UCLA

Intercultural Learning: Programs Survey 2015-2016

Dashew Center for International Students & Scholars (DCISS) Report

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Summary

This report profiles a study of Dashew Center programs during the 2015-2016 academic year. The objective of the study was to assess the departmental outcome below. The objective is met through qualitative and quantitative analysis of responses to an open response survey question about intercultural learning.

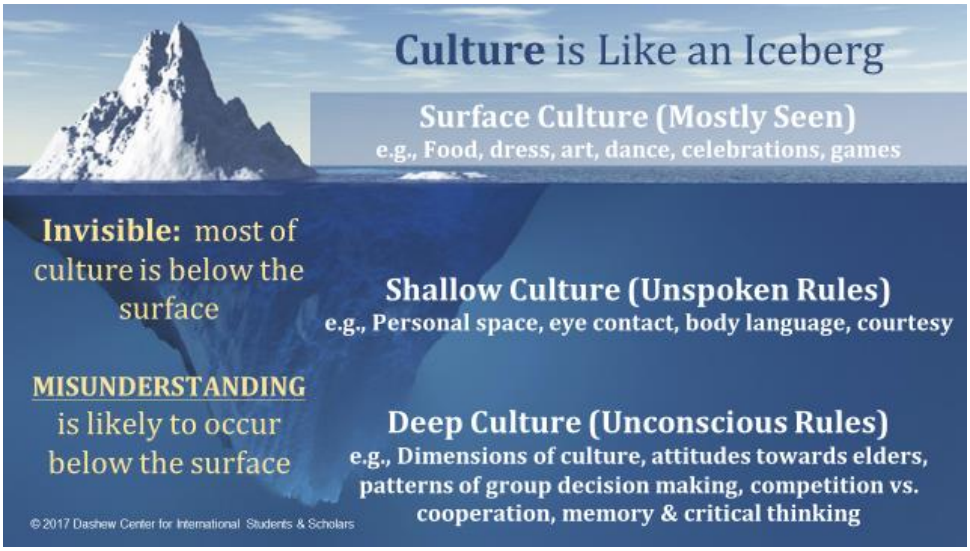
OUTCOME OF INTEREST
Facilitate cross-cultural learning for international and domestic constituents

FINDINGS
The effectiveness of programs to facilitate cultural learning among participants is mixed. Some programs are better at this than others. Programs with the most deep intercultural learning include: Hosted Family Thanksgiving Dinner with Alumni, Welcome Carnival, Language Exchange, International Speed Dating, and the Global Siblings Program. These programs explicitly promote intercultural learning more than programs with shallow levels of learning. Yet some programs catalyze more intercultural learning than expected. For instance, World Café spurs more intercultural learning than expected given that little explicit promotion of this learning occurs during the program. This is an indicator of participants' motivation to seek this kind of knowledge from others. Perhaps the international and global theme encourages participant initiative-taking as well. Programs of this kind that do not explicitly catalyze intercultural learning also serve a purpose as gateways to deeper learning and introductions to the portfolio of programs offered by the Dashew Center.

RECOMMENDATIONS
It is recommended that the Dashew Center continue to explicitly promote intercultural learning, finding new ways to provide learning opportunities at all events in order to meet the objective defined by the outcome of interest. The Dashew Center might also consider expanding training for students on intercultural sensitivity which includes cautions about overgeneralizing while also exploring new models of intercultural learning in experiential settings.

Depth of Cultural Learning

Depth of cultural learning is measured by an open-ended question in the program survey: You indicated that you learned something about a culture other than your own, what did you learn? Using the iceberg model of culture below, coding criterion were created.



Answers were coded, according to the content respondents mentioned. Figure 1 shows what each level of cultural learning includes, and Appendix A contains more detailed coding criteria.

