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Chapter 11

Intercultural Competency Education Via Food

Tony V. Johnston

Note: Section II includes Chapters 4-14. These chapters use a standardized template to discuss the details of their respective study abroad programs and reference Deardorff's (2012) framework for intercultural competencies. The use of this template and the intercultural competencies framework are described in the Section II introduction. All courses in this section (except for Chapter 6) were taught through Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU), a mid-sized state school located in Murfreesboro, Tennessee (USA).

The course entitled *International Agriculture* (AGBS 5800) examines food as an avenue to explore international cultures and was first offered in Mendoza, Argentina. Mendoza is a city in the westernmost part of the country, close to the Andes Mountains. Mendoza province is the source of most of Argentina's fruit and vegetable production, processing, and export, and the city of Mendoza is centrally located within the province. This course puts focus on cuisine culture as a vehicle to learn about the everyday lives of people and provides opportunities for students to reflect and critically think about the deeper differences that exist across cultural boundaries. The course has been taught in Mendoza seven times (2011-2023) and a total of 67 students have participated.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Two pedagogical approaches are utilized at different times in this course. Study abroad courses are inherently experiential, as students must learn to adapt to the study abroad environment in addition to learning the content being taught (Kolb, 1984), but exactly how the experiences encountered are integrated into the curriculum can vary. For this course, the integrative pedagogical approach (Yadav, 2022) is utilized during the execution of “class time” since the students are physically present in the fields and factories in which agricultural goods are produced, processed, and shipped. The topics being discussed, such as agricultural production and trade, are literally at hand and underfoot, and almost everything being taught relates to the application of science, math, and economics. This course is designed to be integrative; every activity, including pre-planned meals, “free time,” and even transportation time, is utilized as an opportunity for formal and informal student instruction and guidance. This addresses one of the most important issues that impact pedagogical success: confidence in and comfort with the instructor. This is especially critical in the study abroad environment, where the instructor is frequently viewed as a “lifeline to home” in addition to the person teaching the course. Group-based informal contact with students in the class is critical to rapidly establishing credibility and confidence and reducing fear and stress (both expressed and internalized).

To help students connect the dots between activities and desired educational outcomes, students are briefed for each activity via a short lecture detailing what the students will encounter and providing context prior to activity execution. At activity completion, students are prompted for reflection and guided toward desired educational outcomes. Prior to scheduled free time, students are invited to join the instructor in unscheduled, casual activities, such as a meal

or a visit to a local site of interest unrelated to the class. Although students do not always take part in unscheduled events, word quickly spreads that these opportunities are interesting, entertaining, and worthy of participation.

After the students return home, a reflective essay assignment (discussed in detail later) is used as a reflective pedagogical exercise (Yadav, 2022). Although the primary academic objectives of the class have been achieved during class time, reflection provides a powerful means of reinforcing the greater lessons of studying abroad, including the commonality of humanity, the beauty of world cultures, and humanity's interdependence. The importance of this exercise cannot be overemphasized.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course was specifically designed to be taught abroad. Students are taken to countries outside the U.S. to explore first-hand how agricultural practices differ in other countries and how commodities are delivered from those locations to the U.S. and other export destinations. The course was taught via a combination of discussions, lectures, and visits to agricultural production fields, fruit and vegetable processing facilities, grocery store warehouse operations, and export operations. During these visits, students talked with owners, managers, and supervisors of each business. All activities took place within a two-hour drive radius of the city of Mendoza. Because there was no textbook available that met the needs of this course, a customized course packet, consisting of articles and agronomic information, was created to accompany the course.

Course Learning Outcomes

The primary learning outcomes for this course are:

- a. Recognize limitations that nature and geography impose on agriculture on a global scale.
- b. Recognize the role that economics plays in the marketing of agricultural products.
- c. Recognize logistics as a key factor that influences commodity prices and that transportation within a country or continent can be more difficult than across oceans.
- d. Understand that individual farmers decide what to produce based on market forces and national governments work to influence market forces.
- e. Understand that currency exchange rates significantly affect the value of agricultural crops in international trade.
- f. Recognize that labor costs and technological differences between countries significantly impact the relative cost of production (and therefore, value) of agricultural products.
- g. Recognize that low rates of agricultural mechanization do not always translate into higher costs of production.
- h. Recognize the interdependence between countries required to feed the world.

