounding the core and identity dimensions is the context in which a person experiences their life, such as family, sociocultural conditions, and current experiences. The salience of each identity dimension to the core is fluid and depends on contextual influences.[9]

Only once we understand the intricacy of our students' identity dimensions can we begin to understand students' meaning-making capacity in relation to the global experience. Knowing the relationship between meaning-making capacity and identity provides us with a deeper awareness of how students understand themselves and, in turn, allows us to more effectively engage in meaningful interactions and discussions around how students may perceive and interpret their own identities abroad.

By way of illustration, a recent study was conducted on identity salience in heritage-seeking destinations.[10] One student who studied abroad in Mexico and identified with being 100% Mexican heritage, never felt like she belonged as an American due to negative racial teasing experiences during grade school and throughout her life. However, during her global experience in Mexico, she felt a sense of belonging with other Mexicans that looked like her and made her feel accepted:

> *"There was no question, yeah you are one of us. That was the first time that I had ever gone somewhere and there was no question you are one of us. It was weird because I was technically like a foreign exchange student; I wasn't from there. So, I felt out of place with the study abroad kids and I felt more at ease with the people from there. My whole life I had always been, not one of us, and now I was one of everyone."*

Natalia ended her experience abroad feeling deeply connected to her Mexican roots and stated that:

> *"Before I went I probably would have [identified as] Hispanic or Latino but after I went, I was like oh, I am Mexican. I tended not to (say Mexican before) because of the stereotypes. It didn't help when your parents didn't speak very good English; I was always there to translate. It was like we're [named stereotypes]. I felt kind of ashamed of who I was. Then when I came back it was like, this is my family. I know what they went through to come here. I am very proud of what they went through. So it was a moment of understanding my parents and being so proud that I was Mexican."*

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[8] Jones, 1997, p. 383.
[9] Jones & McEwen, 2000.
[10] Naddaf, 2016.

1.2 Facilitating Conversation & Dialogue

As a faculty leader of a diverse student cohort, it is imperative to be proactive in engaging in productive discourse around diversity[11] and the role of identity in social relationships in order to facilitate student's interactions with each other and the host community. These discussions have the potential to create a space in which students can both reflect on their own notions of diversity, identity, race, sexuality, etc., and also address sensitive topics and issues that may arise. Dialogue should also broach the historical context around the politics of identity and the dynamics of power and privilege of the host region (see section 2.2).

A discussion on diversity and identity should be held with students before you arrive in the host country or as soon as you get there. We urge you to engage in diversity discourse and arrange a team-building workshop or activity with students before you arrive at the global program site. The pre-departure orientation (PDO), for example, is a great opportunity for you to engage in this kind of discussion. Not only will you have a better understanding of the attitudes, perspectives, and experiences students bring to your program, but the PDO also allows you to build community and therefore create a space within the group that is more conducive to having a dialogue about some of the challenges that students might have with each other and within the host country. Below are several recommended strategies for understanding and facilitating conversations on diversity and identity within your student group.

- **Critically Self-Reflect**: Taking a proactive stance to meet student needs requires critical self-reflection; meaning, you must consider your own comfort and preparedness in addressing issues related to diversity when traveling such as stereotypes, microaggressions, prejudices, etc. Some questions to consider are[12]:

  - Are you prepared to facilitate these kinds of discussions?
  - Do you have the skills needed to truly create spaces open to dialogue in which diverse students can have their needs met?
  - Are you able to recognize microaggressions when they occur?
  - Do you have a plan to address microaggressions if you notice them or if they're brought to your attention?
  - How do you communicate to students that they can trust you to support them through challenging incidents?

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[11] Diversity is a social justice term borne from the demand of structural changes and should be defined as such. Its original intent was to close the gap in achievement and opportunity produced by systemic, racially based inequality, yet it has moved to a buzzword closer in meaning to "variety." To better understand the shifting definition of diversity, read the following article: http://diverseeducation.com/article/102190/
[12] Adapted from Willis, 2015.

○ Do you know who to contact if you do not feel comfortable addressing a specific issue?

As one of a few professionals working with students in-country, you must ensure that you are not only prepared to deal with challenging situations related to diversity and identity but also are proactive in creating a safe climate for all students to enjoy and maximize their learning abroad.[13]

● **Set the Stage for Discussion**: Before broaching dialogue around diversity and identity with students, it is critical to first define relevant terms, so that everyone can start the conversation on the same page. Furthermore, the group should establish collective agreements and guidelines that all members agree to follow during the discussion. Some possible guidelines may include:[14]
  ○ Listen respectfully, without interrupting
  ○ Allow everyone the opportunity to speak
  ○ Criticize ideas, not individuals or groups
  ○ Avoid inflammatory language, including name-calling
  ○ Ask questions when something is unclear; do not assume you know others' thinking or motivations
  ○ Don't expect individuals to speak on behalf of their gender, ethnic group, class, status, etc. (or the groups we perceive them to be a part of)

Once guidelines have been solidified, the group should define what the guidelines mean to ensure there is a communal language;[15] for example, how do different people define "respect"; what does a confidentiality agreement entail; why is it important to use "I" statements; etc. An example of activities you can conduct to facilitate this discussion can be found in the University of Houston's Diversity Activities Resource Guide (pgs. 23-25).[16]

● **Engage in Awareness-Raising Activities**: To engage in productive discussions about diversity and identity, students should be allowed the opportunity to reflect on who they are and how their identities shape their perspectives. USC's "Guide to Discussing Identity, Power and Privilege"[17] provides a comprehensive overview of activities and resources you can use to facilitate self-reflection in the areas of identity, systems of power and privilege, gender and sexuality, race and ethnicity, and class and historical disadvantage. Through these activities, students not only gain a deeper sense of self-awareness but also are privy to the cultural frames of

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[13] Ibid, p. 225.
[14] Adapted from the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, Indiana University Bloomington.
[15] Goldbach, 2017.
[16] https://www.uh.edu/cdi/diversity_education/resources/activities/pdf/diversity%20activities-resource-guide.pdf
[17] https://msw.usc.edu/mswusc-blog/diversity-workshop-guide-to-discussing-identity-power-and-privilege/

reference of their fellow group members. This exposure to other's perspectives and experiences can be crucial in preventing, or at least mitigating, future misunderstandings and conflict.

