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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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Middlebury Institute of
International Studies at Monterey

Race, Ethnicity, Power, and Privilege Abroad: Racialized Tensions Rise Among a Group of Students Abroad in Chile

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Tags

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

Setting

Mission State University (MSU) is a large public university system with over a dozen campuses. MSU prides itself on the diversity of its students, with many of its campuses designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions. However, on their education abroad programs, many diverse racial and ethnic student populations are underrepresented while white students are overrepresented. About 70% of MSU education abroad program participants are white while the rest are students of color.

The MSU system serves as a provider organization for students from throughout its campuses to study abroad together. There is a cohort of students on a semester-long program in Santiago, Chile that includes a language intensive pre-semester portion of the program in which this case takes place. The students are instructed by a local Chilean professor and all course work is in Spanish, though this professor is lenient and lets them speak in English as needed to express themselves.

This cohort is made up of 30 students, about 10 who are people of color while the other 20 are white. Eight students of color are Latino/a/e students of diverse ethnic backgrounds, with a range of brown and beige skin tones. The other two students of color are East Asian with light-skinned complexions.

Case

On the first day of instruction, Nicole and Sonia, who had decided to study abroad together, walk into their class a few minutes before it begins. Nicole is a heritage seeking student who is in Chile for the first time looking to reconnect with her roots. Sonia is of Mexican descent. When they arrive, they find a group of students sitting around Sharon and Katie, two white students, who are excitedly sharing about their recent hiking trip in southern Chile.

Nicole and Sonia notice Yahaira, who is of Afro-Dominican descent, and Stephen, a gay man who is of Chinese descent, chatting among themselves. Nicole and Sonia slide into their seats among them. Sonia turns to Yahaira and says to her, "*Parece que nos siguieron hasta el fin del mundo*. There's no escaping." This translates to, "Looks like they've followed us even to the end of the world", in reference to the white students, insinuating that there's no getting away from them. Yahaira simply looks down and doesn't say anything in response. Stephen responds by saying, "Yes girl, they're everywhere". The professor walks in and calls everyone to attention.

This language-intensive course is based around language, culture, and history. However, the coursework prompts conversations around power and privilege. Some of the white students in the cohort, especially Shannon and Katie, have made comments that were offensive. In return, the students of color, particularly Nicole and Sonia, made comments about the white students. Neither of these groups of students seem to recognize the impact of their words on one another.

During the first week, Shannon shares that her Mexican nanny taught her Spanish while growing up, which is why she's able to speak it so well. Sonia and Nicole share eye rolls with one another. In the second week, Katie mentions that she hates being discriminated against as an American when overcharged while buying local artisanal goods. Sonia tells her that she should pay the prices that locals are asking for since she holds the power and privilege of having U.S. currency. Yahaira counters Sonia and tells her she agrees with Katie - that she also hates being ripped off by locals. This conversation sparks a heated debate among the rest of the class.

On the third week of the language-intensive course, one other white student, Emma, shares that she is having a hard time navigating her white privilege knowing that she is of German descent. She discloses that she's aware of the stigma surrounding German descendants in Chile due to their association with Nazis who fled to South America after World War II. After class, Stephen begins to joke that some of the white students in their cohort, including Emma, are Nazis.

Day by day, the discussions get more and more intense. On the fifth and final week of the language-intensive course, when discussing the end of the Chilean dictatorship, Nicole, the student of Chilean descent, has an emotional outburst. She blames the United States for catering to the greed of its people, white people, as the ongoing reason for issues in Chile.

Shannon, who happens to be sitting a couple of rows behind Nicole, jumps up in her seat in an aggressive manner. She shares that she is tired of having everything blamed on white people when none of these issues have anything to do with them. She shares that a lot of white students in the group are from different backgrounds themselves - German, Jewish, Irish, Italian, French, Norwegian. She states that some of them

don't even know their cultural background and that it's unfair to blame them when they weren't even alive when many of these historical events took place. Nicole tells Shannon that none of that matters since she still holds white privilege that runs rampant around the world. Shannon tells Nicole that she needs to stop victimizing herself. That's when Nicole approaches Shannon to tell her off face to face. The two students begin a yelling match in each other's face while the professor shouts at them to sit down with no success.