COURSE HISTORY

The course was developed in the Middle Tennessee State University (MTSU) School of Agriculture as part of the Agribusiness major in the late 1990s. No such course previously existed

at MTSU, and the primary purpose was to teach concepts related to international trade in agricultural products. A critical component of this class was the availability of locally based personnel who can identify potential companies and personnel to visit with and make arrangements for transportation. In the case of Mendoza, the same company has been utilized for almost 15 years because of their ability to make all arrangements and respond to both local circumstances and academic objectives. Although this stability aids in the success of the course, there are changing circumstances between planning and execution each year. As a result, an updated and detailed schedule is provided to each student upon arrival.

COURSE LOGISTICS

This is a 3-credit hour upper division course where almost all instruction occurs in a non-traditional manner. It is frequently difficult to find traditional classroom space in the study abroad environment, and, as opposed to teaching in a traditional setting, the entire day can be utilized for instruction while teaching abroad. Meals, most of which are either pre-paid or coordinated by the instructor, are valuable teaching and learning opportunities. Time in transit to and from scheduled meetings can be utilized to prepare students for what they will see and whom they will visit and to emphasize key points of the experience/discussion. Formal lectures, when necessary, may be offered in city parks, when the weather allows, or in the hotel conference room. In this 17-day class, a total of 272 contact hours are available for instruction (16 hours/day), of which only 7 hours are scheduled for traditional classroom time. The course is designed as a senior-level agribusiness major elective course and includes several agribusiness prerequisites, but exceptions can be made for non-agribusiness majors to take the course. Non-agriculture majors are typically deficient in their awareness of agriculture in general, and

especially unaware of how food gets from a farm to the store where they purchase it. The philosophy behind making exceptions to enrollment in this course is that non-agricultural majors will, by exposure to the course itself and interaction with agribusiness majors during the conduct of the course, substantially increase their comprehension of the world food supply system.

PRE-PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

The course itinerary must be prepared well in advance of the class, and it should be designed to accomplish the stated learning objectives. This is the single most important value of an in-country logistics provider because that company identifies the people, places, and events available to help you accomplish your goals. For this course, the logistics provider was provided with both the learning objectives and a list of suggested commercial operations (not individual companies), venues, and civilian or governmental positions that would address each objective. The logistics company then identified options for each learning objective. Through email conversations, selections were made and an itinerary was built. In addition, prior to departure, students were briefed on what to expect in Argentina and a long list of other topics including expectations of behavior, what to and not to pack, currency exchange details, and what kind of laundry options were provided (see Appendix 11.1 for a list of pre-departure discussion topics).

CLASS ACTIVITIES & INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCIES

Visits to commercial farming operations were arranged to address course learning outcomes *a*, *c*, *d*, and *f*. Since only 2% of U.S. residents live on a ranch or farm (Farm Bureau, 2021), it is highly likely that visits to farming operations are totally new experiences for most students and a key

component of the integrative pedagogical approach taken in the class. Visits to commercial processing operations involved in the export of their products (e.g., wineries, fruit and vegetable canning operations) and a supermarket distribution center were arranged to address course learning outcomes *b*, *c*, *e*, *g*, and *h*. Access to commercial food processing facilities in the U.S. has always been relatively restricted for probably obvious reasons, but the recent COVID-19 pandemic and the heightened need to ensure the safety of our national food supply have made access even more difficult for non-employees (Brackett, 2021). Therefore, processing plant and food distribution center visits, practically impossible to accomplish in the U.S., are extremely valuable experiential learning opportunities. Cultural awareness was repeatedly addressed by scheduled/pre-arranged meals, interactions with a panel of expatriate entrepreneurs who had immigrated to Argentina and established companies there, and the innumerable opportunities to accompany students as they learned the city, shopped, sought daily meals, bought their daily gelato, and enjoyed the parks in the city. Highlights of the program itinerary are presented in Appendix 11.2. One of the most important considerations for faculty members conducting courses abroad is to be flexible and always have alternatives in mind for each of your planned activities. Despite careful planning and arrangements made in advance, unexpected events occur and circumstances change, requiring a change of plans.