- **Identify students' areas of expertise**: Prior to departure, you should identify different areas of expertise and community cultural wealth[18] that students possess such as language fluency, diplomacy skills, navigational skills, self-care, exercise, nutrition, recreational leader, shopping concierge, historian, accountant, and so on. Identifying areas of expertise gives students leadership roles and helps in the delegation of tasks.[19]

- **Encourage Journal Writing And Blogging**: Journal writing and blogging require students to critically think about their experiences abroad. You should both encourage these activities and create a space in which students can share their writings with the larger group. It is critical to develop and nurture an environment where all students feel comfortable freely sharing, discussing, and debating issues that arise during the program.[20]

- **Conduct Regular Check-Ins**: While in the host country, you should conduct regular one-on-one check-ins with students and proactively initiate dialogue about how they are experiencing their identities in relation to interactions they are having in the host country. This will serve to both address potential concerns and to create a climate in which subjects like race, class, gender, age, disability, and sexual orientation are safe for students to raise before, during, and after these check-ins, and even upon return home.[21]

- **Seek Out Appropriate Resources**: While you are the leader of your education abroad program, you are not expected to be an expert in all things related to diversity and identity. However, we do want you to know who to reach out to if you are unsure about how to handle specific incidents. Below is a list of relevant SCU campus resources that can assist you in navigating diversity and identity abroad. Moreover, we strongly urge you to research support services in-country near the program site. Depending on the context, on the ground support may be able to assist students faster than on-campus resources and may also have more in-depth knowledge on diversity-related challenges specific to the host culture. For example, if a LGBTQA+ student is abroad in a non-western society,

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18 Yosso, 2005.
19 Chang, 2017, p. 19.
20 Ibid.
21 Willis, 2015, p.225.

the Rainbow Resource Center may be limited on the resources it can provide due to its relative western notion of queerness.

SCU Campus Resources

Office for Diversity and Inclusion (ODI)
Shá Duncan Smith - Vice President for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion
Phone: 408 554 5131 (office)
Email: tssmith@scu.edu
Location: Third floor Walsh Administration Building

Raymond V. Plaza, Ph.D. - Director, Office for Diversity and Inclusion
Phone: 408 551 3383 (office)   408 551 6074 (fax)
Email: rplaza@scu.edu
Location: 103 Walsh Administration Building

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
Phone: (408) 554-4501
Email (general): cowellcenter@scu.edu
Location: Cowell Center, Bldg. 701

Office of Multicultural Learning
Phone: (408) 551-7152
Email (general): oml@scu.edu.
Location: 832 Market Street, Santa Clara, CA 95050

Rainbow Resource Center
Phone: 408-551-3397
Email (general): rrc@scu.edu
Location: Benson 11

Office of Student Life
Phone: (408) 554-4583   Fax: (408) 551-1937
Email: osl@scu.edu
Location: Benson Memorial Center, 205

Campus Ministry
Phone: 408-554-4372
Email: campusministry@scu.edu
Location: Benson Center, Room 105

1.3 The Role of Empathy in Leading Culturally Diverse Students

An empathetic disposition is a critical trait for group leaders working with culturally diverse students. This propensity is associated with increased sensitivity to different cultural values and norms, the ability to understand perspectives from a different cultural standpoint and respond appropriately/respectfully to individuals from cultural contexts that differ from your own. Empathy requires responding to concerns and needs in a nonjudgmental fashion, and often manifests itself through caring relationships with students. Researchers have noted that students, especially students from diverse backgrounds, who have caring relationships with faculty are more motivated and perform better academically than students who do not.[22] Various attributes such as listening, being patient, and being supportive reflect a receptivity that leads to caring and can ultimately foster better relations with students.[23] Other attributes that define empathetic behavior include sensitivity, respect, tolerance, acceptance, understanding, flexibility, openness, and humility.[24]

Furthermore, an empathetic leader will provide individualized consideration and recognize student's limitations. For example, while the global program budget covers the costs of necessities for student success, you should consider the financial situation of each student and be cognoscente of adding additional dinners or other aspects to the program that could pressure a financially-restricted student. As has been mentioned, cultivating a climate in which students are comfortable coming to you with issues and concerns is of the utmost importance as a program leader. As such, it is essential to develop and nurture empathetic connections with your culturally diverse students.

1.4 Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

Classroom management refers to those activities of faculty that create a positive climate within which effective teaching and learning can occur.[25] Culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) is an extension of the term that aims at managing classrooms in culturally sensitive ways. This can include utilizing students' backgrounds, rendering of social experiences, prior knowledge, and learning styles in

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[22] Foster, 1995; Gay, 2000; Irvine, 1990; as cited in McAllister & Irvine, 2002.
[23] Noddings, 1984.
[24] McAllister & Irvine, 2002
[25] Martin & Sugarman, 1993.

daily lessons.[26] While CRCM is a well-researched pedagogical approach, in respect to leading education abroad programs, a more appropriate use of the term would be culturally responsive group management (CRGM) in which faculty leaders manage their diverse student groups in culturally competent ways. In order to effectively manage a diverse student group, it is important to acknowledge and be responsive to who students are (cognitively, socially, and emotionally) and create a safety net that equitably responds to student needs. Weinstein, Tomlinson- Clarke, and Curran (2003) cite three requisites of CRCM (that we will use for CRGM): understanding of the self, the other, and the context.[27]

- **Understanding "The Self**"- Recognize that we are all cultural beings with our own beliefs, biases, and assumptions about human behavior. As a faculty leader leading an education abroad program, it is important to explore and reflect upon where your assumptions, attitudes, and biases come from and to understand that how you view the world can lead to misinterpretation of behaviors and inequitable treatment of culturally different students.

