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CSIE
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About CSIE

Case Studies in International Education (CSIE) is an open access, online, peer-reviewed publication that utilizes case studies for the development and advancement of the field. CSIE seeks to promote further professional development through engaging case study discussion. We offer publication opportunities for scholar-practitioners, including working professionals, faculty, and graduate students at CSIEpub.org. Each case study provides an opportunity to integrate theory and practice through interdisciplinary analysis/insight for the benefit of the field's future growth.

International education is defined by Punteney (2019) as "the profession of designing, managing, and facilitating programs and activities that help participants to appropriately, effectively, and ethically engage in interactions with culturally diverse people and ideas, often across national borders."

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In Appreciation

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Who's in the Know:

Communication and Procedure in a Crisis

McKenna Hughes

Tags

Crisis-Management; Education Abroad; Education Policy; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; Management and Operations; Partnerships; Program Assessment; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

At a small, private university, the Office of Global Education (OGE) is responsible for all outbound study abroad programs (semester abroad, exchange, faculty-led travel courses) and incoming exchange. The OGE Director, Sheryl, has been in the position for a month after the sudden departure of the former Director. Previously, Sheryl was the Associate Director and focused almost entirely on semester exchange programs. The Travel Course Manager, Hannah, reports directly to the OGE Director. At the end of every faculty-led travel course, she distributes and evaluates participant surveys for feedback on program logistics.

There is no formal crisis management procedure in the Office of Global Education. Faculty leaders receive an emergency procedure packet that contains OGE phone numbers and basic guidelines of what to do in different situations.

For over 20 years, Professor Cunningham has served as faculty leader on a travel course every January to a meditation retreat center in the United States. Students take classes throughout the week about meditation and mindfulness. The classes are led by the center instructors who are not affiliated with the university. Professor Cunningham, as the faculty leader, also attends these activities and facilitates debriefing sessions with his students throughout the week.

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Case

Once Professor Cunningham's Travel Course has ended, Hannah reviews the results of the participant survey for any red flags before processing and evaluating the data. Hannah sees a comment describing an incident in which a female student of color was called up to the front of a group by a center instructor then he proceeded to sing a racist and sexual song to her. The comment mentions that they could see in the student's body language how uncomfortable she was and that the other students in the group didn't know how to intervene or react. The comment also mentions the center instructor by name and calls for him to be removed. According to this student, the university faculty did not intervene but may not have seen it. The surveys are anonymous, and no comments appear to come directly from the student in question.

Immediately, Hannah brings the report to Sheryl. In response, Sheryl forwards the full survey report to the Title IX Coordinator at the university for guidance without including any other staff on the email. The Title IX Coordinator opens an investigation, and Sheryl tells Hannah that she will handle all communication with the Title IX Coordinator.

A few weeks later, Hannah begins to reach out to the January faculty to debrief them about their survey results and recommendations. Not for the first time, Hannah reaches out to Sheryl to ask for any relevant updates to the investigation to be appropriately prepared for what she can and cannot discuss with Professor Cunningham during the debrief. Sheryl decides it is okay to mention the student's comment and that the OGE has forwarded the concern to the appropriate authorities. In the meeting, Professor Cunningham says that he was not there for the incident itself and learned about it from the group the next day. He appears to brush the incident off and downplays the situation.

After months, Hannah has not received any updates from Sheryl or the Title IX Coordinator about the investigation, but Professor Cunningham is already planning the course for the following January. Given the sensitive nature of this issue and that she is only receiving limited updates herself, Sheryl does not think Hannah should receive updates. Hannah, however, feels that not having any information or communication guidelines is negatively impacting her ability to do her job, especially as she continues working directly with the center on next year's program. Without any guidance, Hannah continues working on the program as usual. She feels uncomfortable when communicating with the provider and faculty, knowing the program could be canceled depending on the results of the investigation. Hannah tries to explain her concern to Sheryl but doesn't feel that Sheryl understands her role and the travel course process.

The day before all January programs open for recruitment, Sheryl tells Hannah that the investigation is complete and the program is okay to run for future terms. The meditation center issues a general statement about the incident to their contacts at the OGE that states that the staff member in question is no longer an instructor at the center and that their instructors will receive additional training on appropriate behavior. They do not share this with students.

In December, the student-run news organization on campus runs a story about the incident, the university's perceived insufficient response, and the reaction of participants set to go in January who were not made aware of the incident beforehand. Students from the course last year were interviewed, including anonymous audio clips from the victim, expressing surprise that the course would be offered again and dismay that their voices

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were not heard. The university's President and Provost get involved and one week before the program is set to begin in January, they cancel the travel course.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- As the faculty leader/OGE Director/Travel Course Manager, how would you support the students in this program without breaking confidentiality or spotlighting the victim?
- What are some ways to improve communication between stakeholders within the same office (OGE)?
- Was canceling the travel course an acceptable response from the university's senior administration? What other alternatives may have been appropriate responses to this situation?
- Should faculty training be required for all travel course faculty leaders, and what topics should be covered? How would you implement this, and what limitations exist with only one staff member working on travel courses full-time?
- If the faculty wants to run this course at the same center in the future, who should be involved in that decision, and what would be required to mitigate liability and ensure student safety?
- What stakeholders should be involved in developing a formal emergency procedure and policy for OGE staff and faculty leaders? What information and resources should the emergency response include?

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Case Studies in International Education
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Ethical Dilemmas:

Cultivating Critical Awareness in Service-Learning

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Tags

Cross-Cultural Issues; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; Experiential Education; Non-Formal Education; Partnerships; Program Design; Program Assessment; Student Learning and Development; University/Higher Education

Setting

Critical service-learning is becoming more prevalent in many international education programs as a form of community engagement. It offers students a unique opportunity to learn with and from host communities and involves working in collaboration with local communities on relevant social change issues. An important component of critical service-learning is ongoing reflection that emphasizes one's positionality and ethical engagement while working with community members.

Juntos is a program provider organization in a rural town in Mexico that offers various critical service-learning research programs for students from the United States. All Juntos staff members live and work full-time in the community and have cultivated close relationships with community members. Most staff members are from the United States, but there are a few local Mexican staff members. Juntos has a solid reputation in the community and works year-round on community development projects in addition to their service-learning programs for students.

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Juntos hosts a two-month summer program each year for both graduate and undergraduate students to participate in a service-learning research project related to the provider's ongoing community development work. The students are given a lot of autonomy to co-design the research with Juntos and to determine the most suitable projects to work on. The research is meant to be iterative and adapted based on what students observe and experience in the community.

In this particular program, there are 10 undergraduate students and two graduate students who serve as mentors to the undergraduate students. The students are all participating as part of a university program that promotes service-learning research. None of the students knew each other before the program. The university selected the student participants through a competitive application process and chose Juntos as the provider due to its work in critical service-learning. The university briefly trained the graduate student mentors in how to facilitate reflections with the undergraduates. The graduate mentors have significant experience working in rural Mexico and are meant to work closely with Juntos staff to ensure that the undergraduates have a safe and fulfilling experience. After selecting the students and training the graduate students, the university does not play a role in the rest of the program until students return from Mexico.

Juntos designs the pre-departure and onsite orientations for the students. To encourage critical reflection, Juntos prompts all of the students to consider issues of equity, ethical community engagement, power dynamics, and positionality. Students complete an in-depth online pre-departure course around these topics, which includes relevant readings, case studies, and discussion boards. The topics are also emphasized during the week-long onsite orientation. These orientations are meant to adequately prepare students for the challenges of conducting research in a rural community, ensuring that they approach it ethically and uphold Juntos' values.

Each student on the program speaks at least beginner-level Spanish. All students live with Mexican host families with two to three other students for the duration of the program. The host families are all experienced in hosting international students and help students practice Spanish and learn about the local culture.

Case

For the first two weeks of the eight-week program, the undergraduates generally had high spirits and were excited to learn about different service-learning research methods, including interviews and surveys. They discussed the challenges of interviewing across linguistic and cultural barriers and developed strategies for overcoming these challenges. They piloted their interview protocol and practiced interviewing in Spanish with Juntos staff.

However, around week three when students started conducting the research with local community members, they quickly became disheartened and unmotivated. They were nervous to interview community members and eventually approached the graduate student mentors. They said they were concerned that their work was not ethical, and they did not think it was their place as "outsiders" of this community to conduct this research. The students brought up issues of positionality, race, socioeconomic status, and country of origin that created a troubling power dynamic with the local community members whom they were interviewing. Many students expressed that they were uncertain if they wanted to continue on with the project.