Class activities for *International Agriculture* are always, to some degree, adjusted to reflect the presence and subject matter of any other courses being offered in parallel. It is critical to note, however, that group activities are always preferred over individual activities. Students studying abroad are inevitably sharing rooms, meals, and transportation with one another, and they may not have known each other before embarking on the class. This provides an ideal

opportunity for students to learn how to work with others whom they may or may not know much about, which is a situation we all experience when we take a new job and make other life changes. In this section, some representative activities, tasks, and assignments from the course will be presented while also identifying key integrated intercultural competencies.

Welcome Lunch and Local Tour

The first formal activity of the class is a welcome lunch, which features empanadas (individual meat, cheese, and/or vegetable pies), the local version of pizza, and drinks. Having flown overnight and knowing that the first pre-planned dinner is scheduled for much later in the evening (which is typical for Argentina), this lunch is a necessity. As food is consumed, students are offered an informative and entertaining presentation on Argentine culture and an orientation to the city of Mendoza.

The welcome lunch is followed by an open-air bus tour of the area immediately around the hotel, which includes five major inner-city plazas: Plaza Independencia, Plaza Chile, Plaza España, Plaza San Martín, and Plaza Italia, and General San Martín Park, a major park on the western side of the city. San Martín Park is heavily utilized because of the wooded and open spaces available for recreation in addition to the city zoo, Juan Cornelio Moyano Museum of Anthropological and Natural Sciences, Grego Frank Romero Day outdoor amphitheater, and the Army of the Andes Monument, which celebrates the liberation of Argentina from rule by Spain. At the end of this tour, students are dropped off at Anna Bistro restaurant a few blocks from the hotel for their first Argentine dinner. The after-dinner walk back to the hotel is generally the final prelude to participants enjoying a good night's sleep. This activity provides the students an opportunity to gain the intercultural competencies identified in Table 11.1.

Table 11.1: Intercultural Competencies in the Welcome Lunch and Local Tour Activity

| Knowledge | Skills | Attitudes |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Geographic awareness• Cultural awareness | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Navigation skills• Culturally appropriate communication skills• Observing and interpreting new information | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adaptability• Acceptance/open minded• Stepping outside one's comfort zone |

Grocery Shopping and Scavenger Hunt Task

Because the accommodations include a kitchenette, students want to visit a grocery store shortly after arriving to stock up on water and snack foods to keep in their rooms. It took a visit to the grocery store with students to recognize the potential value of formalizing the learning that occurred during the trip. Not all students who visit Argentina can speak or read Spanish, and it quickly became obvious that students were shopping by sight rather than by reading the directional signs or package labels. Pictures on packages were immediately identified as vitally important and information could be gleaned from locational clues (e.g., proximity to similarly sized/shaped products with pictures), or Spanish-speaking students could be utilized to interpret. The students are so focused on their efforts to identify and purchase familiar and potentially edible unfamiliar food items, they didn't see the bigger picture the store offers.

In response to this observation, a simple exercise (see Appendix 11.3) was designed along the lines of a scavenger hunt to direct students to see what they otherwise would not. Both culturally unique and "typical American" food items were selected, and students are challenged to find them. In addition, questions are formulated to direct attention to both subtle and obvious distinctions between U.S. stores and familiar food items and Argentine grocery store items.