Sonia stands next to Nicole, attempting to pull her away from Shannon. Katie and Yahaira try to pull Shannon away as well. Shannon flails her arms and accidentally hits Yahaira in the face with her elbow, causing her nose to bleed. Nicole yells at Shannon, telling her, "Look what you did!". Shannon pushes Nicole away and Nicole responds by pushing Shannon back so hard that she falls to the floor. Sonia pulls Nicole away while she continues shouting at Shannon. Shannon begins to cry while Katie attempts to consult her. Stephen attends to Yahaira while the professor calls the onsite study abroad coordinator for assistance.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What pre-departure measures could have been taken to prepare students for cultural competency and behavioral expectations while on this program?
- What could have been done onsite to encourage community-building and belonging among this cohort of students?
- What kind of support could these students receive as they navigate topics such as race, ethnicity, power, and privilege while on program?
- How can international educators tackle topics of race, ethnicity, power, and privilege in a way that validates students' experiences while also challenging them to question how they engage with one another on these topics?
- How could relationships within this cohort be rebuilt after an altercation as intense as this?
- What would the appropriate consequences or next steps for the students involved in this situation look like?

Passive Discrimination:

Access to Higher Education for People with Physical Disabilities in Russian Universities

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Tags

Education Policy; Ethics, Equity, and Social Justice; International Enrollment Management; Student Learning and Development; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

Natasha is a person with a physical disability living in Russia. Because the overall accessibility infrastructure in Russia remains undeveloped, she needs physical assistance from her family to go to the store or other places. She wants to study at the leading university (City State University) in her home region and learn foreign languages. Russia has a law requiring all public institutions to be accessible but does not intervene in individual cases of accessibility implementation. Some universities have ensured physical access to some buildings. Many other universities have not. This creates obstacles for students with disabilities who seek to study at universities.

Case

Natasha is an 18-year-old girl using a wheelchair. She completed her secondary education at home due to the inaccessibility of Russian schools, and her teachers came to her house to teach ten hours of classes per week. Natasha wants to go to the university to study foreign languages and develop her independence, worldview, and cultural competence to succeed in her career. She spent around four years contacting hundreds of universities asking about their wheelchair accessibility because it is the main barrier to her being able to study.

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Afterwards, she focused her attention on a local university, City State University. She prepares to take the English and History exams required to enter the international relations major at City State University and goes to visiting days at the university. Though it is not her first choice of major, it would allow her to study two languages. She tells herself, “At least they have some sort of ramp to get inside their building.”

One month before the application process opens, she hears from the teacher of her English courses that the faculty of international relations will be moving from the building with the ramp to a historical heritage building without any ramp. Additionally, the law in Russia prohibits the construction of elevators or ramps in historical heritage buildings. Natasha makes an appointment with the Vice President of City State University. She cannot go to the meeting herself because it is on the second floor of another historical building. Instead, her mom goes to the meeting as her representative.

After hearing the concern of Natasha and her family about the location of the faculty of international relations at City State University, the Vice President urges Natasha to apply for the faculty of history located in the first building with a ramp. However, it would require Natasha to take completely different exams and change her life and career plans. The Vice President even offers to “help with entrance exam fraud” using her networks and power in the education field because Natasha would not be able to pass new exams for which she has not been preparing for. The Vice President also explains, “Natasha should study history because she can work in the archive after graduation” and “there is no future for those learning just languages.” With disappointment and anger, Natasha’s mom asks the Vice President why she did not study engineering then and does not work, for example, at the factory. She is upset and brings this news to Natasha, who has spent many years trying to find even one institution in her region with a ramp to the faculty of foreign languages or international relations.

One month later, Natasha learns from her classmate about the National Research University (NRU) in a neighboring region with better accessibility at the faculty of foreign languages. This option would require Natasha and her family to leave everything back home and move to a new region to help Natasha move around. The person who picks up the phone when Natasha calls is surprised that someone is ready to move to a smaller city only because of the elevator. Natasha leaves everything back home and moves with her family to study at NRU.

In a couple of months, a representative of City State University calls Natasha and asks her to complete a survey about why she did not apply and enroll in their institution. The representative also informs Natasha that City State University authorities decided not to change the location of the international relations faculty, realizing that the historic building is in disrepair, and that it is dangerous for people to be there. This was decided after all the admission and enrollment deadlines had passed.