The graduate student mentors, with their previous community development experience, understood the concerns of the undergraduate participants. However, they were somewhat surprised that it became such an issue, even

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after the pre-departure and onsite orientations explicitly discussed these potential dilemmas. They facilitated reflections with the students and reinforced that these were valid preoccupations, but also reminded them that Juntos has years of working alongside the community on projects like this. The reflections just seemed to fuel the students' uncertainties and hesitance about working in the rural communities.

The mentors then decided to communicate these issues with the Juntos staff, as staff had not previously participated in any of the student reflections. The staff understood the concerns and were appreciative that the students were critically thinking about their work, but they wanted to encourage students to continue with the research project, as this was all part of their experiential learning process. The staff and graduate mentors tried to brainstorm how to move forward, as the students seemed paralyzed.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- In what ways can the graduate mentors and Juntos staff collaborate to address the undergraduate participants' concerns and move forward with the rest of the program?
- How could the sending university better train/prepare graduate mentors to deal with these types of conversations/situations in the future?
- Does Juntos have a responsibility to involve the sending university in this case? Likewise, does the sending university have a responsibility to intervene and work with the graduate students and/or Juntos staff to resolve the issue?
- What could be the ethical, financial, or academic ramifications of the students refusing to continue with the program? Are there any other impacts this would have?
- How could local community members be involved in the resolution of these issues?
- In what ways can Juntos adapt its orientations (both pre-departure and/or onsite) to prepare students for their critical service-learning experience? What topics or strategies would be helpful?
- How might program providers, like Juntos, balance the needs of students and community members in community engagement programs to ensure the most equitable outcomes?

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Reinforcing Stereotypes or Developing Intercultural Competence?:

Professional Training and Evaluation in Higher Education through Cross-Cultural Collaboration

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Tags

Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Abroad; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; Internationalization and Global Learning; Leadership and Strategy; Program Design; Program Assessment; Professional Training; Student Learning and Development; University/Higher Education

Setting

This case is set at a public university in Denmark. The university received funding from the European Union for a five-year cultural exchange program that focuses on promoting internationalization by developing critical cultural awareness and intercultural competence in both faculty and students.

Internationalization initiatives are not new to the institution. The university has cultivated cultural exchanges throughout the last decade by annually receiving around 600 international students and sending approximately 1,000 Danes abroad. Last year, the administration went through an intense strategic planning process which resulted in several new initiatives, one of them focusing on intercultural learning. Within the next five years, the university aspires to be “a Danish leading hub for intercultural innovators and changemakers.” The program is created to operationalize the initiative on campus and is open for enrollment for students across all undergraduate degrees.

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The program's mission: *The cultural exchange program fosters meaningful cross-cultural collaboration and communication that leads to developing intercultural changemakers who build bridges by finding solutions together.*

The program facilitates weekly cross-cultural solutions labs throughout each semester where international and Danish students work together to create solutions to complex global challenges through design thinking. The university advocates that cross-cultural collaboration needs to take place on equal terms in order to truly promote intercultural changemakers.

Case

The administration has been on a strict deadline to get the program up and running before the start of the semester. The faculty members who facilitate the solutions labs are passionate employees with nascent knowledge of design thinking and some connection to study abroad.

In order to meet the funding criteria of the grant, the program needs to demonstrate development of students' and faculties' intercultural competence along with widespread campus impact in regard to the overall internationalization efforts. The evaluation measures are currently limited to self-evaluation surveys that the students fill out before, during, and after participation in the weekly cross-cultural solutions labs.

In the first round of cross-cultural solutions labs, 160 students enroll, 40% of them are international students, and the student to faculty facilitator ratio is 32:1. The students are divided into groups of five to six students and they meet once a week for three hours. A short introduction to the design thinking process is facilitated prior to the initial group work. For the remainder of time, the faculty facilitators are present, available to support, but the students are in charge of their own group work. Each group chooses a global issue and has to go through the iterative stages of design thinking from empathizing with stakeholders, defining the issue, ideating innovative solutions, prototyping the solutions, and finally testing them with stakeholders.

After the first semester of weekly cross-cultural solutions labs, the faculty facilitators review the data collected through the surveys the students took before, during, and after the program. The surveys had a 31% response rate. The feedback highlighted that most students enjoyed participating, as 92% responded that it had been a fun way to meet new people, and the majority had improved their knowledge of design thinking. However, the data from the surveys indicated that some respondents left the program with more preconceptions and reinforced stereotypes. For example, over half of the international students commented that, due to their race and/or origin, they had been asked to represent whole continents and societal issues in their work sessions even though they did not necessarily identify with the specific groups.

Over 50% of the international students commented that the group work methods were dominated by Danish cultural norms. The Danes were speaking their minds and at times seemed extremely rude by calling on group members to speak up; yet some students felt uncomfortable doing so.

Eighty percent of students reported that they had developed their intercultural competence, yet 70% of students did not respond when asked to provide a definition of intercultural competence.

The majority of faculty members are worried about the findings in the data and wonder whether the students have developed their intercultural competence or if the program reinforced stereotypes? As a result, the faculty

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are working on how to redesign the program. A suggestion has been made to create an introductory course on intercultural competence studies, but they are concerned that it will turn into a lecture-based course. The faculty want to continue to focus on design thinking as a means of developing intercultural competence through cross-cultural group work.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What are the underlying problems affecting the effectiveness of this program?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of the design, implementation, or evaluation of this program?
- How do you define and assess intercultural competence?
- What type of pre-program professional training would you recommend for the faculty facilitators? How would you facilitate a cultural lab with students from across the globe?
- How would you improve the validity of the current evaluation system? How would a more multidimensional evaluation approach look for this program? How do you improve survey response rates, so that they are representative of all participants' experience?
- How do you facilitate cross-cultural work without reinforcing stereotypes? How do you differentiate between generalization and stereotyping?
- How do you make sure that the dominant culture in a group does not take charge of the work methods?

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The Cultural Barriers of Mental Health: International Students' Access to Mental Health Services in Higher Education

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Tags

Crisis-Management; Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Abroad; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; International Student and Scholar Services; Student Learning and Development; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

The case takes place in the Intensive English Program (IEP) at Ashton Lake College, a community college offering select four-year degrees in the United States. The school has a population of 10,000 students, which includes over 1,000 international students. They have five mental health counselors who are able to provide free, short-term care for all students at the school.

Case

Duc was an 18 year-old Vietnamese student who came to the United States to become more proficient in English and to get an undergraduate degree in Business Administration. He was studying English at the intermediate level and was due to transfer into Ashton Lake's full-time Business Administration program within the next year. He had often thought of himself as a social outcast and had difficulty making friends in his own country. However, he had a lot of interest in politics and entrepreneurship, and he got good grades in school. When Duc came to the United States, though, his situation got worse. His grades and attendance dropped, and he got in verbal

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disagreements with the other students. He felt he had no friends. He also joined a radical political group on campus, and he became suicidal.

In class one day, Duc began crying and expressing a desire to kill himself. The teacher called for one of the counselors from student services, who came and escorted Duc to their office. Duc met with the counselor several times over the next few weeks. They were able to calm his suicidal thoughts, but the counselling staff suspected that Duc had a serious mental health condition that required regular therapy and the intervention of a psychiatrist. Ashton Lake College did not have a psychiatrist on staff, and their counselling center was not equipped to assist students requiring long-term treatment. The staff felt that they simply were not able or qualified to help a student in Duc's situation.

Although Duc recognized that he was experiencing a mental health breakdown, he was hesitant to seek psychiatric help for a number of reasons. First of all, he could not afford to pay for the therapy and his student health insurance would not cover the number of sessions that he would need. Additionally, he thought going to therapy would make him seem weak or sick. Mental illness was considered taboo in his home country, and it was also seen as a significant source of shame for one's entire family. Duc and his parents were afraid of the potential social and professional repercussions that their family might face if anyone in their community found out that he had sought such treatment. Perhaps most difficult for Duc, though, was the language barrier. Duc did not feel that he could fully express himself to any of the counselors because his English was too limited and none of them spoke Vietnamese. He did not see the usefulness in attending therapy if he could not speak in his native language.

The counselling staff checked in with Duc once a week, but he was still reluctant to speak with them. He began to display extreme mood swings and he showed increasing interest in radical, violent political ideals. Several students mentioned that they felt unsafe around Duc. The teachers were uncomfortable having him in class due to the comments that he made regarding his political beliefs. However, the administration agreed to allow Duc to remain in school because he had not technically failed his classes, nor had he specifically threatened to harm anyone. About six weeks after his initial breakdown in class, Duc's grades fell to the point that he could no longer complete the program. The Director of International Programs, in conjunction with support from the admissions office and the Business Administration program, decided to expel Duc and to terminate his SEVIS record.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What additional steps, if any, might the counseling staff have taken to ensure Duc's well-being?
- Was the school justified in terminating Duc's SEVIS record, or should they have allowed him to remain in the program until the end of the term?
- Should the institution have expelled Duc sooner, due to the complaints from the teachers and the other students?
- To what extent should mental health personnel on college campuses be trained to work with international students?
- How can we make campus mental health services more affordable and accessible to international students?