Figure 1. Coding graph for depth of cultural learning

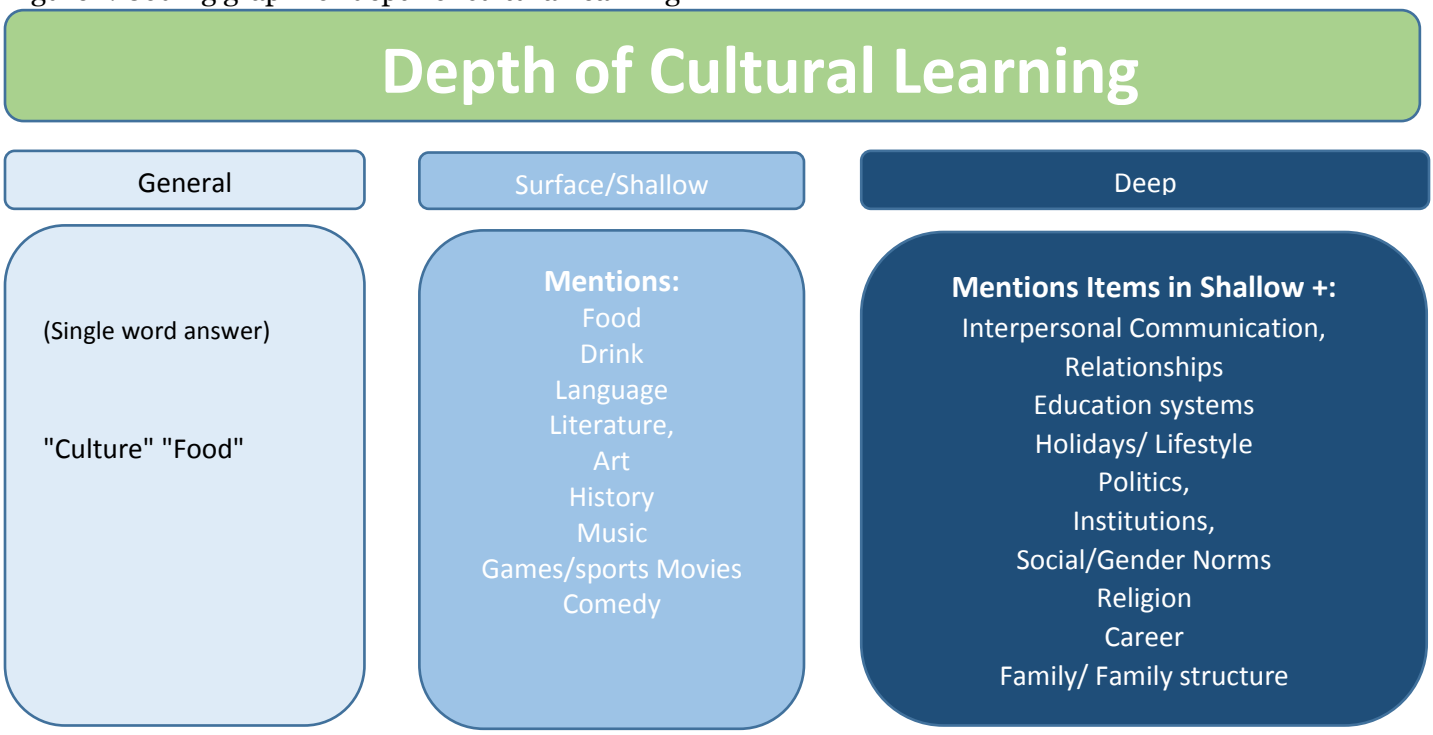


Table 1. Depth of cultural learning in each program

	General		Shallow		Deep		Shallow+Deep		Total*
Program Name	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
15F									
Welcome Carnival	17	24%	13	19%	25	36%	38	54%	70
World Café	20	38%	8	15%	13	25%	21	40%	52
Language Exchange	5	17%	13	43%	10	33%	23	77%	30
Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner	3	12%	11	44%	7	28%	18	72%	25
International Comedy Show	3	14%	8	38%	5	24%	13	62%	21
Explore SoCal: Downtown LA	5	31%	7	44%	3	19%	10	63%	16
LinkedIn Networking Night for Grad Students	3	20%	1	7%	4	27%	5	33%	15
A Hosted Family Thanksgiving - Alumni	1	7%	2	14%	11	79%	13	93%	14
Travel*Mate Trip: Ski/Snowboard in Big Bear	2	17%	6	50%	3	25%	9	75%	12
Intro to American Football Workshop	1	9%	10	91%	0	0%	10	91%	11
F15 total	78	23%	100	30%	89	27%	189	57%	332
16W									
World Cafe	3	8%	21	55%	5	13%	26	68%	38
Language Exchange	6	25%	11	46%	6	25%	17	71%	24
International speed dating	3	25%	1	8%	6	50%	7	58%	12
W16 total	18	12%	60	40%	37	25%	97	64%	151
16S									
World Café	1	5%	13	62%	6	29%	19	90%	21
Global Siblings	3	16%	1	5%	13	68%	14	74%	19
Language Exchange	5	42%	3	25%	4	33%	7	58%	12
S16 total	11	11%	43	45%	32	33%	75	78%	96
Academic year total									
All programs total**	107	18%	203	35%	158	27%	361	62%	579

* The count in Row Total also include irrelevant responses (not shown in the table).
** The count in Column total also include programs with less than 10 participants (not shown in the table).
Highlighted % are percentages over 75% percentile among all programs during that quarter.