- **Understanding "The Other"**- Acknowledge the cultural, racial, ethnic, and class differences that exist among students. As has been stressed, it is important to get to know students before departing on the education abroad program to gain general knowledge about their cultural frames of reference. This knowledge can, in turn, help you to understand students' behavior, rules of decorum and etiquette, communication, and learning styles, among other things.[28]

- **Understanding "The Context**"- Understand the ways in which institutions reflect and perpetuate discriminatory practices of the larger society. As a faculty leader, you should examine your curriculum and general practices to ensure that they don't privilege select groups of students while marginalizing others. Moreover, in respect to understanding the context of the host culture, you should be explicit to students that social inequities may seem particularly visible and tangible in their host country (depending on the site, of course).[29] You should equip students with strategies to understand social inequities and the power and privilege associated with their American identity.

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[26] Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008.
[27] The following list and descriptions were adapted from Weinstein, Tomlinson- Clarke, Curran, 2003.
[28] Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008.
[29] Chang, 2017.

1.5 Considerations for International Students

The SCU international student population is an ever-growing, integral part of the campus community. Since years alone, undergraduate international student enrollment has increased from 3.1% in 2012 to 4.7% in 2019.[30] Ergo, international student participation in global programs is on the rise as well. Accordingly, we must be sensitive to the specific needs of this student demographic, especially during an education abroad program. While studying abroad can be a formative educational experience, international students must go through a plethora of additional processes in order to participate. Important considerations include maintenance of U.S. visa status, host country visa requirements, and the global program timeline, among many others. However, the logistical aspect of going abroad is only one issue.

When international students arrive in the U.S., they are expected to quickly adjust to U.S. society and the U.S. academic system, which can lead to acculturative stress.[31] Consequences of acculturative stress include depression, anxiety, physical complaints, anger, identity confusion, substance abuse, and family conflict.[32] Going abroad and immersing oneself in yet another culture can be an even more difficult experience, as many international students may still be adjusting to and learning American cultural dimensions, values, customs, communication styles, teaching styles, etc. Thus, it is essential to be hyperaware of international student's acculturation process in the host country in addition to interactions with U.S. peers. Empirical research has consistently revealed that social integration and making friends with Americans remains a top challenge for international students.[33] Peer connection is even more difficult for East Asian students due to cultural distance, i.e., the difference in cultural values between countries. By way of illustration, in a 2012 study on the effects of home and host region on intercultural friendships, 38% of the 454 participating international students had no close American friends. Broken down into home regions, the percentage of students without host-national friends was highest among students from East Asia (52%) and lowest for students from northern and central Europe (16%) and Anglophone countries (10%).[34] For this reason and more, facilitating group discussions around diversity, identity, and culture and engaging in team-building activities play a crucial role in leading diverse student groups abroad.

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[30] https://www.scu.edu/diversity/diversity-dashboard/santa-clara-university-trends/
[31] Johnson & Sandhu, 2007.
[32] Berry & Kim, 1988; Sandhu & Asrabadi, 1998
[33] Gareis, 2012.
[34] Ibid.

Host Culture Diversity Climate

2.1 Country Climate Resources

It is imperative, as a faculty leader, to understand the diversity climate of the host culture through which you will be leading students. Being knowledgeable about issues of discrimination, equality, and racism in the host culture as well as providing information on the climate for women, people with disabilities, the LGBTQA+ community, religious minorities, and ethnic and racial minorities, among others, is critical in preparing students for international travel. Below is a list of resources on the country's diverse climate.

- **Diversity Abroad's Culture & Diversity Destination Guides[35]**
  - Provides country-specific climate notes about ethnic minorities, sexual orientation and gender expression, physical disability, religion, and women
- **US Department of State Overseas Advisory Council (OSAC)[36]**
  - Provides country-specific information on security issues abroad
- **The World Factbook[37]**
  - Provides information on the history, people, government, economy, geography, communications, transportation, military, and transnational issues for 267 world entities
- **ISEP Country Handbooks[38]**
  - Provides country-specific information on what students can expect abroad including educational systems, visa regulations, health and safety, issues of daily life, bibliographies, and links to further information on a host country
- **Lonely Planet[39]**
  - Provides planning tools for LGBTQA+ travelers and travelers with disabilities in addition to notes about ethnicity, women's roles in society, religion & beliefs

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[35] https://www.diversityabroad.com/articles/travel-guide

[36] https://www.osac.gov/Pages/Home.aspx

[37] https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/

[38] https://www.isepstudyabroad.org/guides-and-tips/before-you-go/review-your-country-handbook

[39] https://www.lonelyplanet.com/

2.2 Student Perception of Host Climate

The ways students perceive the climate in their host country is likely to be influenced by their lived experiences based on one or more aspects of their identity in the U.S.[40] As such, providing opportunities for students to discuss host culture climate, both prior to departure and while in-country, may help them to develop both coping strategies and realistic expectations.[41] Experiences of negative host country climate (such as hostility, harassment, or discrimination) based on one or more aspects of a students' identity may impact a student's ability and willingness to interact with the host culture, which may in turn impact learning outcomes.[42] Thus, it is critical to incorporate different lessons in group discussions for students to learn how members of the host culture may perceive and treat them, especially in countries that have a history of racism, sexism, classism, ableism, heterosexism, or other "isms". In Argentina, for example, African American students have reported feeling uncomfortable and hyper-aware of their racial identity; in part, because there is no recognizable African descent population in Argentina. One student described her experience as follows:

> *"I began to realize the stares were because of my skin color, not my nationality. I was a black woman in Argentina, a country with people of mostly European descent. Anywhere I went I stuck out like a sore thumb…No one could believe that I was American…One thing stuck with me that I just could not ignore, why hadn't anyone told me about this before I left?"[43]*

Many times, locals can be ignorant to the fact that their comments are perceived by students as racist, such as referring to a student as negro. While the word "negro" in the U.S. is construed as offensive, in Latin America, it is often used as a term of endearment. Formal and informal discussions on the politics of identity (e.g., issues regarding race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexual orientation, to name a few) and the dynamics of power and privilege of the host region, as well as cultural and historical differences between host country and home country, can help students understand and deal with their positions and use these discussions as a point for cultural understanding.

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[40] Sweeney, 2013.
[41] Ibid, p. 7.
[42] Talburt and Stewart, 1999.
[43] Lewis, 2009, p. 51.

Challenges and Discrimination Abroad

3.1 Challenges Abroad

Diverse student populations including ethnic and racial minorities, students of color, students with disabilities, first-generation college students, low and middle-income students, students of particular faiths, LGBTQA+ students, and others, have been historically underrepresented in global educational opportunities. In the most recent Open Doors report,[44] students of color (Latino, Asian, Native Hawaiian, or other Pacific Islander, African-American, Multiracial, and American Indian or Alaska Native) only constituted 29% of the 325,339 students who studied abroad during the 2015/16 academic school year.[45] To mitigate the disproportion of global program participants, empirical research has investigated the barriers to global programs for diverse students. However, minimal empirical research exists that examines diverse students' lived experiences in-country, including their challenges and successes. Thus, a literature review of empirical studies was conducted to shed light on the identified challenges diverse student groups face abroad in order to develop ways to better support students through the on-site experience. A list of these challenges[46] along with considerations for supporting students through them are listed below.

1. Microaggressions from U.S. Peers and Host Nationals[47]

Microaggressions are "the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership."[48] Microaggressions are not always intentional or explicit, and the disparaging nature of microaggressions are subtly hidden within every-day practices and conversation. Many individuals are unaware that a simple compliment or question could be perceived as a microaggression; for example, telling a non-U.S. native: "You speak good English" or telling a person with a disability "You people are so inspiring." Though seemingly harmless, micro-aggressions can produce mental health issues such as feelings of low self-esteem, humiliation, and dehumanization. Microaggressions can also create a hostile environment leading to lower work productivity & educational learning.

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[44] Open Doors is the most widely used data instrument in the field of international education.
[45] Institute of International Education, 2017.
[46] Adapted from Bayman, 2017
[47] Doan, 2002; Willis, 2015.
[48] Sue et al., 2007.

In Willis' 2015 study of the experiences of 19 Black women who studied abroad through community colleges, all 19 reported experiencing some form of microaggressions, either from U.S. peers or the host culture. The microaggressions experienced from U.S. peers were stated to be more troubling than what the students faced from the local culture. One student explained:

> *"Just some of the comments that [the white students] would make were a little bit uncomfortable… But I just laughed it off as a joke. I mean I just let it slide. But at the same time, I started to distance myself from them. I noticed that I wouldn't hang out too much with them going out or I wouldn't hang out with them in a lot of large crowds."[49]*

How can you support a student who experiences microaggressions?[50]

1. Examine your own unconscious biases.
2. Interrupt microaggressions when you hear them.
3. Listen carefully and sincerely to students' concerns if they feel someone has demonstrated microaggressive behavior towards them.
4. Facilitate discussions with your student group about microaggressions, their consequences, and how to recognize them. One tool you can use to do this is the Microaggression Activity by Breaking the Prejudice Habit.[51]

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2. Racism[52]

The theme of racism came up frequently across many of the reviewed studies. Subthemes of this challenge included profiling, discrimination (see section 3.2), and stereotyping. While some students chose to ignore or minimize these affronts, others were deeply affected by them. In Bruce's (2012) study, one African-American student who studied in India explained the complex battles she faced with her classmates, her professor, and the society:

> *"I had a professor, a very racist professor. I ended up leaving a month early, just because of everything I couldn't handle anymore."[53]*

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[49] Willis, 2015, p. 217
[50] Adapted from Office of Diversity and Inclusive Excellence, The University of Arizona.
[51] http://breakingprejudice.org/teaching/group-activities/microaggression-activity/
[52] Bruce, 2012; Doan, 2002; Rawlins, 2012; Sweeney, 2014; Wick, 2011; Willis, 2015
[53] Bruce, 2012, p. 72.

Experiencing racism abroad can cause even more stress and anxiety when incidents aren't taken seriously by in-country staff. A student from Sweeney's (2014) study explained that when she tried to report a racist encounter to in-country staff, they dismissed her story. The staff member commented that she was shocked, as things like that didn't happen there,

> *"Pretty much discrediting my story. And after that, I was like, eh. Just keep my mouth shut and keep moving."[54]*

How can you support a student who experiences racism?[55]

1. Engage with the [Office of Student Student](). The Office of Student Life offers support and resources for students facing bias incidents, and other challenges. They welcome faculty contact concerning student issues.
2. Facilitate discussion on host country climate with students (see section 2).
3. Be proactive in discussing issues of power and privilege within your student group. A tool for facilitating this discussion can be found at Teaching Tolerance.[56]
4. Approach racist concerns with compassion and care rather than skepticism. Do not ignore, minimize, or dismiss concerns.
5. Collaborate with SCU Campus & Psychological Services (CAPS) and on-site counseling services to discuss ways of helping students cope. Be sure to provide access to psychological and support services for the student including other SCU campus resources included in section 1.2.
6. Pay attention to group dynamics. Be aware of scapegoating and bullying among students.

