

– SAMPLE RECORD –

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Title Of Study: Assessing Language Acquisition and Intercultural Sensitivity Development in Relation to Study Abroad Program Design

Objectives/Hypotheses: To verify the effectiveness of the learning and experiential strategies which define the AUCP program design, and which are intended to help students achieve optimal results in the acquisition of foreign language (French) and in the development of cross-cultural sensitivity and skills.

To generate and interpret meaningful statistical assessment of the study abroad experience, within the context of specifically defined study abroad program types.

Instruments/Methodology:

- *Test d'Evaluation de Français* (TEF)
[administered pre and post, composed of 150 multiple-choice questions divided into three sections: 1) Written Comprehension, 2) Oral Comprehension, and 3) Vocabulary and Structure]
- Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)
[administered pre and post, more information available at <http://www.intercultural.org/idi/idi.html>]

Findings/Conclusions: Over eight semesters, the results from the 257 students tested have demonstrated an average one-semester personal gain of 37% in overall personal achievable progress. Because of the consistency of the overall averages over the years, we have come to consider the attainment of 40% of overall achievable progress as confirmation of what we subjectively perceive to be a “good” semester. In eight semesters of TEF testing, 57% of the students achieved personal progress within ten percentage points, higher or lower, of the final program-wide average of 37%. In short, TEF results confirm what we subjectively perceive to be true, that the majority of students move forward in their linguistic progress at a fairly consistent, predictable rate.

The IDI has been administered for this assessment study for a total of six semesters to date, to a total 187 one-semester AUCP participants. The AUCP IDI results confirm that students, who have already taken two years of a foreign language, and have chosen to study abroad in a full-immersion program, will show promising incoming results as to their openness and intercultural sensitivity. Over the six semesters of testing, student groups attained on the average 33% of collective achievable progress, with average group scores varying from semester to semester within a range of 20% to 39%. A close look at the IDI scores shows that an average of 14% of the student population decline in their cross-cultural competence as measured by the IDI. Two factors lead to the clear development of cross-cultural competence in the American student group: as much direct, authentic contact with the host culture as possible, and skillful mentoring which guides, informs, inspires, and stimulates the experiential learning process.

Year Completed: 2003

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Further Resources: *Assessing Language Acquisition and Intercultural Sensitivity Development in Relation to Study Abroad Program Design* available from the *Frontiers* archives (Fall 2004, Vol X) at:
http://www.frontiersjournal.com/issues/vol10/vol10-13_EngleEngle.pdf