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- Which resources would help higher education institutions to provide access to a wider range of mental health services (clinical psychologists, psychiatrists, etc.), especially to international students?

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Culture & Inclusion: Navigating Gender Identity Across Cultures

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Tags

Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Abroad; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; Partnerships; Personnel Management; Professional Training; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

Worldwide Study Abroad (WSA) is a medium sized U.S.-based study abroad provider organization. WSA runs semester and summer programs on six continents for several hundred students each term. These island programs are center based, where students live and study on WSA owned campuses. Each WSA campus is staffed with 20 people from cooks to faculty, with 15 host country national staff and 5 foreign staff. Campuses are run by a program director that acts as the primary liaison between the campus and headquarters in the United States. The student affairs coordinator, a U.S. hire, acts as a secondary liaison to the headquarters. The program director supervises and trains all onsite staff.

WSA values diverse perspectives on their programs and works to bring cohorts of students together that represent global diversity. Part of the organization's mission emphasizes the importance of diversity and inclusion, and its goal to create inclusive communities. In regards to gender identity, WSA offers resources for students to learn more about host country perspectives and strives to offer gender-neutral housing at all locations. Students receive additional information and resources from admissions counselors during the application process and during orientation before and after their arrival in the host country. Students self-report their gender on application materials. This information is shared with the program director and the student affairs coordinator.

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This case will focus on the campus in Nicaragua. The program director, Manuel, is Nicaraguan, but has spent over ten years studying and working in the United States. The five foreign staff, including the student affairs coordinator, Emma, are all American. Outside of the program director and faculty, all other Nicaraguan staff do not speak English.

Case

One week before the start of the semester, staff at the WSA campus in Nicaragua are preparing for the arrival of 30 semester students. The demographic report lists that the group gender breakdown includes 26 cisgender students, 3 non-binary students, and 1 transgender student. Emma is responsible for making room assignments of groups of four, and notes that all but seven cisgendered females have indicated that they are comfortable with gender-neutral housing. In collaboration with Manuel, she decides to prioritize grouping students by gender and creates one gender-neutral room for the non-binary and transgender students.

Emma also meets with the program administrator, a local staff member, to go over program details. The administrator asks for a list of the students and their gender for paperwork to submit for an international trip later that semester, and asks for clarification regarding the non-binary students. “Is this student a he or she?” is asked repeatedly. Emma struggles responding, as Spanish does not have a widely accepted gender-neutral pronoun. Emma decides to compile a list of the student’s sex based on their passport and stops trying to explain non-binary identities to her coworker.

At a check-in with Manuel, Emma mentions the interaction with the program administrator and asks if there has ever been a staff discussion around gender identity, specifically with a U.S. perspective (the home country of the majority of program participants). Manuel responds that there has been no previous discussion and would love Emma to facilitate a training. Emma is new to the position, not confident in her Spanish, and feels uncomfortable explaining the American perspective on gender to a group of Nicaraguan staff that have been working with the program for years. Emma reaches out to headquarters for support and is notified that while they would love to have a training for local staff at all of the campuses, it is up to the program directors to manage and facilitate trainings.

One week into the program, a student comes to Emma expressing concerns that the one gender-neutral room housing the non-cisgender identifying students feels othering and does not support the inclusive community vision of WSA. They have also noticed that their peers and some of the staff consistently use the incorrect pronouns for a few members of the group and are not making an effort to correct themselves.

Emma brings the concerns to Manuel, who responds it is best to leave the housing assignments alone, as gender-based rooming is more acceptable for the Nicaraguan staff. Manuel also welcomes Emma to facilitate a conversation regarding identity with the students, would be happy to attend, but would be uncomfortable facilitating.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- In what ways did Manuel’s actions regarding housing decisions, support or not support WSA’s goal to create inclusive housing?

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- What responsibility does Emma have in developing understanding of gender identities with her colleagues?
- What strategies could be used to support students who don't use he/she pronouns, when the host country language doesn't have non-masculine/feminine pronouns?
- If you were Emma, how would you respond to the student's concerns around inclusiveness on the program?
- Should WSA's campuses provide identity training for its onsite staff? If yes, who should be responsible for these trainings?
- What training and resources do you provide for local staff around gender and other identity-based learning?

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New Director Dilemma:

Local Trust in Onsite Operations

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Tags

Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Abroad; Education Policy; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; Leadership and Strategy; Management and Operations; Partnerships; Personnel Management; University/Higher Education

Setting

Susana is the Manager of Onsite Partnerships and Operations for VIDA, a private study abroad organization. For the past year and a half, she has been working to establish a direct enroll program for undergraduate students with Arts University in Porto, Portugal. Susana is very excited about this partnership because the university's curriculum and course offerings are different from VIDA's other partner in the city, the Porto School of Business. In addition, Lidia, the Director of International Programs at Arts University, has a long history of working with faculty-led groups from the United States, and their office truly understands the needs of the US student demographic. With this new partnership, VIDA can now offer a variety of visual and performing arts, humanities, and music courses to students wishing to study in Porto. Susana sees this as an opportunity to recruit more students to a city with historically low enrollment.

Two months before the first three students are set to arrive in Portugal and attend Arts University, VIDA's onsite director for Porto decides to retire. Luckily, before the director leaves, he sends Susana a few names of potential replacements. After interviewing several of these candidates, Susana offers the position to a well-connected local named Maria. Maria used to work for another US study abroad organization, has experience in health and

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safety management, and works part time in the international office for Performing Arts College, a small private institution in a town just outside of Porto.

While not ideal, Susana makes the assessment that a part-time onsite director would be feasible to start. Susana needs a program director to be trained and communicating with the students as soon as possible. Due to local regulations about part time employees, Susana and VIDA's Human Resources Director decide to hire Maria on a short-term contract basis for the first academic year. If enrollment improves, Maria's role can be extended and expanded to full-time employee.

Case

During the course of training Maria, Susana hosts a virtual introduction meeting between key stakeholders. This group includes several people at the main VIDA office in the United States; Lidia, the Director of International Programs at Arts University; Alfonso, the Director of International Programs at the Porto School of Business; and the new director, Maria. The call goes smoothly, with everyone making introductions, discussing ideas and collaboration opportunities for orientation sessions in the upcoming academic term, and exchanging contact information in order to meet in person later in the month.

However, two days later Susana receives a worrying email from Lidia at Arts University. She expresses great concern about the newly hired director:

Dear Susana,

Thank you for setting up the opportunity to meet with Maria.

While as a university we would never presume to tell you whom to hire for your company's director, we have many concerns about Maria being your representative here in Porto. I have spoken with the dean, and he agrees with my assessment. Because Maria works for a college that is swiftly becoming a local competitor, Performing Arts College, we believe there may be a conflict of interest for her to represent your students on our campus.

Here at Arts University, we have many proprietary concerns about our intellectual property including class syllabi, orientation procedures, and all of our policies that we've developed over years of working with US students. In general, onsite directors for study abroad organizations have total access to engage with Arts University, and they receive information about our orientation, courses, etc. without a problem. But, in this case, we are concerned that this information could be used by Performing Arts College to increase that university's enrollment of US students.

Please let us know what can be done to remedy this situation.

Best regards,

Lidia Moreno
Director of International Programs
Arts University

Susana immediately responds to say that she will converse with the key staff members at VIDA and get back to Lidia within 24 hours. Susana knows that in all countries, the onsite directors are the key representatives of the study abroad organization and must maintain a positive and trusting relationship with the local universities. If any

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of the universities do not trust the onsite director, it could seriously impact the relationship with VIDA and might negatively impact the students' experience. With this conflict coming to the surface mere weeks before the students arrive onsite, quick intervention is necessary. Susana meets with the Director of International Operations and the Director of Human Resources at VIDA, and they discuss some key considerations.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- Which relationship should take precedents for the provider in a situation like this – the newly-hired onsite director or Arts University? How does that hierarchy impact the decision-making process?
- What are the ethical issues described in the case?
- What are the key points that need to be communicated jointly, or separately, to Arts University and to Maria?
- What might be the financial, legal, and student experience considerations that are relevant to this case? Which considerations are most important in both the short- and long-term view of programming?
- How should VIDA proceed in this case to manage relationships with all stakeholders and ensure consistency for the students due to arrive onsite?
- What, if any, new procedures or policies could be implemented for future hiring decisions at the program provider to avoid a situation like this in the future?