Natasha spent four years at the National Research University learning foreign languages, cultures, and teaching (her desired field of study). When Natasha graduated with honors, she left for the USA through an exchange program to explore accessibility, independence, and the world without family support. However, two years after her graduation, even after having one other student in a wheelchair studying at the same faculty, National Research University authorities changed the location of the faculty of foreign languages to an old, inaccessible building. After Natasha’s exchange experiences in the U.S., she chose to apply for graduate

school in the United States because she could study independently and be engaged in the full student experience at a U.S. host institution.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What forms of discrimination did Natasha face?
- What are ways to address the issue of corruption (and fraud) existing in the educational system of Russia?
- How can an institution with limited funding improve its accessibility?
- How does the issue of physical access at the universities influence the educational and career development of students with physical disabilities?
- How can international higher education foster the holistic growth and independence of people with physical disabilities?

Refugees in International Education: Language as a Barrier for Higher Education

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Tags

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

Setting

Higher education is a dynamic and multi-layered process. In times of increased uncertainty, it becomes more necessary for higher education institutions to update policies and take action. Access to higher education is a human right enshrined in various international conventions, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. In this context, refugee participation in higher education best exemplifies this uncertainty. Yet, the participation of refugees in higher education can facilitate and strengthen social integration.

The experiences of refugees, persons under international protection, and persons under temporary protection in higher education are different from the experiences of international students. Those in the first group face many problems in participating in higher education. Access and integration to higher education can be realized by removing the existing difficulties and barriers. Some of these barriers include documentation, finances, and language. Despite policy changes and the support of international organizations, the language barrier remains the most important obstacle to access to higher education.

In this context, the situation is no different for Turkey, which has been exposed to a large influx of refugees. As a stakeholder of the European Higher Education Framework, Turkish Higher Education has taken important decisions to facilitate the processes of refugees, those under international protection and those under temporary protection status. Despite this, the barriers still prevent many refugee students from completing their studies.

Case

Ali is a refugee student who started his secondary education in Syria and had to complete it in Turkey. He is not a refugee under Turkish law and is instead under Temporary Protection Status. Immediately after the start of the Syrian Civil War, he was forced to migrate to Turkey, the closest country to his region. Ali is the eldest child in a family of 6 children and is responsible for taking care of his family. After his migration to Turkey, Ali was hesitant to persevere in his education owing to financial distress. Due to his father's health issues, Ali had to look after his family after the Syrian Civil War. With the support of his family, Ali graduated from high school and then decided to study Civil Engineering, as the field would be in demand after the war. The problems for Ali began to occur after his decision.

Ali had to work and pursue his high school education at the same time. Therefore, he was late in following the advertisements and announcements during the university application process. The main reason for running behind was that all information channels were provided in Turkish. Ali also had insufficient information about the university and department he desired to study at, as well as the required documents for application and registration. In Turkey, universities have information and counseling offices during the application process. Ali went to these offices in the limited time he had after work. Nevertheless, the staff at these offices could not communicate in Arabic or English and were unable to assist not only Ali but also numerous other students in the same situation. Ali's language-based problems with the admissions and student affairs offices made him indecisive about going on to higher education.

The unforeseen influx of refugees has left Turkish universities uncertain about their policies. The intense student demand faced by universities has put the staff working in the registration and student affairs offices in a hard situation. Their attitudes towards prospective students hardened during the process as well.

Ali encountered the obstacle of not being able to communicate with the relevant offices to get assistance. This brought Ali to the point of rethinking his registration. Yet, Ali concluded his enrollment in the Civil Engineering department out of concern for his future. Ali's language-based problems persisted with the start of school. The lack of an orientation week and how to operate the university's course selection system were among the first crises Ali encountered. His friends studying in the same department also struggled to communicate with Ali owing to language barriers, which caused this problem to continue. The language barrier Ali faced during his admission, enrollment and study process caused him to decide to drop out of university several times. However, the attention of Ali's academic advisors and the approach of some university staff in solving the

problems helped Ali to overcome his decisions. With this support and with perseverance, Ali continued his studies, including completing an internship in Civil Engineering in the last year of his undergraduate studies.