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3. Harassment[57]

Harassment was most prevalent for female students abroad. Different challenges included sexual harassment and assault, sexualization of race, and lack of knowledge about how to culturally respond. In Rawlins' (2012) study that looked at the intersectionality of race and gender within the experience of students abroad, she noted that almost all the young women interviewed struggled with experiences of public harassment, "most of which involved being catcalled or receiving unsolicited evaluative or sexual comments from men in public, although a few reported being touched, having objects thrown at them, or being trailed or followed home by a strange man."[58] In Costa

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[54] Sweeney, 2014, p. 113
[55] Adapted from Diversity Abroad, 2016.
[56] https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/talking-about-race-and-racism
[57] Rawlins, 2012; Willis, 2015.
[58] Rawlins, 2012, p. 477.

Rica, for example, while students had been warned about piropos (catcalls), they still found this cultural norm frustrating and difficult to ignore. Part of their frustration was their lack of knowledge about how to effectively respond to this public harassment. Effective responses were hampered both by the students' lack of fluency in the language and by their inability to understand or accept a cultural context in which piropos were viewed as harmless and liked by women.[59] As one student recounted:

> *"I think I'm quicker in America to be like 'oh shut up.' And there ... because of the language, you know you don't really know what to say to defend yourself, so in case something was to happen, I think I would tend to ignore it more, not even try to start something, because if something was to happen I wasn't sure what the cultural codes for defending yourself were."*[60]

How can you support a student who experiences harassment?

1. Collect critical incidents. Have a system in place for reporting all things, big or small, to appropriate campus units.[61]
2. Report incidents to local authorities, if warranted.
3. Connect students to local psychological and counseling services, if needed. Contact SCU Campus & Psychological Services (CAPS) and Campus Advocacy Resources and Education (CARE) for additional assistance.
4. Institute the use of a buddy/ally system for students. Have students act as support systems and allies for one another in the face of harassment in any form.

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4. Tensions with Whiteness and White Privilege between Peers[62]

A "white" peer refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa.[63] Tensions with white U.S. peers happen for a variety of reasons and circumstances, and these relationships are often more challenging than those with host nationals. One Asian-American student noted that she was shocked by the ignorance of the white American students abroad who had narrow views of who was American, not acknowledging that she was also an American.[64] These tensions are

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[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid, p. 489.
[61] Diversity Abroad, 2016.
[62] Chang, 2017; Doan, 2002; Rawlins, 2012, Sweeney, 2014; Willis, 2015.
[63] United States Census Bureau, 2010.
[64] Doan, 2002.

exacerbated when white students are culturally insensitive to their diverse peers or the host communities. One student noted that there was uncomfortable dynamics with white peers when students of color shared the counter-stories of their lived experiences that contradicted the experiences of their white classmates. For example, when a host country professor asked if race was still an issue in the United States:

> *"The American kids were like, no, I don't think so, you know, we have a Black president now, so life is great…So, I was like, hmmm. OK. Once again, you don't have to go through some of the things that I do, but OK. And I said no, I think it is still very much an issue in America as well. And then they looked at me again like, oh, this girl."[65]*

Chang (2017) discovered that Latina students were particularly disturbed by the behaviors of white students in Guatemala. Specifically, one of the recurring issues that arose was white students' commodification of indigenous people in Guatemala. Participants observed that white students treated indigenous people "as objects rather than full human beings with hearts and souls."[66]

How can you support a student who experiences tensions with Whiteness and White Privilege?

1. Be proactive rather than reactive. One way to do this is to examine systems of power and privilege with students through an activity called "Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack" by Peggy McIntosh.[67] The objective of the activity is to confront entrenched systems of power and privilege, and identify common situations when privilege is not acknowledged.
2. Engage with the [Office of Student Student](). The Office of Student Life offers support and resources for students facing bias incidents, and other challenges. They welcome faculty contact concerning student issues.

5. Isolation Based on One or more Parts of a Student's Identity[68]

Isolation most often occurs when a student is the only one of a particular identity (e.g., race/ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation, gender expression, age, socioeconomic status, ability, etc.) on a global program. This alienation can be compounded by experiences of microaggressions perpetuated by U.S. peers and the host culture. Being the only one of a particular identity can be disconcerting for participants as they may feel like they don't have anyone who can understand what they are going through. A student from Willis (2015) explained the situation as follows:

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[65] Sweeney, 2014, p. 109.
[66] Chang, 2017, p. 13.
[67] https://msw.usc.edu/mswusc-blog/diversity-workshop-guide-to-discussing-identity-power-and-privilege/
[68] Bruce, 2012; Doan, 2002; Sweeney, 2014; Willis, 2015.

"So, it was like I really didn't have that, that other bond with someone that could understand the same experience; because my experience was completely different from everyone else's. Because there were other Hispanics, there were other Asians, there were other Whites. There were no other Blacks, so it was just me. So...I don't have anyone that can share . . . people who, you know, can understand your plight and what you're doing and what you're going through."[69]

A student from Chang (2017) also noted that ethnic groups tended to segregate themselves racially. From the moment her group arrived in Guatemala, she began to see signs of this racial segregation and noted that,

"Just like I had observed while growing up, las gringas stayed with las gringas."[70]

How can you support a student who experiences isolation?
1. Provide opportunities for students to speak with counselors/advisers/students at SCUsupport services (see section 1.2) and SCU student-led clubs and organizations. Similarly, find opportunities for students to meet with local people that share parts of their identity at the global program site, if possible.
2. Connect students to Diversity Abroad Community Forums.[71] This resource allows students to address issues and concerns with diverse global program returnees.
3. Pay attention to who gets excluded from bonding in the group. Be aware of any implicit hierarchies that may be forming and be sure to stop these formations from solidifying when necessary.[72]
4. Create a safe space for students to speak with you about their concerns and issues.
5. Contact Global Engagement for additional resources.