Academic Year Overall

1. For the purpose of reliability, only programs with more than 10 respondents are presented here.
2. During the 2015-2016 academic year, a total of 579 respondents answered this question in the program survey:
    a. Fall quarter has 332 respondents,
    b. Winter quarter has 151,
    c. Spring quarter has 96.
3. Throughout the academic year, approximately 62% of the responses gave detailed descriptions regarding their cultural learning (shallow+deep), and around 28% of them experienced deep cultural learning.

By Quarter

Fall quarter

1. The program with highest level (over 75% percentile) of deep cultural learning:
    a. Hosted Family Thanksgiving Dinner with Alumni (**Deep learning 79%,** shallow+ deep learning 93%)
    b. Welcome Carnival (**Deep learning 36%,** shallow+ deep learning 54%)
    c. Language Exchange (**Deep learning 33%,** shallow+ deep learning 77%)
2. The program with highest level (over 75% percentile) of shallow + deep learning:
    a. Hosted Family Thanksgiving Dinner with Alumni (**Shallow+ deep learning 93%,** deep learning 79%)
    b. Intro to American Football Workshop (**Shallow+ deep learning 91%,** deep learning 0%)
    c. Language Exchange (**Shallow+ deep learning 77%,** deep learning 33%)
    d. Travel*Mate Trip: Ski/Snowboard in Big Bear (**Shallow+ deep learning 75%,** deep learning 25%)

Winter quarter

1. Though more than 20 programs were ran in the 2016 Winter quarter, as less people answered this question, only 3 programs have respondents more than 10.
2. The program with highest level of deep cultural learning:
    a. International speed dating (**Deep learning 50%,** shallow+ deep learning 58%)
3. The program with highest level of shallow + deep cultural learning:
    a. Language Exchange (**Shallow+ deep learning 71%,** deep learning 25%)
    b. World Café (**Shallow+ deep learning 68%,** deep learning 13%)

Spring quarter

1. Again only 3 programs have more than 10 respondents.
2. The program with highest level of deep cultural learning:
    a. Global Sibling (**Deep learning 68%,** shallow+ deep learning 74%)
3. The program with highest level of shallow + deep cultural learning:
    a. World Café (**Shallow+ deep learning 90%,** deep learning 29%)

In conclusion, effectiveness of programs to facilitate cultural learning among participants is mixed. Some programs are better at this than others.

Quality of Evidence

Table 2. Quality of Evidence in each quarter

	Direct Evidence*										
	No direct evidence		Direct evidence level 1		Direct evidence level 2		Direct evidence level 3		Total		Last 2 combined
	N	Row %	N	Row %	N	Row %	N	Row %	N	Row %	Row %
15F	72	27%	139	52%	52	20%	3	1%	266	100%	21%
16W	17	16%	54	50%	37	34%	0	0%	108	100%	34%
16S	22	26%	47	55%	16	19%	0	0%	85	100%	19%
15-16	111	24%	240	52%	105	23%	3	1%	459	100%	24%

*The variable Direct Evidence is about the quality of the evidence, and shows how detailed the responses are.

A research analysis read all qualitative responses and ranked each response according to the quality of evidence for intercultural learning. The schema developed and used to code quality of evidence is as follows:

Quality of Evidence Schema

1. No direct evidence indicates that the response is very broad, and **did not go into detail at all.** [Made 1 general observation with no details mentioned];
2. Direct evidence level 1 means that the response **did not go into detail**, but mentioned **something specific**.
   [Mentioned 1 specific observation on culture, with no details or elaboration];
3. Direct evidence level 2 indicates that the response mentioned **specific** themes, and went into **some detail**.
   [Mentioned 1 observation or theme, and went into 1-2 details]
4. Direct evidence level 3 means that the response mentioned **specific** themes and went into **great detail**.
   [Have well thought-out answers and elaborated more, mentioned 2-3 themes and delved into 2-3 specific details for each theme]

It should be noted that, in general, more direct evidence was associated with more intercultural learning.