Ali's personal experience with the language barrier reflects the problems of many refugees. The elimination of Ali's difficulties and Ali's continuation of his education were realized through the personal determination of individuals. However, this solution is not sustainable and many students with similar problems dropped out of their education. In this context, it is a necessity to create sustainable institutional policies. Many non-governmental organizations from abroad are providing aid to refugees. However, the aid provided and the strategy pursued are often insufficient to prioritize the participation of refugees in higher education. Monthly scholarships are usually very small and policies and practices that will eliminate the language barrier for students are inadequate. In these difficulties, they cannot find the time and financial means to attend language courses. Refugee students face multi-faceted obstacles while trying to continue their higher education, including financial and language barriers. Higher education policy and practice must be updated to safeguard these students' human rights.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- How would you assess Ali's experience in higher education as a refugee student? What factors might be common for refugees? What factors might depend on individual circumstances?
- In what ways are the challenges that refugee students face different from other international students?
- How can refugees' participation in higher education be addressed within the framework of internationalization of higher education?
- How can the language barrier be overcome in the internationalization of higher education?
- What kind of training and support should be offered to personnel working in the admissions, registration, and student affairs offices? How would you address the language barrier?
- How can national policies and practices be updated to support refugees in higher education?

Show Me the Money!

Study Abroad Funding and the Diversification of Institutional Support

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Tags

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

Setting

The University of Majesty is a public 4-year institution with 4,000 undergraduate students and 750 graduate students. Ten percent of the student body is from underrepresented socioeconomic and racial backgrounds. Of the nearly 5,000 students, only about 500 receive federal and state financial aid. Longitudinal studies and surveys from the Office of Admissions reveal that the opportunity to study abroad as an undergraduate is a primary factor in students' decision to attend the University of Majesty. Most of the study abroad opportunities are led by faculty throughout Europe during the summer. Most of the overall financial support from the institution is merit-based.

Case

Jerry Jenkins enrolled at the University of Majesty. As a first-year student, he was excited to begin college, because being accepted to a university was a dream. Although no one in his family had attended college, they supported him and his professional goals. He chose to focus on a career that enabled him to give back to his community. By strengthening relationships with stakeholders, he planned to improve neighborhood resources

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and financial support for others. As a young black man, he believed it was important to support his community and improve circumstances and lived experiences.

Funding for university was a challenge. Jerry learned about the U.S. government's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) from his high school guidance counselor, who he trusted. He understood the option for loans and accepted several thousand dollars of debt. The University of Majesty did not offer much in Financial Aid. However, his FAFSA resulted in an impressive amount of aid in the form of a Federal Pell Grant.

Because of the academic challenges Jerry faced in high school, he earned average grades in his courses. Luckily, he learned about the Academic Center and tutors from good friends. By the start of the next semester, his confidence had grown even more. He created a tailored study plan and often sacrificed personal time in order to meet with professors during office hours.

Jerry's academic confidence led him to decide to study abroad during the summer through a faculty-led Sociology course in London. The tuition for the 3-credit course was \$1,200, in addition to \$4,000 for the flight, housing, meals and activities. He spoke to his family about financial support. Gathering more than \$5,000 by the April 30th deadline was not realistic for his family. He entertained the idea of securing another loan, and a friend suggested he meet with the study abroad office staff to learn about financial options or scholarship opportunities.

Jerry met with a staff member and shared his plans, but the staff member admonished him for not knowing that the deadlines for scholarships had already passed. After five minutes, the staff member gave him the phone number for the Financial Aid Office. Jerry felt dismissed. When Jerry spoke to his mom about the encounter, she was disheartened because she knew Jerry had overcome so much already. "It's ok mom. I'll figure something out." Later that day, Jerry visited the Financial Aid Office, but only received a listing of several loan options.

Jerry felt defeated. He decided he would follow the same process he used with his academics: he would ask around and advocate for himself. He told himself he would find someone who could advise him about scholarships and study abroad funding support options.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What practices could The University of Majesty implement to ensure study abroad participation is financially accessible to all students, especially for students with low socioeconomic statuses?
- What policy changes could the U.S. government implement to ensure that study abroad participation is financially accessible to all students, especially for Pell Grant recipients?
- How could the program design of the education abroad programs be adjusted to bring down the overall cost to the student?

- What could the institution do to ensure staff display or practice empathy and understand equity challenges in addressing student cases?
- How could Jerry's experience affect the educational outcomes for Jerry and others?
- What training would be effective for study abroad offices and financial aid staff?
- How could the university adjust its institutional policies and funding sources in order to be more inclusive of students with need-based aid to participate in education abroad programs?

Cross-Cultural Confusion: Supporting International Students Through Academic Conduct Issues

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Tags

Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Policy; International Student and Scholar Services; Student Learning and Development; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

At the International Student & Scholar Office (ISSO) at a large, private university in the northeastern U.S. (with 5,000+ international students), Rebecca is a recently hired international student advisor specializing in academics. This is a new focus area for the ISSO, as they have been seeing an increase in international student academic conduct issues.