6. Negotiating Identities[73]

A critical challenge specific to diverse global program participants is the process of negotiating the intersections of one's identity including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and nationality. In Wick (2011), one student described how she negotiated her ethnic identity while studying in Ghana as follows:

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[69] Willis, 2015, p. 217.

[70] Chang, 2017, p. 11.

[71] https://www.diversityabroad.com/forums

[72] Diversity Abroad, 2016

[73] Rawlins, 2012; Sweeney, 2014; Wick, 2011; Willis, 2015.

My study abroad shaped how I see myself by realizing that other people may see me differently. I am Black American/Jamaican and in America, I am viewed as a "regular" Black woman. […] But in Ghana some Ghanaians could look at me and could immediately tell that I am mixed with something else aside from West African.[74]

The intersectionalities of identity add to the complexity of diverse student experiences, and the different categories (such as race, class, gender, etc.), contribute to overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination and disadvantage. For example, in some of the reviewed empirical studies, students had to hide or mask one or a multitude of their identities while abroad. By way of illustration, in West Africa, women experienced microaggressions related to their sexual orientation and skin color in combination with their gender.[75] Participants who studied in Nigeria realized quickly after hearing homophobic comments that it was not safe to be "out" in the way they were proud to be lesbian and bisexual women at home in the San Francisco Bay Area.[76]

How can you support a student who is negotiating one or more parts of their identity?
1. Make sure to prepare students for the climate of the host culture (see section 2).   2. If possible, get to know students before traveling abroad. This may entail meeting each student individually to ascertain any concerns and fears.[77]   3. Provide a safe space while abroad for students to talk to you about challenges or difficulties they are experiencing related to the intersection of one or more parts of their identity.   4. Connect students to appropriate on-site and SCU resources (see section 1.2).   5. Connect students to Diversity Abroad Community Forums.[78] This resource allows students to address issues and concerns with past global program participants.

7. Unmet Expectations During Heritage-Seeking[79]

Heritage students are those who have a global experience in a location that is linked in some way (for example, linguistically, culturally, historically) to his/her family or cultural background.[80] Among students of color, in particular, studying abroad in heritage destinations contributes

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[74] Wick, 2011, p. 128.

[75] Willis, 2015.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Diversity Abroad, 2016.

[78] https://www.diversityabroad.com/forums

[79] Morgan et al., 2002; Sweeney, 2014; Wick, 2011.

[80] Forum on Education Abroad, 2017.

to their identity development by fostering a more grounded sense of who they are, a more profound sense of purpose, and confidence in themselves.[81] Many students on these programs go for the experience of finding their "roots" and can be disappointed when they aren't received as anticipated by host nationals.

Morgan, Mwegelo, & Turner (2002) conducted a study of African-American women who went to Africa to find a link to their ancestral roots and familial love among African "sisters." The women reported that they expected their initial meeting to be more of a welcoming home from the African women, yet, one female student stated, "I feel as if the Africans are exploiting us because of being Americans."[82] Among SCU's LatinX community, study abroad advisers report seeing students have "shocking" experiences in their heritage destinations. Students have described feeling displaced and unwelcomed both in the U.S. and in the heritage country. These issues can cause more harm than good if not properly worked through. Other instances of frustration during heritage sojourns occur when White students receive more attention from local hosts than the heritage students. These students can find this attention unsettling and unexpected.[83]

How can you support a student who experiences unmet expectations?

1. Work with students to manage their expectations about host culture interaction before going abroad.
2. Design activities that connect students with the host culture in meaningful ways.
3. Suggest ways for students to get more involved with the local culture; for example, by volunteering with a local organization.
4. Provide opportunities for students to critically reflect on their experiences and interactions with the host culture, both individually and collectively.
5. Connect students with the Office of Multicultural Center if they would like to broach ethnic-specific issues.

The challenges cited above are not intended to be an exhaustive list of all the kinds of incidents diverse students may experience during an education abroad program but rather provide insights as to different types of situations you may want to prepare yourself for as a faculty leader. These identified challenges are based on empirical research in the international education field. However, anecdotal accounts point to a wide range of other challenges you will want to consider. The key takeaways when working with diverse students abroad are as follows.

1. Be proactive in fostering an environment of trust in which students are encouraged to share their concerns with you and each other.
2. Approach student issues compassionately and without skepticism.

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[81] Willis, 2015.
[82] Morgan et al., 2002, p. 344.
[83] Landau & Moore, 2001; as cited in Willis, 2015.

3. Utilize outside resources and expertise to support students throughout the global program experience

3.2 Discrimination Abroad

Discrimination abroad based on one or more aspects of a student's identity is a well-documented occurrence. Both empirical and anecdotal evidence highlight discrimination as a major challenge for students to overcome during the global program experience, which is why we have included it as a section separate from the above challenges. While discussing issues such as stereotypes, microaggressions, and prejudices with students may help mitigate discrimination within the group, it is important to be able to identify the different ways in which discrimination can take place during an education abroad program. Below is a list of examples of discriminatory acts students may experience abroad.[84]

1. Being Identified First as an American

When students from diverse backgrounds (and especially students of color) have an global experience,they may be surprised to be identified by the host culture as an American first. Racial andethnic minority students, in particular, may be put in a situation in which they are forced torenegotiate their identities, especially if "American" is not a term they use to identify themselves. For example, as described in Doan (2002), a Vietnamese-American student who studied in France noted that there was discrimination, "but only hostility of being American. Europeans could care less about Vietnamese status. The racism is different there. Obviously, in the U.S. it is more explicit since we do not have nationality in the U.S. as Americans."[85] Similarly, students may also experience feelings of discord by being labeled as an "American" rather than a "Californian," as many students from California have a strong allegiance to their Californian identity.