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Yes and No:

When an Intensive English Program's Policies and ISSS' Policies Conflict

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Tags

Education Policy; International Enrollment Management; International Student and Scholar Services; Management and Operations; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

This International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) department supports over 900 students and faculty each year. The not-for-profit higher education institution consists of undergraduate programs, graduate programs, study abroad sites, and language programs like the Intensive English Program (IEP). The IEP enrolls less than 100 international students per year in the quarterly program. The ISSS office must work with each program to ensure compliance with their policies and immigration regulations. At times, the IEP's admissions and academic policies and procedures are not aligned with ISSS' which results in confusion for the students, staff, and administration. The following two cases will be examined below: 1) the use of conditional scholarship funds as proof of financial support, and 2) the consequences of leaving the program early.

Case 1

International student Esther was recently admitted into the IEP for one session. She informed the IEP and ISSS offices that she has been conditionally awarded a financial grant and would like to use the funds for a tuition

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deposit waiver and as evidence of financial support in order to receive her I-20. According to IEP policy, a program deposit must be paid before an I-20 can be issued.

The IEP's policy is to accept proof of scholarships and other sources of funding in lieu of a tuition deposit; however, since the award is conditional, the IEP and ISSS department are unsure how to proceed since technically the student has not yet secured the funds. Unfortunately, the conditional funds will not be dispersed until after Esther needs the I-20 to apply for a student visa. Additionally, she does not have enough personal funds to show proof of financial support.

After multiple discussions between the IEP admissions office and the ISSS office, it was determined that the IEP needed a clear policy about what kind of documentation could and could not be used for a deposit waiver. Since SEVP's policies are not explicit on what to do in a situation like this, ISSS would follow IEP policy on what, if any, conditional documentation can be used for the issuance of an initial I-20.

The IEP determined that since Esther was likely to receive her funding, it would waive the tuition deposit payment for her. She was also issued an I-20 based on her conditional funding letter. However, as soon as Esther met the conditions of the award, she was required to show her International Student Advisor proof that she received the funds to pay for her tuition and living costs.

Discussion questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- With consideration to the conditions outlined in the financial letter, to what extent should the IEP and ISSS use this letter as financial documentation?
- Should the IEP have allowed the student to use the letter as a tuition deposit waiver?
- What happens if a student needs to pay her tuition, but the scholarship funds have not arrived?
- Which office do you think should be responsible for the ultimate policy on what kind of funding can be used for the issuance of an I-20?

Case 2

Aron is a university student on an F-1 student visa studying in the eight-week IEP summer session to improve his English. He is in good academic standing with no absences. Halfway through the program, Aron notifies the program director that he must leave the program two weeks early in order to return home to start his university courses.

According to IEP policy, since Aron did not have any absences, he could skip the last two weeks of class and still maintain an 80% attendance rate which is required for successful competition of the program. The director gave permission to the student to leave the program early and invited him back to study the following summer. Nothing was said to Aron about needing to talk with ISSS, nor did the director communicate with the ISSS office about his plan for early departure.

However, when the DSO learned of Aron's plans, they immediately set up a meeting with him to discuss how his early departure will impact his F-1 status. Despite the fact that Aron was technically in good academic standing

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in the IEP's eyes, the ISSS department would have to terminate his record in SEVIS due to Authorized Early Withdraw. Aron's DSO needed to make sure Aron understood the effects of termination, one being that Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) agents may investigate to confirm the departure of the student (SEVIS, 2019).

Moving forward, the IEP instituted a new policy that required all program personnel to notify the ISSS office when a student planned to leave early. The student will also need to meet with their DSO to learn how their F-1 status will be affected.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- In what ways could communication be improved between the students, IEP, and ISSS?
- What might be good practice when the IEP writes new policy and trains new hires?
- Consider these other common issues and discuss how the IEP and ISSS departments should handle them:
    - When a student is not making academic progress in the program (how to define making academic progress? Is it measurable? Does it affect their status?);
    - Concurrent enrollment between a community college and IEP; annual breaks (when are they eligible? How is it being recorded in SEVIS and communicated across offices?);
    - Late arrivals (is the 20% absence rule enforced?);
    - Work authorization in an IEP.

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Balancing Health and Privacy:

Crisis Management Considerations for Education Abroad

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Tags

Crisis-Management; Education Abroad; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

Xavier, a third-year university student in the U.S., applied to a semester-long education abroad program in Seoul, South Korea that was offered by his university. Although he was a pre-law major and hoped to one day enter the legal field, he was also interested in Korean culture and wanted to improve his Korean language skills. His application and letters of recommendation were stellar, and he was admitted to the program without delay. As per the program's policy, Xavier was placed with a Korean host family.

The program used rented office space and classrooms at a Korean university. The program was led by a Resident Director who was a U.S-based faculty member on her first semester of a three-year assignment. The Resident Director oversaw Xavier's program and taught some of the courses in the program. Additional staff members were Korean nationals and based in the Seoul office. All faculty and staff were employees of the U.S. university and their contracts required that they abide by U.S. laws. The Resident Director reported to the U.S.-based Director of Education Abroad. At the time of this case, there was no crisis-management plan in place.

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Case

Three weeks after the start of the program, the Resident Director received a middle of the night call from Xavier's home campus education abroad advisor about a possible emergency situation. Xavier's friend Rebecca, who was also participating in the program, had emailed the home campus advisor in a panic. "Xavier has been planning his suicide. He set a date – the end date of the program – and is counting down the days." Xavier had forbidden Rebecca from speaking of his suicide plans, but she felt it was her duty as a friend to confide in the advisor. Rebecca told the advisor, "he is not living with a host family; he is by himself. I'm very worried."

The Seoul office called the host family and explained the situation. The host family confirmed that Xavier was indeed still living with them – Rebecca had been mistaken about his living situation. However, by speaking with the host family about his health issues, the Seoul office had potentially violated Xavier's HIPAA rights. As a faculty-led program, there was no protocol for crisis management.

The Resident Director consulted with the Director of Education Abroad about how to approach Xavier and what options were possible to ensure his safety. They also considered the impact on other students in the program, impact on the host family, and the legal liability of the university. The Director of Education Abroad began to research whether it was legal to dismiss a student from the program on the grounds of mental illness. He was advised that this was considered discriminatory.

After some time, Xavier was called into the Resident Director's office. The Resident Director had no advising experience herself, but she had done thorough research into mental health resources in the host country, and suggested an English-speaking therapist for Xavier. The program would cover all charges. Xavier agreed to visit the therapist, and signed a waiver giving the Resident Director and Director of Education Abroad permission to speak with his parents on the subject if needed.

Several weeks later, Xavier appeared to be improving. However, Rebecca confided to the Resident Director that Xavier had lashed out at her for her "betrayal" and they were no longer friends. He also bragged to his fellow students about how he had tricked the Resident Director and his therapist, and he was still planning his suicide for the day the program ends. The Resident Director and Director of Education Abroad agreed that a call to the parents must be made, and Xavier may need to be sent home for his own protection.

The Director of Education Abroad called Xavier's mother. The mother was worried about how this would affect her son's future career. "Will this be on his record? How are his grades? He is trying to get into law school." She was reluctant to have Xavier sent home in the middle of the semester.

The Resident Director and Director of Education Abroad agreed to keep Xavier on the program for the remaining eight weeks and asked him to continue with the weekly therapist appointments.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- Do you think the Seoul office's handling of the emergency situation was appropriate? Why or why not?
- What advising techniques would you use when speaking with Xavier?
- If you were the Director of Education Abroad, how would you proceed after the phone call with Xavier's mother? Would you insist on Xavier's dismissal from the program?

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- How would you support Rebecca and the other students who may have been aware of Xavier's plans without disclosing his health issues?
- If, after this case, the office decides to develop a risk prevention and crisis management plan, what should be the components of those plans?
- Should international education programs have mandatory crisis management training for their faculty? If so, how would you implement a training program?

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Transforming from Dual to Joint:

The Evolution of a 25+ Year International Partnership

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Tags

Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Abroad; Education Policy; International Enrollment Management; Internationalization and Global Learning; Leadership and Strategy; Partnerships; Program Design; University/Higher Education

Setting

A private medium-sized liberal arts university located in the United States offers more than 100 study abroad programs and over half of their undergraduate students study abroad prior to graduation. The university operates a central study abroad office, in addition to several smaller, decentralized study abroad offices that typically manage unique partnerships that promote school-specific international programs.

One of the smaller study abroad offices has been considering the next phase in a dynamic 25+ year institutional partnership with a large, private university located in Japan. The active Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between the schools include exchanges for faculty and students at the graduate and undergraduate level. In addition, there are opportunities for bilateral graduate and undergraduate dual degrees to obtain a degree from each school. These programs are generally popular and expected to be renewed when the current five-year MOU expire next year. However, in the meantime, both schools are interested in exploring new avenues for collaboration to further develop this transformational partnership well into the future.