The university is decentralized, with international advisors focusing mainly on immigration, and separate advisors for academics, student conduct, etc. There has been very little communication between these departments in regards to how these issues impact international students, given that their immigration status is dependent on their full-time enrollment.

Rebecca has been tasked with advising international students, particularly in complicated academic cases. Additionally, she has been asked to find ways to bring the relevant parties at the university together, and ensure they have up-to-date immigration information in order to best serve students.

Case

Rebecca's first meeting of the day is with a freshman international student who was referred by their academic advisor. The student was recently placed on academic probation as a result of failing a class last semester. Upon further questioning, the student reveals that they failed the class because they were accused of plagiarizing their final paper. Consequently, the professor filed a student conduct case against them.

The proposed outcome of the student conduct case is dismissal from the university, which Rebecca advises would result in a negative termination of the student's immigration record. This would mean the student would need to leave the U.S. immediately, and it could make it very difficult for them to return to the U.S. in the future.

The student is understandably upset at hearing this information and explains that they did not cheat on their final paper, and they are not sure why the professor filed the case against them. Rebecca offers to contact the Student Conduct Office for more information about the case, and suggests that the student email the professor for clarification and copy her on the email.

The professor responds to the student's email quickly – he explains that the student used multiple quotes from outside sources in their paper and that they did not use citations: no bibliography, no quotation marks, etc. He maintains that this was “blatant, obvious plagiarism that has no place at this esteemed institution of learning”, and that he has no intention of dropping or altering the case against the student.

The student meets with Rebecca the next day and explains tearfully that in their country they do not use citations the way that is expected in the U.S. They were not aware that they had to use quotation marks or include a bibliography, and they had not read the professor's syllabus, which had included a link to the university's strict plagiarism policy.

Rebecca lays out the student's options:

- Accept the terms of their conduct case, and likely leave the U.S.
- Meet with the professor, explain their side of things, and try to convince him to drop the case
- Dispute the outcome of the conduct case, which would then go into a lengthy panel review process with the Student Conduct Office, not necessarily guaranteeing a positive outcome for the student

Rebecca feels that none of these options are ideal for the student, and they all cause a great deal of emotional distress. After her meeting with the student, she tries to brainstorm how she can prevent this situation from happening in the future.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- How would you advise the student? Do you see any options beyond the three that Rebecca laid out?
- Would your advising and opinion of the case be different if the student were in their final year and not in their first year?

- Whose responsibility is it to ensure that international students are aware of and understand U.S. citation and plagiarism rules?
- What other departments would you contact regarding this issue, and how would you collaborate with them?
- Consider the feasibility and likely successful outcome of these trainings. Should these trainings be voluntary or mandatory?
 - A plagiarism training for new international students during orientation
 - A training for relevant staff on international students and academic conduct
 - A training for faculty on international students and academic conduct
- What other academic conduct issues might involve international students at this university? How could Rebecca proactively address these issues in the future?

Navigating Resources:

Connecting to Campus and Community

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Tags

Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Abroad; International Student and Scholar Services; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

This case focuses on the examples from international students, scholars, exchange guests, and study abroad returnees about campus resources. These individual and situational cases provide a unique opportunity to learn about international communities and their willingness to be engaged with campus members, resources, and opportunities in higher education. International program offices assist the international community members with immigration, housing, and other related campus and academic related resources. Despite the common roles international program offices take on, there is diversity in the resources universities can provide, in the host community contexts, and in the needs of individual students and scholars. The following case study offers individual cases regarding campus resources for discussion.

Case

Each of the following cases provide a unique situation that brings awareness to cultural issues that international educators may need to be aware of:

1. Carol, an international student, is on campus to complete a 4-year undergraduate bachelor degree.

“Hi, I am excited to be at this university. When I have free time, I do not know what to do.

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Learning about and engaging with new cultures and languages is a passion of mine so I wonder if you could help me find extracurricular activities that focus on my passion? I really want to be part of the university volunteer organizations or clubs to share my culture. At times, I feel alone, maybe because I do not know many people. I hope that if I get involved in some campus activities I will not feel alone. I believe volunteering and being engaged outside of my schoolwork will help me learn about the community.”