2. Not Being Identified as an American

Conversely, some students may perceive a denial of their American or dual identity by their host culture while abroad. This rejection is often attributed to preexisting racial notions of what Americans should look like. In Doan (2002), several of the respondents commented that whenever they would say they were American, there was always a follow-up question, such as, "Yes, but where are you really from?"[86]

3. Having Comments Made About One's Appearance

While students may experience comments based on their dress and/or appearance, students of particular identities (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, age, physical ability, and spirituality, to name a few) may experience additional comments based on their phenotype or one or more aspects of their physical appearance. A

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[84] The following list was adapted from Diversity Abroad, 2016.
[85] Doan, 2002, p.82.
[86] Doan, 2002, p.96.

Dominican and Puerto Rican American student who spent a month in Italy explained that she and two other Dominican American women received comments from Italian men as a result of their skin color, hair texture, and gender.[87] Additionally, given the current refugee crisis in Europe, minority students may be misidentified as belonging to other minority groups while abroad and may experience discrimination based on how much these groups are stigmatized.

4. Experiencing Fetishization and Objectification

In addition to receiving comments based on appearance, students may also experience fetishization and objectification based on physical traits and characteristics by host nationals as well as by their peers that can manifest in unwanted attention or harassment. As mentioned in the challenges section, women in Rawlins' (2012) study were catcalled, received unsolicited evaluative or sexual comments from men in public, and a few reported being followed or touched.

5. Having Concerns Over Safety

As a result of increased attention based on one or more aspects of a students' identity, students can also report feeling uncomfortable and/or unsafe. These feelings can range from uneasiness and discomfort to fear of physical assault, which can have a significant impact on a student's perceived personal security and successful adaptation to the host culture. For example, in Willis (2015), gendered incidents of harassment and assault were troubling for participants in Italy, in particular, and they spoke of the need to adjust to the cultural difference regarding what is publicly condoned in the country.[88]

6. Experiencing Language Discrimination

While going abroad and mastering a new language can be difficult for any student, evidence suggests that others may endorse stereotyped notions regarding the intellectual abilities of racialized minorities which can hamper their language fluency.[89] For example, in Spain, a host mother was reported blaming a students' lack of Spanish skills and their relationship disconnect on the fact that the student was "of a darker complexion."[90] Furthermore, even in instances when minorities may appear to look like host country nationals (e.g., an Asian American student studying in Asia, or an African American student studying in Africa), students report experiencing discrimination based on their accent or ability to speak the host country language; indeed, in some instances, students report being made to feel ashamed for not speaking the host language better

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[87] Willis, 2015, p. 220.
[88] Willis, 2015, p.223.
[89] Willis & Delalue, 2016; as cited in Diversity Abroad, 2016.
[90] Willis, 2015, p. 221.

7. Experiencing Discrimination from Peers

In addition to discriminatory experiences with the host culture, students can also experience discrimination from other Americans studying abroad.[91] While the research on within-group discrimination is limited, there is a belief that this type of discrimination is particularly toxic because it undermines a person's sense of belonging to a group.[92] One Asian-American student noted that she was shocked by the ignorance of White American students abroad who had narrow views of who was American, not acknowledging that she was also an American.[93] This type of reaction from her fellow sojourners made her feel "excluded from being an American, and from being a citizen of the United States."[94]

Facilitating Group Dynamics

4.1 The Role of Group Leader and Facilitator

As a faculty member leading an education abroad program, you will be in a position in which you will take on many roles, including that of teacher, advisor, counselor, mediator, mentor, translator, and cultural guide, among others. The most significant role, however, will be that of group leader and facilitator. Facilitator, in this sense, means guiding and assisting students in learning from one another and their host culture, re-examining preconceived notions about diversity and identity, rejecting ethnocentricity, and developing as individuals and a group through self-exploration and dialogue.

Being an active group leader and facilitator is of primary concern since group climate and cohesiveness are both of fundamental importance to the process of learning in a foreign culture.[95] Group facilitation stresses the significance of a positive group climate and transforms the teacher from being the key figure in the learning process to becoming a partner in creating successful group dynamics. According to Rogers (1961), functioning as a facilitator, the leader needs to possess three basic characteristics: empathy, acceptance, and congruence.[96]

1. **Empathy** - Being an empathetic leader means knowing how to interpret and respond to group members' emotions. During an education abroad program, it requires being sensitive to the group climate and students' needs.
2. **Acceptance** - Like empathy, acceptance refers to the leader's positive attitude towards the students and processes throughout the group life.

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[91] Willis & Delalue, 2016; as cited in Diversity Abroad, 2016.
[92] Lopez et al., 2015; as cited in Diversity Abroad, 2016.
[93] Doan, 2002.
[94] Ibid, p. 98.
[95] Gałajda, 2012.
[96] The following list was adapted from Gałajda, 2012, p. 93.

3. **Congruence** - A leader's congruence could be defined as rapport within oneself which is perceived by other people as confidence and honesty. Leaders who are not very confident in themselves may be reluctant to admit to their mistakes. Secondly, leaders should be open to bringing their personal feelings into the life of a group. Being honest about one's emotions helps to avoid situations in which a leader's authority is undermined by lack of trust by the students.