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Case

The U.S. and Japanese universities schedule annual campus visits for faculty and staff to review existing programs, discuss issues, and strategize for the future. During an annual visit to the U.S. university, the Japanese delegation of faculty and staff proposed the idea of creating an undergraduate joint degree during a meeting with the study abroad staff and key faculty members from the U.S. university.

The faculty and staff from the Japanese university explain that the proposed joint degree would be the first of its kind between a U.S. and Japanese university. Although the finer mechanics of the program would take significant time to develop, the Japanese delegation explains that the basis of the innovative joint degree would enable students to start their degree at either school, complete two years at each school, and graduate with one degree, jointly-endorsed by both schools. The admissions and enrollment processes would be jointly administered between the two schools by a committee(s) comprised of faculty, staff, and various administrators from both schools. The creation of the joint degree would also align, to varying degrees, with each university's current strategic plans.

The idea of the joint degree, proposed by the Japanese university, partially stems from the long-standing undergraduate dual degree that currently exists between the two schools. During its history, the dual degree has produced more than 500 alumni around the world. Alumni of the dual degree have earned two degrees; one degree from each school. The degrees may be similar, in international studies from the U.S. university and global studies from the Japanese university, or they may be in a different discipline, like business or communications. The dual degree students have traditionally completed two degrees, which means that they were required to complete two separate sets of curricular requirements in order to earn both degrees.

While the dual degree has been successful, and historically popular among students based in Japan, it has faced several challenges over the years. Interest from U.S.-based students is historically low, possibly because dual degrees are less-known in the U.S.[1], and, in the last few years, enrollments from Japan-based students have dropped, as well. There are many factors that could have driven lower enrollment from Japan-based students. One factor may be due to an increase in the minimum accepted scores on common English language proficiency tests, like the TOEFL and IELTS, required by all non-native English speakers to attend the U.S. university.

In addition to building off the long-standing partnership, by proposing the joint degree, the Japanese university plans to continue to work collaboratively with their U.S. counterparts to create an opportunity that is attractive to both U.S. and Japan-based students. They hope to serve as a model for future international joint degrees by promoting a truly global and cross-cultural educational experience, an experience that yields many outcomes and benefits increasingly sought out by future employers. The study abroad staff at the U.S. university believe this opportunity aligns well with its five-year strategic plan to expand experiential learning opportunities.

The U.S. university is eager to explore this new venture with the Japanese university and would like to learn more. The Japanese university explains that they envision the joint degree featuring a jointly created curriculum, meaning faculty from each school will work together to create joint-courses, or each school may have to have curricula approved by their respective school committees, etc. The schools will need to explore immigration

[1] See American Council on Education. (2014). Mapping international joint and dual degree programs – U.S. program profiles and perspectives. https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Mapping-International-Joint-and-Dual-Degrees.pdf

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implications for two years abroad and decide on language requirements for students in the U.S. and students in Japan. The joint degree will also culminate with a single, jointly issued, diploma. Therefore, both schools will have to collaborate on a diploma that meets the needs and requirements of both schools. The details will take significant time and effort to develop, refine, and have approved, but the U.S. and Japanese universities agree to explore the idea of an undergraduate joint degree as the next step in their long-standing partnership.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What are some motivations for a transformational partnership (like the one described in the case) vs. a more transactional international partnership? How could each school benefit from offering such an integrated program?
- What are some challenges that might arise with developing a joint curriculum and/or courses between the schools? Who are the primary stakeholders to have involved in these initial and future discussions?
- What are some important details that will need to be examined and explored between the two schools? (think – language, student mobility, finances, professional development opportunities, accreditation procedures in the U.S. and Japan, etc.)
- Describe a joint-admissions process for this program. Would prospective students apply to both schools? Why might it be beneficial to only apply to one school? What are some strategies both schools could use to develop an accessible and efficient joint-admissions process?
- Should there be a limit on the number of students admitted each year? What are the pros and cons to smaller/larger cohorts?
- How could the U.S. academic unit that manages this partnership, and the future joint-degree program, work with its school's central study abroad office, and other decentralized international program offices, to further explore the idea of offering a joint-degree?
- What if one of the universities ultimately decides they cannot commit to creating the joint degree at this time? How could they communicate this to their long-standing partner without damaging the partnership?

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Questioning Personal Identities:

Supporting Heritage-Seeking Students Abroad

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Tags

Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Abroad; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; Student Learning and Development; Student Services, University/Higher Education

Setting

Kaleo Ichiro Tanaka, a third generation Japanese American who was raised with Japanese, Hawaiian, Japanese-American, and American culture and values, contemplates his personal and cultural identity as he reflects upon his international experiences. He was born and raised in Hawaii, which is considered to be a very diverse and multicultural society. Growing up, he had always felt that he was a part of the Hawaiian, Japanese-American, Japanese, and American cultures.

His paternal grandmother emigrated from Japan to Hawaii to seek a better life. She spoke no English at the time of arrival to Hawaii and until this day, she speaks Hawaiian Creole English (HCE), an English-based creole that reflects Hawaii's diverse culture by encompassing native languages from the plantation workers. As she was not fluent in Standard American English, she encountered hardships due to her language barriers. HCE is spoken, taught, and used in many households in Hawaii.

Kaleo grew up speaking HCE at home with family and friends and using Standard American English at schools, especially in English class. He barely spoke any Japanese and only used Hawaiian in Hawaiian class. In high

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school, he took his first Japanese class and loved it very much. His dream one day was to speak to his grandmother in Japanese without using any English because he wanted to honor her and the Japanese culture. He spent countless hours studying Japanese; he felt that if he didn't speak Japanese fluently, he could not fully understand the Japanese culture as much as he should. He always believed that with language comes culture and the two are inseparable. While learning a language, he is unconsciously and innately learning the culture of that language as well. Thus, as he learned more Japanese, he felt he was becoming more Japanese.

Case

Throughout his life in Hawaii, Kaleo had the opportunity to meet people from around the world. This motivated him to want to experience the world and discover what it has to offer. Despite his low proficiency level of Japanese at the time, he wanted to take a leap of faith and study in Japan to learn about his heritage culture firsthand, as well as perfect his linguistic skills. When he went to college, he consulted with the director of Global Education about the different study abroad options and discovered he had the opportunity to study in Kyoto, Japan for one year.

Prior to studying abroad, Kaleo enrolled in a pre-departure course at his home university. In that course, many elements and aspects of studying abroad were discussed, such as culture shock, but identity was not covered. Most of his interactions with the study abroad office were with peer advisors; he did not receive much guidance from a staff advisor.

He was placed in a Japanese studies program at the host university after arriving in Japan. He attended a welcome ceremony and participated in several different workshops covering practical topics that ranged from life in Kyoto to campus facilities. All the courses taught in this program were in English except the Japanese language classes. If one's Japanese proficiency was high enough, taking regular courses taught in Japanese was permitted. Likewise, Japanese students with high English proficiency could enroll in the courses alongside the study abroad students. During one of the first elective classes, Japanese Literature, the white American professor called for attendance saying, "All the Japanese students, please stand up." Kaleo, thinking he was Japanese because he is of Japanese ancestry, stood up. However, the professor said, "You are not Japanese, you are a study abroad student, a foreigner. Now, sit down." Feeling distraught and speechless, Kaleo bowed his head down and felt tears falling down his face. At that specific moment, he didn't feel "Japanese," nor did he feel that he was welcomed there. Having this bottled up feeling, he decided to seek mental health counseling in Japan because he found that useful at home.

Additionally, he had another upsetting experience regarding his last name. The Japanese language has three different writing systems: Katakana (for loan words and onomatopoeia), Hiragana (for Japanese words when not written in Kanji, to serve as grammatical features, and is phonetic), and Kanji (for words of Chinese etymology and to distinguish homonyms). A person's last name is one of the key elements and connections of personal identity that tells others about their origins and roots. In Japan, Kaleo's name was always written in Katakana and not with the associated Kanji that is available. It was explained to him that because he is a foreigner (who does not hold Japanese citizenship), his last name (although of Japanese origin) needs to be written in Katakana to distinguish the difference between Japanese citizens and people of Japanese descent. This also caused him to question his personal identity because something seemingly as minuscule as one's name can cause disappointing and depressing emotions.