Students are organized into teams of 2-3 depending on the size of the class, and Spanish-speaking students are distributed amongst the teams. For the first class, the entire group was sent to the store, regardless of whether they had previously visited it. For all subsequent classes, this exercise was used as the first formal learning opportunity upon arrival, knowing that repeated visits to the grocery store would be made and, whether consciously or unconsciously, the lessons learned will be emphasized with each visit. Intercultural competencies gained by the students through this task are tabulated in Table 11.2.

Table 11.2: Intercultural Competencies in the Grocery Shopping and Scavenger Hunt Task

| Knowledge | Skills | Attitudes |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food customs awareness • Awareness of local economics (food prices) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teamwork • Observation • Interpretation • Evaluation • Analysis • Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance • Patience • Flexibility • Discovery • Respect |

Field Trips

The next several days of the program focus on visits to distinct agricultural production areas throughout Mendoza province, including the Uco Valley, Maipú, and Luján de Cuyo, to explore the variety of crops produced and processing facilities located nearby. The co-location of processing facilities near production areas is a key principle of agricultural economics and is a major reason food costs around the world are as low as possible. As various areas are visited, pre-paid meals are incorporated into the daily schedule to expose students to the culture and, more specifically, the variations within the culture of Argentina. Each of these meals offers opportunities for the students to experience and discuss the differences they note between U.S.

and Argentine customs. Intercultural competencies integrated into this activity are summarized in Table 11.3.

Table 11.3: Intercultural Competencies in Field Trip Activities

| Knowledge | Skills | Attitudes |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific crop production knowledge • Export market knowledge • Awareness of local agricultural labor practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Observing • Interpreting • Analyzing • Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empathy • Curiosity • Tolerance • Flexibility • Adaptability |

Traditional Day of Activities

One highlight of the class is the day spent at Cerro Arco Park in the foothills of the Andes Mountains. Located just outside the Mendoza city limits, this is the highest point adjacent to the city and many telecommunications towers are installed on the peak. Many residents use the rough road to the peak as a recreational area, and a local restaurateur and mountaineer has established a restaurant, Puerta de la Quebrada, at the base of the hill. This restaurant features extensive outdoor seating, a traditional mud oven fired by local wood in which most of the food is cooked, and cooking classes for individuals and groups who want to learn about traditional Argentine dishes. The *asado*, which is both the traditional barbeque of Argentina and the traditions around its preparation, is more than just a dish. It is truly a cultural icon and is significantly woven into Argentine culture.

On this day, students may choose to hike to the peak (an approximate 2.5-hour round trip) or stay at Puerta de la Quebrada for a cooking class before the meal itself. Those who

participate in the cooking class are taught as they prepare the empanadas that start the meal and the deep-fried quince-filled dessert pastries that end the meal. A second highlight of the day is when the owner of Puerta de la Quebrada is asked to talk about either his multiple climbs of Aconcagua, the highest peak in South America, or his research into the ancient residents of the local region of the Andes. Both groups enjoy a completely traditional day of activities based on their preferences and enjoy the most traditional of Argentine meals. The intercultural competencies observed in this activity are identified in Table 11.4.

Table 11.4: Intercultural Competencies in the Traditional Day Activities

| Knowledge | Skills | Attitudes |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historical awareness • Cultural knowledge • Geographic knowledge • Comprehension of local growing conditions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creativity • Teamwork • Listening • Observing • Relating • Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acceptance • Empathy • Open mindedness • Respect • Stepping outside one's comfort zone |

Research Station Visit

Because agriculture is such an important part of Argentina's economy, federally sponsored research stations have been established around the country to advance the science of agriculture and the practical application thereof. The facility for the Mendoza province is located a short 15-minute drive from the center of Mendoza, making it ideal for the exploration of the more technical aspects of agriculture. At this research station, nuts, grapes, tree fruits, ornamental plants, and field crops such as garlic, corn, and beans are under constant experimentation and

analysis. This facility is visited for a portion of one day. Several of the research scientists working there share their research areas and provide an overview of the importance of that research to agricultural production with the students in the class. This visit is key to emphasizing the scientific value of the class and the trip itself. This activity allowed the students to focus on the intercultural competencies identified in Table 11.5.