2. Ted is a junior in the English Department. He has just returned from a semester abroad experience in Paris, France.

“Hi, I really enjoyed my study abroad this spring. I learned French as part of my program. Could you please guide us to the resources we have on campus that support language learners? I am afraid I will lose my ability to speak French if I do not practice. This is important for my future because my plans are to teach English as a Second Language in Paris after my graduation. My goal is to join a language group or organization that enables me to practice my French on a regular basis. Any help is appreciated.”

3. Marina is an exchange student from Russia who will be on campus for a 6-month exchange.

“Hi, I am a new exchange student, and I am wondering if you have any opportunities to help me get to know other students on campus? As part of my program requirement, I need to volunteer for 15-30 hours, and I must show that I shared my culture and participated in cultural events. Are there any campus programs that I can join to help me meet my program requirements? After completion of the exchange program, I will return to and graduate from my Russian university. After graduating, I will search for a job. Therefore, my overall goals during the exchange program are to engage in volunteer opportunities while also building my resume in preparation for a professional job.”

4. Mustafa is a government-sponsored student from Saudi Arabia.

“Hi, this is my second month on campus. Would you mind connecting me with other students from Saudi Arabia? I have not met anyone yet. If there are no other students from Saudi Arabia that you can connect me with, are there available resources to help me make new friends? I want to improve my English and I want to join American students' clubs or hang out with them. Please can you guide me?”

5. Takashi is an ELL student from Japan.

“I am a new student. I cannot talk much in English. I am wondering if I can get extra help. I need to practice my English, but I feel alone. I have some friends who speak the same language, but they do not speak English with me. I am looking for a club or a group where I can learn more English and share my culture. Are there any cooking classes or any community programs that I can participate in? I want to be around students but also people from the community.”

6. Rakesh is a new international scholar and works as a faculty member at the university and his family is new to the community.

“Hi there, I am a new faculty member and I wanted to learn about community resources that you may have, or you may be aware of. I moved with my family a week ago and I do not know anyone. I have two children, an 8-year-old girl and 10-year-old boy. My wife does not work currently, and she takes care of the children while I am at work. We do not know anything about the community or resources that we could use to support our children. I am wondering if you have a list of organizations or

resources that could support my family. My wife wants to volunteer while she waits for her work authorization. She worked as a high school teacher in our country, and she has her degree in Linguistics. Are there any free English sessions or any community programs that she can participate in? I also want to be around other new families and get to know our community members.”

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What strategies could support students and scholars before, during, and after their experiences abroad?
- What resources exist in your organization to support each of these individuals?
- How could you further develop resources in your organization to support each of these individuals?
- How does the context (rural/urban, university/community college, provider organization, etc.) influence the resources available to support each of these individuals?
- What follow-up questions would you ask these individuals to find out which resources would be the best fit?
- What cultural or cross-cultural problems are highlighted in these individual cases? How could you support each student’s intercultural learning?
- How should international program offices foster relationships with campus representatives and community members to support study abroad returnees, international students, and visiting scholars?

J-1 Insurance Requirements: Mediating Conflict Between Scholars and Internal Stakeholders

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Tags

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

Setting

At a public university with 14,000 enrolled students, the International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) office serves approximately 400 international students and scholars. The university's enrollment includes undergraduate, graduate, pharmacy, and medical students. The ISSS office has three staff members—a Director, an International Student Advisor (ISA), and an Office Coordinator. The ISA has held her position for less than one year and advises graduate students, while the Office Coordinator has been with the office for less than six months. The Director has worked in ISSS for five years, and handles all scholar-related matters, serves on institutional committees, and advises all undergraduate students. Of the three staff, the Director is the only individual in the office with extensive experience regarding international education and federal immigration requirements for F-1 and J-1 students and scholars. Due to the busy nature of the office, the Director sometimes struggles to manage her advising load.

Case

A new faculty member with the College of Medicine wants to host a J-1 research scholar in his lab. The Director sends the professor all the necessary information regarding the J-1 scholar request documentation and gives him a link to the J-1 Scholar webpage for review. The request was submitted, an oral proficiency interview (OPI) was conducted successfully, and a DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor (J-1) status, was issued. The scholar received a packet with the signed DS-2019, emergency contact form, maintaining J-1 status fact sheet, a Welcome Brochure, and the Exchange Visitor Program insurance

requirement sheet (including an explanation of the Department of State requirements for coverage of medical evacuation and repatriation of remains). The scholar was invited to review the J-1 Scholar webpage, which includes information regarding pre-arrival, insurance requirements, two-year home residency requirements, maintaining status, program extensions, and 12-month and 24-month bars, to name a few. The scholar purchased insurance using the link provided on the ISSS webpage.