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After having these experiences, Kaleo had a personal identity crisis; he did not feel like he could fit in or be accepted by Japanese society. It was difficult for him to find others that understood his situation. He went to the International Office in Japan for advice, but they repeatedly told him to see a mental health professional on campus. While seeking out mental health counseling at his host university, he used Japanese because English-speaking counselors were not available. This to some degree affected how "deeply and thoroughly" he was able to explain his situation. Moreover, he felt that he would never be "Japanese," which was very disappointing to him. This experience made him think about his identity and how "Japanese" he really was.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- How can international educators support students regarding their identity prior to, during, and after their international experiences?
- How should on-site support at the students' host institution be discussed in the pre-departure course?
- How could mental health support be improved for study abroad students at this university?
- How can we support heritage-seeking students in order to prepare them for the possibilities of not "fitting in" with their heritage culture?

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Living Spaces:
Housing Considerations for LGBT Students Abroad

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Tags

Education Abroad; Education Policy; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; Management and Operations; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

A medium-sized study abroad program in Italy offers American university students the opportunity to study art and Italian each semester. Students live together in apartments that are no more than a 20-minute walk from campus. In a typical semester, men stay in three apartments while women stay in the other eight. Housing has always been gender segregated, despite a brief push last semester for co-ed housing.

In response, staff updated the housing application to address the housing concerns of LGBT students. Two new sections were added. One section allowed LGBT students to self-disclose their sexual or gender identity. The other asked students to indicate if they were comfortable living with an LGBT individual. The application is only sent to deposited students in an attempt to mitigate potential student fears of discrimination. It is approved and sent out for the next semester.

Case

Two-thirds of the way through the semester, a cisgender man complains to student services about his living situation. He is uncomfortable sharing an apartment with a transgender student, who also identifies as a man. Afterwards, the housing coordinator and another staff member question the other housemates of the students in question in order to gauge their comfort level. Next, the staff checked each student's housing application. They

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had all indicated being comfortable with living with an LGBT student. The transgender student, however, had not disclosed his status. The staff email him to request a meeting the next day.

The next day, the transgender student explains that all of his legal documents say that he is male and felt uncomfortable trusting the staff with medical information "for no reason." He does not know how the cisgender student discovered he was a transgender in the first place. He seems resigned to being outed, because his housemates had confronted and questioned him the night before. When he leaves, he agrees to a facilitated meeting with his housemate later that afternoon.

In the meantime, the staff brainstorm potential solutions in case the students cannot be reconciled. They debate whether to relocate the transgender student to another male apartment, an all-female apartment that aligns his assumed birth sex, or somewhere else entirely. One staff member recommends moving the cisgender student, but she is cut off by the program director, who feels it is unjust to relocate a student who "hasn't done anything wrong." When no final agreement seems imminent, they agree to wait until the facilitated meeting.

Later, the facilitated meeting is a success. The two students are agitated, but speak frankly with one another. The housing coordinator feels unprepared to facilitate on LGBT topics, and neither student agrees to relocate willingly. Eventually, the students agree to continue living together for the remainder of the program. The staff are relieved and vow to make plans to address these unforeseen circumstances in the future.

A week later, the housing coordinator checks in with the transgender student. She learns that the two students are not on speaking terms, but his other housemates are being supportive. The transgender student shrugs off the conflict saying, "it could have been worse." He does, however, wonder bitterly why the school "only asks us if we're comfortable with LGBT people or smokers" and no one else. The coordinator thanks him for his feedback and invites him to reach out if his situation changes.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- How might the staff have prepared for potential conflicts like the one described above?
- What policies does your organization have in place regarding LGBT students? Who and what was involved in the planning process?
- In this scenario, what might you or your organization have done in response?
- What would you recommend as next steps for the program staff?
- Does your organization have a housing application? If so, what information do you ask from students? Is there anything you would like to revise or add?
- How might cultural differences effect how staff interact in onsite programs?

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Assessing Risk: Decision-Making Amidst Student Protests in Hong Kong

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Tags

Crisis-Management; Education Abroad; Education Policy; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; International Enrollment Management; Leadership and Strategy; Management and Operations; Partnerships; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

Hong Kong is a special administrative region of the People's Republic of China. It is under the "one country, two systems" arrangement with some autonomy from mainland China. In April 2019, the Extradition Bill was introduced, which triggered an ongoing series of protests and demonstrations in Hong Kong that continued through December 2019 (as of this writing). The extradition bill would subject Hong Kong residents and visitors to the jurisdiction and legal system of mainland China. Opponents of the bill were concerned the bill would undermine the region's autonomy and their civil liberties and endanger dissidents. The bill has been formally withdrawn, but protests continue with increasing violence. Due to student deaths related to the protests, violence increased dramatically in November. Protesters occupied university campuses and blocked nearby traffic. The police besieged two of the largest universities in Hong Kong. One siege lasted 12 days, with extensive damage to the university, many arrests, some hospitalizations, and a resultant school closing.

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International students have been involved within and outside Hong Kong. For example, two exchange students studying at a university in Hong Kong were arrested for unlawful assembly. At the same time, international student groups have had verbal and physical conflicts at universities outside of Asia when Hong Kong pro-democracy students have held rallies and Chinese students reacted with counter-protesting.

Case

International education programs in Hong Kong want to protect their students, while also ensuring that students do not lose valuable educational opportunities. Their options include cancelling programs, relocating programs, forbidding student involvement in protests, encouraging students to study the protests and political events, and more.

Classes at the various Hong Kong universities have either been suspended, cancelled, or replaced with online lectures for the foreseeable future. Each international education office needs to decide what action to take, if any. Some Hong Kong universities have mandated that exchange students return to their home institutions. A few of the students' home institutions have mandated that the students return home due to the protests. Many of the students' parents are concerned and want them to return home. Some students have reported that their insurance provider has threatened to cancel their coverage if they do not leave Hong Kong. As a matter of safety, many universities and international education offices have warned students to stay away from protest sites and to not get involved.

The fact that the students' education has been halted is a factor in their decision-making. Many students decided to study in Hong Kong due to an interest in the politics, government, history, and sociology of the area. Engaging with the local society during these pivotal events has the potential to offer a powerful educational experience. If students leave Hong Kong and return home, in most cases, they will not complete their courses or earn credits for the semester. This will likely delay students' graduation by one semester and will require students to pay for an additional semester of tuition.

Students that have not been required to leave Hong Kong and return to their home institutions have to make a tough personal decision about whether to leave or to wait out the unrest. Whether it is because of personal safety concerns, concerns from home institutions and families, or from not receiving the quality education they sought by going to Hong Kong, students are in a dilemma.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What preparations can international education offices offer to students before and during their study abroad experience to help students during turmoil like the Hong Kong protests?
- What factors might international students studying in Hong Kong consider as they make their individual plans about staying or leaving?
- After 6 months of increasing violence, protests, and deaths, how will this affect Hong Kong institutions' international student recruitment for the following academic year? What measures can be taken to boost future enrollment numbers?
- What best practices can be implemented to assess for risk in education abroad?
- International education offices warned students to not get involved. Would there be repercussions if students decided to get involved anyway?

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- International students may be concerned about their safety amid student-led protests around the world (e.g. climate change, immigration reform, or gun control protests, etc.). Does this have any correlation to the case described here? How should international educators address risk assessment and student support in these cases?

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Communication in the Digital Age:

Holistic Student Support Abroad when Emails Go Unanswered

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Tags

Education Abroad; Experiential Education; Management and Operations; Partnerships; Student Learning and Development; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

This case takes place at a medium-sized, private, four-year college in the United States, as well as on-site at a semester-long study abroad provider program in Sydney, Australia. Courses on this program are solely taught at the provider's own study center. At this college, there is only one study abroad advisor, who has been advising students there for over three years. Students are not required to submit medical information with their application to prevent concerns of discrimination or bias. Instead, students submit their Medical Form after their acceptance, but prior to studying abroad.

Case

Hannah, a senior Marketing major, is very excited when she meets with her study abroad advisor, Molly, for the first time in September about studying abroad in Australia. The program she's interested in is perfect for her; it offers her the courses she needs for her final semester of college, the courses are all taught in English, and the program will even place her at a local business for a part-time academic internship in her field of study. In their

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first meeting, Molly reminds Hannah that she must pass all of her classes while abroad in order to graduate in May.

As Molly works with Hannah, she can see that Hannah needs a little more support than other students. Hannah is very nervous about doing something wrong, and she ends up submitting her provider's application at the very last minute since she wanted to make sure it was all done correctly. At one point, her program provider even has to reach out to Molly directly to get Hannah to submit an overdue form.

After Hannah has been accepted to her program, she sends Molly a frantic email stating that her family ran into financial issues and that they are no longer financially supporting her semester abroad. Molly sends Hannah some information about scholarships and other funding options. She doesn't hear anything back from Hannah about the situation, even when Molly reaches out to ask how she's doing.