Table 3. Two-way table of Direct Evidence and Depth of Cultural Learning

Depth of cultural learning	No Direct Evidence		Direct Evidence Level 1		Direct Evidence Level 2		Direct Evidence Level 3		Total		Level 2+3 combined
	N	Row %	N	Row %	N	Row %	N	Row %	N	Row %	Row %
15F											
General	33	42%	45	58%		0%		0%	78	100%	0%
Shallow	24	24%	54	55%	21	21%		0%	99	100%	21%
Deep	15	17%	40	45%	31	35%	3	3%	89	100%	38%
15F Total	72	27%	139	52%	52	20%	3	1%	266	100%	21%
16W											
General	5	29%	12	71%		0%		0%	17	100%	0%
Shallow	11	19%	27	47%	20	34%		0%	58	100%	34%
Deep	1	3%	15	45%	17	52%	0	0%	33	100%	52%
16W Total	17	16%	54	50%	37	34%	0	0%	108	100%	34%
16S											
General	3	27%	8	73%		0%		0%	11	100%	0%
Shallow	12	29%	25	60%	5	12%		0%	42	100%	12%
Deep	7	22%	14	44%	11	34%	0	0%	32	100%	34%
16S Total	22	26%	47	55%	16	19%	0	0%	85	100%	19%
15F-16S											
General	41	39%	65	61%	0	0%	0	0%	106	100%	0%
Shallow	47	24%	106	53%	46	23%	0	0%	199	100%	23%
Deep	23	15%	69	45%	59	38%	3	2%	154	100%	40%
Academic Year Total	111	24%	240	52%	105	23%	3	1%	459	100%	24%

Academic Year Overall

1. During the entire academic year, around 24% of the respondents mentioned details (Level 3 and 4) in their answers.
2. In general, for people with deeper cultural learning, their answers tended to have more direct evidence.
    a. For students with general cultural learning, none of the answers went into detail;
    b. For students with shallow level of learning, 23% mentioned detail;
    c. For students with deep level of learning, the figure is 40%.

By Quarter

Fall quarter

1. During 2015 Fall quarter, for students with general level of cultural learning, they only mentioned general observation, or 1 specific observation with no detail.
2. For students with shallow level of cultural learning, over half (55%) mentioned 1 specific observation with no detail, and around 25% mention 1 specific observation with 1-2 details.
3. Students with deep level of cultural learning tended to mention more details in their answers (38%),

Winter and Spring Quarter follow similar pattern.

Appendix A: Coding Criteria

Detailed category

Food, drink:

- Experiencing a drink or food of a country, either through tasting, or hearing about it from someone of that culture
- Example:
  - *"I learned about different coffees from different countries that I wouldn't have ever tried otherwise"*

Language, literature, art, history:

- Specifics of language: slang, new vocabulary, nuances of language
- Books, stories, plays
- Art, painting, sculpture, architecture
- Events of historical significance
- Examples:
  - *"some basic Chinese vocabulary"*
  - *"I learnt more about the american writing culture."*
  - *"The culture and history of San Diego"*

Music, games/sports, movies, comedy:

- Experiencing music of a different culture
- Games and sports
- Learning how sense of humor varies
- How a new culture experiences movies
- Examples:
  - *"Football is a part of american culture. By participation in this event, I got familiar with its rules, and …"*
  - *"About Bollywood"*

Politics, institutions, geography, science:

- Political systems, participation in government
- Government institutions
- Geographical attributes contributing to culture (eg. beach culture in coastal towns)
- Influence of science in culture
- Scientific achievements
- Examples:

  - *"I met some people from New Zealand, and learned that New Zealand lies directly on a fault line (like California)."*
  - *"The way American research is contributing to Scientific development"*

Interpersonal communication, relationships:

- Observations on social interactions in different cultures
- Rules around social interactions
- Dating
- Friendships
- Examples:
  - *"How to greet people."*
  - *"I learned how dating is different in other countries and have to take that into consideration when dating international students from foreign countries."*

Education systems:

- Lower and Secondary education
- School life and expectations at school
- Types of schools
- Examples:
  - *"One of the friends I went with is from Ireland and I learned a lot in particular about the differences in their education system from ours. I was very surprised how different it is!"*
  - *"Career path/financing options for school of another attendee"*

Lifestyle

- Hobbies
- Social activities including: nightlife
- Examples:
  - *"What it's like to live in Hong Kong"*

Holidays:

- Holidays celebrated
- Examples:
  - *"American traditions on Thanksgiving"*
  - *"I have learned a lot about Chinese culture- holidays, food, social norms, tourist attractions, etc."*

Religion

- General religion observations: (which religion is observed)
- Specifics of religious practices, customs
- Examples:
  - *"difference between thanksgiving and Christmas, and how religion may mean to some people"*
  - *"I was able to make some friends and now am keeping in touch with them understanding their different background like religion."*

Family/family structure:

- Roles of different family members in the family
- Family dynamics and expectations
- Family traditions including around marriage, child rearing, career, education
    - *"Korean moms are protective"*
    - *"I learned that in China, the law for limited amount of children is no longer a law but still highly enforced."*