When the insurance policy was expiring, the professor contacted Human Resources to inquire about signing up for the institutional insurance policy. Initially, Human Resources denied the request as the scholar missed the enrollment period and the insurance policy did not meet the requirements set by the Department of State. The Director was unaware that a visiting scholar could purchase the institutional insurance as previous scholars purchased third-party insurance policies that met the federal requirements. As conversations progressed, tension built between the parties involved. The College of Medicine faculty member was upset that the institution did not provide insurance that met the requirements for J-1 scholars. At this point, the Director asked the university's Legal Counsel to intervene and help resolve the situation.

Legal Counsel stated that the university is not responsible for covering all J-1 insurance requirements. The scholar could purchase the institutional health coverage plan as other benefits-eligible employees; however, the scholar would be required to purchase supplementary health insurance that included medical evacuation and repatriation. At this time, the Director and Legal Counsel became aware that the scholar would not be eligible for institutional insurance until the next enrollment period, as he waived coverage when he signed his work contract. Based on this situation, ISSS and Legal Counsel updated the insurance coverage policy on the webpage. The new wording stipulates that if a scholar purchases institutional insurance, a supplementary insurance must be purchased to fulfill the federal insurance requirements. The J-1 Scholar request forms were also updated with the new insurance verbiage so all parties involved in the process would be aware of what the institutional health policy covers and what additional insurance would need to be purchased.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What strategies can ISSS utilize so scholars can make informed decisions regarding insurance purchases?
- How can ISSS best support scholars and host departments while ensuring that federal requirements are being met?
- How could ISSS have acted differently to help alleviate the tension building between the scholar, the faculty member, and Human Resources?
- Which communication channels are most effective for reaching international scholars? How does your answer vary depending on the content and purpose of the communications?
- What should an ISSS office prioritize when understaffed or staffed with employees still gaining experience?
- Who on campus needs to understand the immigration regulations, and to what extent?

When Things Get Broken:

Student Alcohol Use While Abroad

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Tags

Crisis-Management; Education Abroad; Management and Operations; University/Higher Education

Setting

A large state university regularly approves study abroad faculty-led programs which feature on-campus classes connected to short-term international excursions of 10-14 days. Faculty members lead groups of students through international travel to strengthen the in-class learning with an experiential learning opportunity. While abroad, students get to experience sites, communities, companies, and people that they learned about in the classroom and reconcile the veracity of their class content to real-life examples.

These short-term travel programs usually navigate through multiple countries and are very often active and on the go, staying only one or two nights at each location. While students have a schedule organized by faculty leaders, students do have several opportunities to explore on their own. Faculty-led programs include program fees which allow faculty leaders to organize a majority of transportation, lodging, company/university visits, cultural visits, health and emergency insurance, and some meals.

Faculty leaders of these programs must attend mandatory leadership training before taking students abroad. Trained faculty members are expected to provide travel preparation and clear expectations for student conduct on these travel programs. A majority of these faculty-led programs have student groups between 7-30 people. The ratio of faculty leaders to student participants is mandated by the university.

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Case

A group of 14 third and fourth-year undergraduate students and 2 faculty members embarked on a travel program designed for 10 days to Europe. This exact program had run successfully over the past 4 years. The faculty leaders were accustomed to multiple countries, lodging locations, and other places on the itinerary from past experience. This year's group of students were prepared for travel through conversations about health, safety, risk, money, phones, appropriate dress/packing needs, alcohol-use, conduct, culture shock, etc., as all previous groups were.

Over the first eight days, the program ran smoothly according to the itinerary as it had in past programs. Overall, students got along with each other and their faculty leaders. Satisfied with the program, students seemed to enjoy their free-time and enjoyed going out at each location they travelled through. Several students would drink alcohol while going out, but no problems emerged.

However, in the last two days of the program, some students seemed to imbibe in alcohol more heavily. On the last night, students went out for the evening and a couple of them were inebriated when returning to the hotel. One of the students passed out in the bathroom after breaking a porcelain sink. Water and broken porcelain were everywhere. The faculty were woken up by frustrated and angry hotel staff. Luckily, the student was not in need of medical care.