At the end of November, Molly is pleasantly surprised to see Hannah RSVP for and attend pre-departure orientation. At the end of the workshop, Molly reminds everyone to submit their acceptance letters, Medical Forms, and flight itineraries to her as soon as possible. As other students are leaving, Molly gets a chance to speak with Hannah privately, and Hannah tells her that she's still waiting to hear back about some scholarships and she's not sure what her plans are at this point. Molly asks her to keep her informed of the situation.

A week later, Molly sends out reminder emails to all students with outstanding materials, including Hannah. Molly has her acceptance letter, but Hannah still hasn't sent her Medical Form or flight itinerary. With finals approaching, Molly knows that some students will wait until the last minute to take care of these things, and she's not surprised at all when Hannah still hasn't submitted these materials to her when winter break starts. Molly reaches out again at the beginning of January and still doesn't hear back. At this point, she doesn't even know if Hannah still plans to study abroad.

The day after Hannah's program starts in Australia in early January, Molly receives an email from her on-site advisor letting her know that Hannah arrived and is doing well. Molly lets out a sigh of relief. While she wishes she had heard from Hannah directly, she's glad to know that she has arrived safely. Molly knows that the program provider has their own medical paperwork for students, so she doesn't contact her further about the college's Medical Form, which she still hasn't received from Hannah.

In early February, Molly sends all students abroad a check-in email to see how they are doing and to remind them of coping strategies they discussed during pre-departure orientation to manage their cultural transitions. She hears from Hannah a week later, when she asks Molly about the academic consequences of dropping her internship course. Hannah states that she is unhappy in her placement and that her supervisor doesn't communicate with her well or often. Hannah doesn't need the internship to graduate, so Molly advises her that she would be okay to drop it from the college's perspective, but that she should speak to her on-site advisor about her options.

Hannah does not respond to Molly's email, though her on-site advisor sends several updates to Molly on the situation over the next few weeks. On-site staff have spoken with Hannah and have given her some tools and resources to better interact with her supervisor, and she has said that she will try to continue the internship. Molly reaches out again in early March to see if there's anything she can do for Hannah but is not surprised when she doesn't receive a response.

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A month later, in early April and two weeks prior to the end of the program, Hannah's on-site advisor contacts Molly to tell her that Hannah is not attending classes and is at risk of failing her classes for the semester. Molly's supervisor, the Director of Study Abroad, emails Hannah directly and insists that she meet with her on-site staff and start attending classes again so as not to jeopardize her upcoming graduation. Hannah actually replies to the Director, saying that she has been having issues with anxiety lately, but she has dealt with it at home before. She says she has spoken with her on-site advisor and is now back on track for the remainder of the semester. This is the first time that Hannah has disclosed any mental health concerns to anyone at her home college.

The on-site advisor updates Molly about Hannah's plan to pass her courses and also lets her know that Hannah mentioned being stressed out about completing her graduation requirements from abroad. Molly reaches out to Hannah once more to offer her support and to answer any questions Hannah may have about her graduation requirements back on campus, but once again, Hannah doesn't respond. The next day, however, the on-site advisor lets Molly know that Hannah has agreed to speak to a therapist to help deal with the mental health issues that she disclosed to the on-site advisor.

When Molly receives Hannah's transcript from abroad a week prior to commencement, she discovers that Hannah did indeed withdraw from the internship course, despite originally indicating otherwise. She also received a D in another class, but she passed her remaining three courses. Luckily, Hannah only needed nine credits of electives—three courses—in order to graduate, which she does two weeks after returning to the United States.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What are some strategies for working with students like Hannah who either do not read or do not respond to emails from the study abroad office?
- How can students best be supported regarding mental health needs if they choose not to disclose that information to their advisors?
- How can the home study abroad office and the on-site staff more effectively collaborate to help students like Hannah? What are the ethics of sharing information about a student's academic progress and mental health between the home study abroad advisor and the on-site staff?
- What sort of policy or procedural changes could be put in place to better support students like Hannah in the future, either at the home school or at the provider's center abroad?
- What resources are you aware of that could help Molly, Hannah, or Hannah's on-site advisor in this situation? Think about technology, professional development opportunities, local resources, and other campus departments.

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“Them” vs. “Us”:

Global Perspectives and Academic Freedom in Curriculum Internationalization

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Tags

Cross-cultural issues; Education Policy; Internationalization and Global Learning; Leadership and Strategy; University/Higher Education

Setting

The institution described in the case is a large, public research university in the United States. It is a four-year institution. The average enrollment is approximately 30,000 students in undergraduate and graduate programs. The school has a long history of academic excellence and has historically had a good academic reputation in providing a rigorous liberal arts education, which promotes student engagement with diverse perspectives and international settings. Providing a curriculum in which students learn about global perspectives is a foundation of the school’s efforts to internationalize their institution’s academics and optimize student learning. Creating graduates who can be successful in an increasingly globalized world is one of the institution’s prime goals and is strongly held by their leadership, as well as their faculty, staff, and student body.

Case

An English course at a large research university was focused on literature based on a major transnational terrorist attack. The course was a first-year seminar, in which students are encouraged to reflect on the course content, come up with original ideas and analyses of the course material, and participate in class discussions. This course is exemplative of many of the institution’s courses making internationalization efforts. It presents content from a

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global perspective with the goal of encouraging students to see beyond their prior understanding of the material and recognize that their perspective on a topic or issue is both valid and one of many.

One semester, however, an incoming freshman to the university took offense to the course's syllabus and required reading materials. The student argued that the literary works used in the class were too sympathetic to terrorists. Said student came to these conclusions from the contents of the syllabus, researching book reviews of the materials, and reading past reviews of the class. However, it should be noted that the student was not enrolled in the course. They claimed that one did not have to take the course or read any of the course materials to know that the materials and the course itself were sympathetic to terrorists. At the time of the controversy, the class had full enrollment. Additionally, students who had taken the course previously reported that the class was inclusive to various perspectives and students were encouraged to see the material from different viewpoints but were not expected to change their thoughts or beliefs on the event.

The opposing student relayed their opinion in an online article. The student's article garnered media attention from other outlets and gained support from some of the institution's campus organizations. These groups—led by students—not only disapproved of the course and agreed with the author of the article, but they began a petition for the course to be discontinued and removed from the department's course offerings. This petition was directed towards the institution's administrators and leadership.

While the campus organizations believed the course to be denigrating to the nation and its values, the institution's faculty and leadership disagreed. The professor of the course defended their right to determine course curriculum and materials. They were supported through this process by the Dean of the department who believed that the faculty member had the right to full control of their course. The leadership of the institution also supported the faculty member and department, recognizing that both were demonstrating dedication to the institution's internationalization goals. As a department and an institution, this meant that the academic freedom of their faculty members and internationalization initiatives were considered an institutional right over the demands and grievances of students. The Dean believed that the faculty member not only had full rights over their course, but that the course's emphasis on learning about the perspectives of others was a value of the institution's mission and everything it stood for.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- In this scenario, what was more important: student feedback and media attention or campus internationalization efforts? How would your institution react to a similar situation?
- How would this scenario be different if the class were about an issue besides terrorism?
- Are there issues or topics that internationalization curriculum should or should not discuss?
- What role do domestic perspectives play in these courses?
- As generations change and students have access to more information than ever and can post anything on the internet, how will this come to affect institutional internationalization initiatives? Can access to these technologies bring more diverse and global perspectives into campus conversations or do they increase the risk of dissent, bias, or even hate speech?

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Don't Take it Personally:

Supporting Diverse Students Abroad

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Tags

Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Abroad; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; Internationalization and Global Learning; Partnerships; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

Kayla is a third-year undergraduate student at a private university in the U.S. She is an Anthropology major and has a special interest in pre-Colombian civilizations. She decided to spend a semester studying abroad in Mexico City, and applied to an exchange program at a local university that is known for its unique fieldwork opportunities. Kayla identifies as a cisgender female and African-American, and is an active member of her home university's Black Student Association. She has not traveled outside of the U.S. before and took two years of Spanish in high school. Kayla has read several books and watched some documentaries about Mexico's Mayan and Aztec cultures in order to prepare for her time abroad. Her home university also provided her with basic information about health and safety, academic expectations and travel logistics during her pre-departure orientation.

The Mexican university hosting the program has a longstanding partnership with Kayla's home institution. The two universities have an active bilateral exchange agreement; both send and receive approximately 30-40 students each year. In recent years, the Mexican university has also run a short-term custom program, which has significantly increased the number of the U.S. university's students studying there. They have been in partnership for 10 years.

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During the exchange program, students take most courses with local students, along with a language and culture class designed for international students. There is no language requirement, as the university offers several courses taught in English. Students live with host families and are supported by staff in the International Office, who have been working with exchange students for many years. Upon arrival in Mexico City, students receive an orientation from the International Office staff, which covers campus resources, academic requirements, safety guidelines and rules for living with a host family.