Diversity/diverse perspectives

- Learning about diverse perspectives
- Experiencing diversity in a new, unique way
- Examples:
    - *"Many people are born or from the U.S. but have a lot of backgrounds from around the world."*
    - *"How many other cultures there are at UCLA"*

Norms:

- Social norms such as socially accepted end reinforced behaviors
- Manners/etiquette

Gender Norms:

- Prescriptions for how gendered individuals should act
- Examples:
    - "*It's rare for men to cook in Korea"*
    - *Chinese culture-- gender role*

Stereotypes/Counterstories

- Stereotypes encountered by the student towards them
- Stereotypes learned about another culture or about their own culture perceived by another culture
- Counterstories: alternate stories from the mainstream narrative of history or culture
- Examples:
    - *"The view of people from other countries about LA"*
    - *"That each culture has stereotypes but there's no use taking them seriously"*

Challenges

- Challenges faced by international students in assimilating or understanding American Culture
- Examples:
    - *"How hard it is for students from another country to learn american culture, and thus programs like this are very beneficial"*
    - *"International students' experiences of marginalization in the U.S. that are dissimilar to mine"*

Specific Culture/location mention

- Names one or multiple specific cultures or countries
- Examples:
    - *"I learned a little about Malaysian culture and the language from a friend I went with"*

- *"My family is German and i was paired with an Austrian woman. I'm learning a lot about the nuanced cultural differences between Germans and Austrians, including language dialects."*

US Culture/institutions

- Learning US specific culture
- Examples:

Intercultural relations

- How different cultures interact or view each other
- Examples:
  - *"American and Asian students have a large interest in Japan, my country."*
  - *That just because cultures are really different, that doesn't mean one is better than the other.*

Intercultural Comparisons

- Making comparisons between two different cultures or makes a general statement on cultural comparisons- similarities and differences
- Examples
  - *"Mostly that you can find similarities in another culture if you look hard enough."*
  - *The behaviour rules in the theater different in United States than the European ones.*

Depth of Cultural Learning

1-Yellow: The response has made an elementary observation on culture generally. Single word answers such as "culture" or "customs" or "food"

- Examples:
  - *"American culture"*
  - *I learned about the German culture.*

2-Orange: may mention several categories shallow level culture, or goes in depth into one facet of the following:

Food, drink	Language, literature, art, history	Music, games/sports, movies, comedy

- Examples:
  - *"About the American Entertainment industry"*
  - *"I learned from a German international student about how their culture uses slang in their language."*

3-Green: Shows evidence of a recognition of a more nuanced level of culture, or can make connections across cultures, may combine categories from level 2 and the following:

Interpersonal Communication, Relationships	Education systems	Holidays	Politics, institutions, geography, science	Lifestyle Social Norms Gender Norms	Religion	Career*	Family, family structure

- Examples:
  - *"I talked to a guy from Singapore and learned about their mandatory military service"*
  - *"I learned about more about Tamil and Indian regions as well as cultural marriage practices in Singapore."*
  - *"I learned about Chinese culture, and specifically the Bible in Chinese :) I also got to talk to her about my experience in China as a student, and what it meant to me/her. Since I plan to go back to Beijing someday, it was great and promising to get to know her story back home (in China). Hopefully she felt the same***!"**

*Career- relates to family, education, social norms

Direct Evidence (vague/specific scale)

1 – Yellow: 1 general observation, no details mentioned

- Examples:
  - *"different culture!"*
  - *"Some new languages"*
  - *Language and different culture*

2- Orange: Mentions 1 observation on culture, no details or elaboration

- Examples:
  - *"The drinks and their significance in day to day lives of people from different countries."*
  - "*Taiwanese foods and Taiwanese slang"*
  - *"I learnt about their lives in their respective countries, food and culture in general and how well they are adjusting to life in the States."*

3- Green: Mentions 1 observation or theme, goes into 1-2 details, more nuanced

- Examples:
  - *"I learned that for Asian countries it's not that surprising if they have a British or Australian accent because many of them go to boarding school abroad in a different country!"*
  - *"Indian last names are the sign of family status. "*
  - *"Some basic traditions in this country. For example, I had already know there is a special day called 'Thanksgiving' but I've learned its historical background and thanksgiving day rituels etc."*

4- Blue: Mentions 2-3 themes, delves into 2-3 specific details for each theme, well thought out answer, elaborates

- Examples:
  - *"Since I am from Asia, I felt like the culture in the Western countries are more towards openness. Asians are most of the time afraid of doing things wrong, but Westerners aren't and learn from the mistake. This can be easily seen even through communication because we think a lot before spitting out the words, but people from countries out of Asia are always more bold."*