Moreover, when working with groups in an international context, faculty must engage in 'transformational leadership' (a term rooted in organizational psychology) which reflects four characteristic features of a leader-facilitator: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.[97]

These concepts are described as follows:[98]

By **idealized influence**, the group leader stresses the importance of purpose and commitment throughout the course of group life. Consequently, such leaders are respected by the students who identify with them.

Inspirational leaders are optimistic about the future of the group and students' achievements. By strongly motivating students, the facilitator shows them a sense of purpose and fully engages them in the process of learning within a foreign culture. As a result, students become emotionally committed and involved in all group processes as well as willing to invest their time and effort in the group life.

Transformational leaders **stimulate** their students intellectually by asking questions and encouraging them to think deeply about the learning process. Moreover, mistakes are treated as a possibility to learn and as a sign of taking risks. Cross-cultural mistakes and misunderstandings are especially salient learning opportunities for students during an education abroad program.

Finally, a transformational leader should possess the element of **individualized consideration** which allows for the individual contribution that each learner can make to the group; for example, utilizing areas of expertise that students possess including language fluency, diplomacy skills, navigation, etc. Transformational leaders know that being sensitive to students' individual problems and needs should be of primary importance in facilitating group dynamics. An empathetic and supportive leader-facilitator gains students' respect and trust since they are concerned not only with the learning process but also students' personal lives and experiences in the host country.

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[97] Bass & Avolio, 1994.
[98] Derived from Gałajda, 2012, p. 94-95.

4.2 Group Formation and Development

The role of a facilitator in creating positive group dynamics is crucial. Thus, it is important to be aware of the process of group formation and development to recognize that these processes evolve according to some general patterns. By acquiring a basic foundational knowledge of group development, you will be able to identify the processes and the types of interactions taking place in your student group. According to Tuckman's (1965) developmental model of group process, there are four general stages of group development among small groups: forming, storming, norming, and performing. Notwithstanding, while Tuckman was able to divide group development into four stages based on empirical research, the model does not take into consideration that different groups develop in different ways. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that group dynamics can form differently in distinct environments. For example, group dynamics in the classroom, on excursions, and during downtime may all be unique.

Tuckman (1965) Model of Small Group Development

Forming
- First stage characterized by 'testing and dependence'
- Group becomes orientated to task
- Group creates boundaries for ground rules
- Group members test the boundaries for interpersonal and task behaviors
- Group members establish rela\onships with leader and each other

Storming
- Second stage characterized by intergroup conflict
- Group experiences lack of unity
- Polarization around interpersonal issues
- Resistance moving into unknown areas of interpersonal relations
- "Group members become hostile toward one another and the leader as a means of expressing their individuality and resisting the forma\on of group structure" (p. 386)

Norming
- Third stage characterized by group cohesion
- Group members accept each other's idiosyncrasies and express personal opinions
- Roles and norms are established
- Group members discover the most effective ways to work with one another
- The group becomes an entity as members develop in-group feeling and seek to maintain and perpetuate the group

Performing
- Fourth stage is characterized by 'functional role relatedness' (p. 387)
- Group members adapt and play roles that enhance the task activities
- Group structure is supportive of task performance

- Roles become flexible and functional
- Strong group energy and problem-solving

As the above model demonstrates, group dynamics evolve and develop over time. Thus, there is no universal rule for group leaders about group management. The interaction and energy among students change constantly and may take different forms, both positive and negative.[99] The purpose of the above model is to provide you with insight of the general stages of small group development as you facilitate group dynamics during your education abroad program.

4.3 Relationship-Building

Developing deep bonds and new friendships with peers have been cited as some of the most rewarding aspects of a student's global experience.[100] Peer connections can serve as cultural buffers and sources of comfort during the process of adjustment to new environments.[101] Similarly, negative group dynamics can adversely impact a students' learning and success abroad. For this reason, faculty leaders must stress the importance of inclusivity and acceptance of cultural differences within a global program group.

While empirical research has identified the reasons for why students make connections to other students abroad, (generally based on similar interests, experiences, and cultural backgrounds),[102] program leaders should highly discourage the formation of clusters or cliques as they can cause students to feel excluded, rejected, and ignored.

The Office of Intercultural Affairs at Stonehill College has put together a book of icebreakers and team builders for diversity.[103] Engaging in activities outlined in this book can help students from culturally diverse backgrounds build relationships and a sense of community among one another.

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[99] Gałajda, 2012
[100] Bruce, 2012; Doan, 2002; Minton, 2016; Sweeney, 2014; Wick, 2011; Willis, 2015.
[101] Willis, 2015.
[102] Bruce, 2012; Chang, 2017; Doan, 2002; Minton 2016; Sweeney, 2014; Willis, 2015.
[103]https://studentlife.mit.edu/sites/default/files/Diversity-based%20Teambuilders%20and%20Icebreakers%20from%20Stonehill%20College.pdf

Conclusion

Following the proposed strategies, recommendations, and considerations presented in the resource guide has the potential to enhance the quality of the global experience for culturally diverse students on education abroad programs. We recognize that our faculty leaders bring with them a multitude of competencies, experiences, skills, and expertise to successfully lead education abroad programs. Therefore, our intent is to assist our proficient leaders in further developing their prowess in the areas of student diversity and identity abroad. Diverse students are significant contributors to the learning that takes place in education abroad and their identities present a strength in contributing to larger discourses around globalization, equity, and social justice.[104] Thus, faculty should work hard to identify student's strengths, such as their community cultural wealth,[105] in order to better incorporate these values and to understand and address any potential needs that students might have while abroad.[106] While the resource guide covers many topics, there is still much to be further researched and explored. Notwithstanding, we hope that this resource guide can contribute to the larger discourse around increasing access, diversity, equity, inclusion, and student success in education abroad.

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104 Chang, 2017.
105 Yosso, 2005.
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