Case

Kayla had a difficult start to her exchange program; she experienced several incidents that made her uncomfortable. When she would walk down the street, many people would stare and point at her. She sometimes heard people call her “negrita,” which she knew meant “Black girl” in Spanish. This seemed to be particularly frequent when she passed by men; sometimes they also made kissing noises. When she was with other students from the U.S., she noticed that this did not happen as much to them. Being the only African-American exchange student on her program, she did not feel she could really talk to the other students about these issues. She started to limit her outings and take Uber more often to commute to class in order to minimize these encounters. This became costly and affected her personal budget for her semester.

Kayla also had some issues at her homestay. Her host family was primarily speaking with her in Spanish, and Kayla sometimes struggled to communicate. Her 18-year-old host sister would often touch her hair without asking permission and ask if it was real. Kayla politely asked her not to, but she continued to do so. Kayla wondered if her limited Spanish was part of the problem. Additionally, her host mother would make comments about her weight and her clothes, telling her she wasn’t eating enough or asking if she was sure she wanted to wear that outfit to class. She also called her “negrita” from time to time. Kayla tried ignoring these comments, but they continued to bother her. She started to spend more time in her bedroom, only coming out for mealtimes.

After a month of such encounters, Kayla brought up these issues to the local International Office staff. The student coordinator, María, explained that these behaviors are part of the culture and many students experience some adjustment. When asking about interactions on the street, Maria said men often make comments to women to express their admiration. When Kayla mentioned this doesn’t seem to be happening to her White peers, María explained that Mexicans don’t see many Black people in person, so they likely find her exotic and interesting. When she brought up her host mother and sister’s behavior, she was told her family means well and they are not intending to offend her. María told her to just ignore this behavior and to not take it personally.

Kayla tried to follow María’s advice over the next few weeks, but things seemed to be getting worse. She tried changing her style of clothing to appear less noticeable on the street, but that didn’t seem to make a difference. She spent even more time in her room at home and stopped hanging out with her friends outside of class. She only took Uber to and from campus, and started skipping lunch in order to have enough money for rides. Some days, she didn’t have the energy to go to class at all. She felt like something was wrong with her and she wasn’t meant to study abroad; she started thinking of returning home.

The International Office began to suspect something may be wrong when several of Kayla’s professors reached out about her frequent absences and dropping grades. María asked Kayla to come into the office to talk and gave her a warning, reminding her about the program’s rules regarding fulfilling academic requirements. Kayla

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responded angrily, saying it wasn't her fault that all Mexicans were racist and made her feel uncomfortable just going to class. She said she would rather go home than waste more time there and demanded that she be reimbursed for all the Uber rides she was forced to take to go to class. María was shocked and reported the situation to her director, Ana, informing her that Kayla wished to return home.

When the local staff contacted Kayla's home university to let them know what happened, the Director of Study Abroad, Alice, was surprised; this was the first time she had heard there were any issues with Kayla. Kayla had signed a release during her application that allowed the university to share information with her parents, so Alice called Kayla's parents to inform them of the situation. Her parents knew that Kayla was having trouble with sticking to her budget, but they were not aware of the academic issues or any other problems.

Alice explained that if Kayla returned home at this point in the semester, she would not receive any refund of program expenses and she would risk not earning any credit for the semester. Her parents did not want Kayla to return; they had paid a lot of money for her to study abroad and they did not want her to lose a semester of school. They said it was the local staff's job to support her and help her figure things out. Alice spoke with Ana, the International Office Director in Mexico, to discuss how they could best support Kayla, but Ana believed that Kayla should return home.

Alice is unsure what to do. She does not want to pressure the local staff for fear of damaging their long-standing partnership. They exchange many students between the two institutions, and the custom program is a successful revenue generator, which is important to university leadership. However, she is worried about the adequacy of the support Kayla is receiving. There have not been many African-American students who have studied on this program before and she is concerned about the local staff's understanding of Kayla's needs. She must decide how to proceed.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- How would you explain Kayla's behavior? What factors led to her most recent reaction?
- Discuss the perspective of Kayla's parents. What considerations led them to react as they did, and to what extent should the Director of Study Abroad factor their response into her decision making process?
- Discuss the response of the local staff. Should they agree to keep Kayla on the program?
- How should the program staff address the financial issues raised and Kayla's demands for reimbursement?
- How could the two universities have better supported Kayla before and throughout her study abroad experience? What could they have done to prepare Kayla for the challenges she faced?
- How should the home university Director of Study Abroad, Alice, proceed?
- In what ways can the home university ensure that their partner universities are aware of the diversity of U.S. students and be prepared to support them?
- What other groups of students or social identities may be challenged in different cultural contexts on a study abroad program? How can these students be supported before, during, and after their experiences abroad?

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Who Pays?:

International Student Services in a Public University

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Tags

Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; International Student and Scholar Services; Leadership and Strategy; Management and Operations; University/Higher Education

Setting

This case is set at a public university in the United States. It enrolls about 15,000 students at the bachelors and masters degree levels. Among those students are 600 international students. The Office of Global Education has been leading a campus-wide internationalization initiative focused on curriculum internationalization, expanding study abroad participation, and increasing recruitment of international students. The campus strategic priorities do not explicitly address internationalization or global learning. As a statewide public university system, part of the campus' mandate is that it serve students and communities from six surrounding counties.

With several consecutive years of decreases in state funding, the university has made the decision to admit fewer in-state students. In addition to reducing the number of in-state students admitted in the fall, the campus is not admitting any new in-state students for the spring term. At the same time, out-of-state and international students continue to be admitted at the same rates they were previously, or at even higher rates. The administration's rationale is that out-of-state and international students pay full tuition instead of the subsidized fees that in-state students pay. They argue that increased recruitment of out-of-state and international students is necessary to maintain the financial sustainability of the organization in light of the budget cuts. As fewer local

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students have been admitted, there has been public backlash to this decision. Many people argue that the university is giving seats to international students that should rightfully go to in-state students since the university is supported by in-state taxpayers.

Case

While faculty on campus teach the majority of classes, a few classes are taught by student services professionals, such as service-learning courses and courses for first-year students entitled *College Success 101*. The campus career center offers an internship course in which students can complete assignments to accompany their internship experience in order to earn academic credit. This course is taught by the Director of the Career Center. In each of these cases, the student services professional is teaching the course as one of the duties of their student service position and not receiving additional compensation.

U.S. immigration regulations require that international students have work authorization for off-campus employment. International students often complete internships under Curricular Practical Training (CPT) work authorization. The Code of Federal Regulations say, among other things, that CPT is available for internships that are “integral” to the academic program. Most campuses, including the university in this case, interpret the regulation to mean that the students must be earning academic credit in order to receive CPT work authorization to engage in a paid internship. At this university, many students want to do paid internships to gain practical experience in their field. Accordingly, they enroll in the 1-credit internship course taught by the Director of the Career Center. Normally, international students pay $1700 per credit in non-resident fees above what an in-state student pays. Thus, the international students would have to pay $1700 in order to have the opportunity to gain work experience. In other words, they have to pay to be able to work. Meanwhile, U.S. students have the option to undertake the same summer work experience without credit, earning money to fund their education while gaining professional work experience. If the U.S. students want to earn academic credit for the experience, they can do so at a nominal rate. Wanting to encourage all interested students to undertake internships, the Director of the Career Center has waived his salary for teaching this course, and instead set it up so that all students who enroll in the internship course only have to pay a $70 administrative fee. This solution works well for several years, allowing international students to gain internship experience, comply with immigration regulations, and not pay high fees for the right to work off-campus.

Motivated to protect the interest of their members, the faculty union observes that some campus courses are being taught by student services professionals. They assert that only faculty can be allowed to teach courses. Further, if student services personnel are hired to teach courses, they must be hired as adjunct faculty, receiving additional salary and doing the teaching related work outside of their usual work hours. Because this policy change was unexpected, most departments don’t have salaries budgeted for these classes. In addition, many of the student services professionals, though they have enjoyed teaching the classes, don’t want to work additional hours each week and thus do not want adjunct contracts. The university administration accedes to the demands of the faculty union and declares that classes may not be taught by staff members as part of their staff positions.

This policy change ends the ability of the Career Center director to teach the course. International students must now enroll in the internship courses offered in each academic department, paying an additional $1700 per credit in order to access this educational and professional opportunity. The Office of Global Education must decide if or how to respond to this change in order to support international students.

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Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- Who are the stakeholders? What are the goals/priorities of each group? What power do they have?
- In what ways are the priorities of the stakeholder groups in tension with each other?
- What are the ethical issues described in the case?
- What should the Office of Global Education do?
- How can the university administration balance the needs of stakeholders?

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CASE STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

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