The hotel demanded payment for the broken sink and damage before the group was allowed to leave the premises. The repair and clean-up costs were several hundred dollars. The student, who was still not fully alert, indicated that they had no funds available to pay for the cost of the damage. All student flights were rapidly approaching and faculty members needed to get students to the airport within a few hours.

After consultation with international educators at the main campus, it was decided that the faculty would pay for the costs of repairs/damages so they could get all students to the airport to return to the U.S. as planned. The student responsible for the damages was notified before the faculty paid the repair/damage costs that the university would charge the cost to the student's account and place a hold on the student account until the university was reimbursed.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- Given that student preparation training included topics on alcohol use and student conduct, what else may have been done to help prevent this type of behavior?
- Was it an appropriate decision to have faculty pay the repair/damage costs on-site? Why or why not?
- What are other ways that faculty could have reacted?
- How might this incident have played out differently if the local police had been called?
- Speculate how the faculty determined the student was "not in need of medical care"? How do you think it should be determined in this type of case?

- How do you think this incident may have played out differently if the student had been injured and in need of medical care?
- What do you imagine is the long-term impact of being able to book with the same lodging vendor again?

Students, Parents, and Health: Reporting Medical Needs and Supporting Students Pre-Departure and Onsite

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Tags

Crisis-Management; Cross-Cultural Issues; Education Abroad; Management and Operations; Student Services; University/Higher Education

Setting

A U.S.-based provider organization facilitates summer, semester, and year-long education abroad programs for undergraduate students in numerous locations including Seoul, South Korea. As part of the onsite support, the provider employs a full-time site director, Lee, who is regularly available to the students and assists them with their cultural transition, course registration, and housing. The director also leads orientation, organizes field trips and activities, and oversees the students' study experience and well-being throughout the academic session. Lee works alone in a small office on the host university campus. Most of the students who participate in this program are third-year or fourth-year undergraduates enrolled in a U.S. institution. Student groups can number as high as 50 students per session. Among the organization's U.S.-based staff is a health and safety team who collects health information from students prior to their study and guides them on particular needs such as medication, health-related accommodations, insurance, and other relevant topics.

Case

Ray is a 20-year-old politics and Korean language double major studying at a large, mid-western U.S. institution. His dream is to successfully study abroad in Seoul before graduating. He has two semesters

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remaining after the current one. He was awarded a partial academic scholarship by his institution and is also using financial aid and family savings to attend the program.

One month into the session, Ray's mother calls the local site director on a weeknight at 1 a.m. local time, saying that her son is having trouble breathing. She explains that she can track his health status, including breathing rate, with an app on her cellphone. The student is located in a single room in on-campus housing and has been fully participating onsite for the first month of the semester session. The student has neither reported (predeparture or onsite) nor shown any medical needs or breathing trouble during his time onsite. The parent, who is calling from the U.S., reports to the director that her son needs special breathing equipment in order to sleep each night which she also monitors with the phone app. The student reportedly has the equipment with him, but the parent is not sure it is functioning properly. Neither the health team nor the site director were informed by the student, parent, or home institution of the student's need for medical equipment or support before or after the student's arrival. The parent asks the site director to go check on the student in person. Moreover, the parent asks the organization's health team and onsite staff to monitor the student's health for the remainder of the semester by using the same app.

The site director Lee feels this is an unreasonable request for her personally and a liability for the organization. She calls the residence hall and speaks to the student who reports he is fine and will meet with her the next day to discuss his medical equipment needs. However, Lee refuses to use the app (considering it an invasion of privacy) and requests that the student be withdrawn from the program if his needs cannot be adequately met by the student himself. The parent wants the student to remain onsite and to complete his semester abroad. The student's U.S. institution has yet to communicate with the student, parent, or organization on the matter.

Discussion Questions

As you consider this case, discuss:

- What are the challenges of collecting health information pre-departure?
- How might organizations and institutions best work with parents, families, and students regarding health issues and reporting, before departure and onsite?
- Does the organization or institution have any ability to require information?
- What does this case reflect about parent involvement in undergraduates' study abroad experiences?
- What does this case indicate regarding the use of technology?
- What do you consider the health and safety team's role and decision-making power in a similar case?
- What do you consider the site director's role and decision-making power in this case?
- Should the student's home university or the Korean host university be consulted about this case?
- Does culture or location play a role at all in this case or similar cases?

CASE STUDIES IN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

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