We integrated service learning in a faculty-led study abroad course with the goal of our students achieving cultural learning and thereby gaining personal and professional growth. The purpose of this presentation is to: (a) describe the best practices of guided reflection to achieve cultural learning, (b) briefly describe the study abroad course, and (c) describe implementation of strategies to promote guided reflection based on best practice recommendations by Schmidt and Brown (2016).

Study abroad has resulted in cultural learning, personal growth and professional development in nursing students (Kelleher, 2013; Kokko, 2011). However, the full potential of service learning has not been achieved due to inadequate use of guided reflection (Brown & Schmidt, 2016). Based on their research, Hatcher, Bringle, and Muthia (2004) recommended integration of course content with service learning and that this integration should be clearly communicated to students. Service learning should include participation in an activity that meets community needs and guided reflection on the connection of that service activity to course content. Guided reflection learning activities are accepted as the best strategy to assist students to make these connections. Rather than occasional, free-flowing writing, daily journaling that follows prompts or structured questions is recommended (Amerson, 2014; Hatcher et al., 2004). The structure of journaling should be guided by a rubric and prompts to help students describe their experiences, connect them to course content, and integrate experiences, course content and personal values (Hatcher, et al. 2004). This structure was very similar to the framework promoted by Schmidt and Brown (2016) that included the “What?”, “So what?”, and “What now?” with specific guided reflection prompts that we chose to use in development of a faculty-led study abroad course.

The study abroad course included a preparation phase that was provided with distance technologies to students at three sites and was followed by two weeks of study abroad in Ghana. We partnered with staff from an international health system to develop a service learning activity (a medication safety course) with the nursing staff. In addition, we had a short service learning experience at a residential home for children with disabilities. We visited many cultural and historic sites with our guide who provided educational background information for our students.

We began the two weeks by encouraging students to reflect every day with journals that contained the prompts provided by Schmidt and Brown (2016) pasted on the inside of the cover. The first week of journaling focused on describing their experiences as the “What?”. We discussed course content and experiences during the second week to cover the “So what?”. A few weeks after students returned home, they wrote and submitted a summary paper that covered all the prompts, including “What now?” to incorporate their own personal values in the context of the study abroad experience. This summary paper was evaluated with an analytic rubric that included these prompts and was adapted from Dennison, Rosselli, and Dempsey (2015). In this presentation we provide some short examples of student reflections to illustrate the guided reflection process and evaluation of student learning outcomes. In summary, guided reflection with daily journaling and group discussions during the study abroad phase prepared students to write a summary guided reflection paper to achieve cultural learning.
Keywords:
Guided reflection, Service learning and Study abroad

References:


Abstract Summary:
This presentation includes a description of the authors’ application of best practices in service learning with guided reflection strategies to promote cultural learning in a faculty-led study abroad course. Examples of the processes and outcomes of guided reflection strategies are included.

Content Outline:
Title: Best Practices in a Faculty-Led Study Abroad Course

1. Introduction/Background
2. Best Practices
   1. Partnership as Service Learning
   2. Connect Course Content to Service Learning
   3. Guided Reflection
3. Partnership in Service Learning and Course
   1. Partnership
   2. Preparation Phase
   3. Study Abroad Phase
4. Guided Reflection Strategies
   1. Daily Journaling with Prompts/Questions
   2. Discussion and interactive strategies
   3. Summary Paper and Rubric
   4. What, So what, What now?
5. Discussion/Conclusion
First Primary Presenting Author

**Primary Presenting Author**
Cynthia Anderson Elverson, PhD, RN, NNP-BC
South Dakota State University
College of Nursing
Associate Professor
Sioux Falls SD
USA

**Author Summary:** Dr. Elverson co-designed and co-led a three credit, study abroad course for nursing and health science students. The course incorporated service learning in partnership with groups and communities in Ghana in 2017. The course will also be offered in 2019.

Second Author
Ruth Klawiter, MSN, RN
South Dakota State University
College of Nursing
Instructor
Sioux Falls SD
USA

**Author Summary:** Ruth Klawiter has traveled extensively with South Dakota State University (SDSU) Travel Abroad. She has accompanied students to India, Egypt, China, Tibet, Poland, and Ghana, West Africa. Her previous employment with Sanford Health in Sioux Falls created a unique partnership with SDSU and Sanford World Clinics in Ghana West Africa. This partnership created a Service Learning experience with the SDSU students and the clinic nurses in Ghana.