

Focus Group Questions Fall 2001, Past Study Abroad Participants

Opening Questions

(3:00) To start off with, please introduce yourself and tell us your major and where you studied abroad.

Thank you all for coming. We're very excited that you've made some time in your day to get together and speak with us about your study abroad experience. Before we jump into the questions, let me just provide you with a little background about this process.

Purpose of the Sessions:

As part of a Bush Foundation grant, the University is working to integrate study abroad throughout the U of M, systemwide, in all colleges and departments. As past study abroad participants, your feedback today will be critical to that process. Basically, we are interested in finding out how study abroad has affected you and how you have been able to use what you have learned studying abroad since you've returned to campus.

Before we begin, there are some basic ground rules that we'd like to go over with you so that this session can be productive and interesting for all involved.

- Now there are no wrong answers during this conversation, and we hope that you will be as candid as possible. All conversations within this room will remain confidential, and we won't use any names in our final reports. We also ask that whatever is said in this room remains in this room.
- You don't need to agree with others, but we ask that you listen respectfully as others share their views. We're hoping for a good, lively discussion here today, so feel free to respectfully disagree.
- Some quick logistical concerns. We ask that you turn off your cellular phones and pagers during the session. If you must respond to a call, please do so as quietly as possible and rejoin the group as quickly as you can.
- And, you may have noticed the tape-recorder. We will be taping the session because it's sometimes hard to get all of the information down that we would like to. We're really interested in what you have to say, and want to make sure that we can record all of the helpful things that are discussed here today.
- Finally, keep in mind that we're interested in both positive and negative comments, and that the negative comments are sometime the most helpful and interesting. With that said, let's begin.

Introductory Questions

- (3:05) How has study abroad affected you?
- (3:10) How has study abroad affected your undergraduate education?
- (3:20) Thinking back to when you first contemplated studying abroad, what did you expect to learn out of the experience?
- (3:25) How were those expectations developed? What did your advisers/professors say? What did fellow students say?

Transition Questions

Now, let's talk for a moment about the actual study abroad experience.

- (3:30) Specifically thinking about your education and your major, did you learn anything studying abroad that you think you wouldn't have learned if you had stayed on campus?
 - Were you academically prepared to study abroad? Were courses that you had taken before studying abroad helpful?
 - If you were a professor, how would you prepare your students to study abroad?

Key Questions

- (3:40) Returning to the US, have you been able to integrate what you learned during your study abroad experience in your University courses/area of study?
- (3:45) If you were a professor, how would you ensure that your study abroad students had the opportunity to use what they had learned studying abroad in your classroom.
- (3:55) If you were the President, how would you ensure that study abroad was integrated at an institutional level?
 - How can or have you shared your study abroad experience with other students?

Ending Questions

- (4:05) (After providing a summary of the conversation) Is this an accurate summary?
- (4:10) Are there any issues that we've missed?