Title:
Preparing Nursing Students for International Learning Experiences

Karen M. Lundberg, MS
Cheryl A. Corbett, MSN
Debra Edmunds, MS
College of Nursing, Brigham Young University, Provo, UT, USA

Session Title:
Advancing World Health Through Nursing Students' Study Abroad Experiences: Shared Insights

Slot:
D 07: Friday, 28 July 2017: 10:45 AM-12:00 PM
Scheduled Time:
10:45 AM

Keywords:
learning strategies, study abroad and travel preparation

References:


Abstract Summary:
Nursing students completing a cultural preparatory course before international study abroad benefit both students and faculty. Nursing faculty share the advantages of students completing the preparatory course and various course learning activities.

Learning Activity:

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<tr>
<th>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>EXPANDED CONTENT OUTLINE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Identify key elements international students must understand before travel.</td>
<td>1. Importance of preparing for international travel a. Explore students’ expectations/fears b. Enhance students’ experiences c. Ability to engage quickly d. Unexpected events such as illness, itinerary changes 1. Key elements to</td>
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**Discuss a variety of learning activities faculty can utilize in a cultural-prep class.**

**Useful learning activities to assist students in learning about culture**
- Readings
- Oral presentations
- Guest lectures
- Role playing
- Videos
- Class discussions

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**Abstract Text:**

**Purpose:** Faculty at a western United States university found it essential for student nurses participating in a clinical international experience to complete a preparatory course prior to in-country experience. Students prepared by learning about travel expectations, culture and people, course requirements and personal perceptions. The purpose of this presentation is to discuss the significance of cultural preparation before travel, and describe a cultural preparatory course.

**Methods:** Students selected to participate in an international experience are required to complete a one-credit cultural preparatory class. The course is taught the semester before student travel. Course outcomes include assisting students to understand their own personal worldview and perceived experience expectations, in addition to studying about the culture and people. Students also prepare to practice nursing in an international setting. Additional preparation includes the development of an emergency plan for possible in-country disasters. Teaching methods include book reports, oral presentations on culture topics, guest lectures, videos, and reading articles. Class discussions are very helpful concerning culture shock and culture biases. These important discussions help students identify their personal risks of maladaptation to new international experiences. Students are also given opportunities to voice fears or concerns during discussions whereupon faculty can address these issues prior to travel. Presenting faculty have assisted students in preparation for a variety of international experiences including India, Vietnam, Tonga and refugee populations.

**Results:** Students prepared for international travel have a more rewarding encounter and adapt quicker to their new situation, allowing for earlier engagement in the international experience. End of travel student feedback provided faculty with suggestions for improved preparation such as guest speakers from different religious communities and increased language skills.

**Conclusions:** The benefits of cultural preparation contribute to a more enlightened international experience for both faculty and students. Continued preparation is vital for international travel. Faculty are encouraged to implement a similar type of preparatory program for international study abroad programs.