Table 11.5: Intercultural Competencies in the Research Station Visit Activity

| Knowledge | Skills | Attitudes |
|--|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local agricultural practice knowledge • Agricultural research priority (for Argentina) knowledge • Awareness of Argentina's agricultural worldview | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Observing • Analyzing • Technology • Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resilience • Respect • Adaptability • Discovery • Empathy |

Recreation Activities

Students (and faculty alike) need downtime during study abroad programs, so two recreational days are incorporated into the class. One day is left to the student to decide what they would like to do, and they are provided a list of “vetted” options in the immediate area to choose from. The most popular of these options is an outdoor activity company named Argentina Rafting.

Founded by a U.S. citizen and her Argentine husband, Argentina Rafting offers zip line, white water rafting, mountain biking, rock climbing, sky diving, hiking, paragliding, horseback riding, stand-up paddling, and kayaking adventures. From a practical point of view, the best features of this option are that the company operates an office that is a 15-minute walk from the hotel, at

which students may choose and pay for their chosen activities and arrange for round-trip transportation from the hotel to the facility, which is located about an hour outside the city limits.

The second recreational day of the trip is scheduled to be spent at the Cacheuta Hot Springs Thermal Water Park. The naturally heated mineral waters in the pools, beautiful vistas, and ample accommodations for lounging at the facility provide a relaxing respite for all participants. The day at the park includes a buffet lunch which features countless traditional Argentine dishes and chefs on hand to prepare dishes that are not ready-made. The only way to describe this experience is that everyone in the group is pampered. Through these recreational activities, the students could gain intercultural competencies as listed in Table 11.6.

Table 11.6: Intercultural Competencies in Recreation Activities

| Knowledge | Skills | Attitudes |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural self-awareness • Understanding other' worldviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listening • Observing • Interpreting • Communication | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk taking • Tolerance • Flexibility • Adaptability |

Research Paper Presentations

One of the last scheduled events of the course is the presentation of the students' research to the class. The students are allowed to select their topic from a list provided in the syllabus, all of which are fruits, vegetables, nuts, and spices not produced in the U.S. Regardless of the level of agricultural familiarity amongst the students enrolled in the study abroad course, awareness of and familiarity with crops produced abroad is inherently low. This exercise provides students

another opportunity to hone their public speaking skills and share their research on unfamiliar crops that are exported to the U.S. (and other countries). Academically, it also reinforces the central idea of the class: humans around the world are dependent on each other to provide the foods and organic materials we want to consume. This assignment helps the students develop the intercultural competencies listed in Table 11.7.

Table 11.7: Intercultural Competencies in the Research Paper Assignments

| Knowledge | Skills | Attitudes |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding others' worldviews • Country-specific knowledge • Academic content knowledge | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication • Creative thinking • Interpretation • Analysis • Articulation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovery • Respect • Patience • Withholding judgment |

POST-PROGRAM AND FUTURE CLASS ACTIVITIES

Post-program assessment and reflection are perhaps the most important aspects of studying abroad. Upon both the arrival in another country and the return home, students undergo a type of culture shock. Outbound culture shock occurs as the student notices all the differences between the new environment and the place they call “home.” In contrast, inbound culture shock takes time to develop, as the traveling student internalizes everything experienced while abroad and readjusts to living at home.

The final assignment of this course is a post-return reflection paper adopting the reflective pedagogical approach (Yadav, 2022). The unusual, and strict, stipulation for this assignment is that students may not begin writing the paper until at least 30 days after their return. Time must be allowed for the euphoria of a successful trip and return home to diminish,

after which the students can focus on their changes of perspective, newfound awareness of the prevailing culture at home, and their experiences abroad. To accommodate this post-trip assignment due date, the program must be scheduled early in any given semester.

Each offering of this course is potentially executed in a different country, making it critical that the itinerary always be flexible. Fortunately, agriculture is practiced around the world, and there are always opportunities for teaching it. The most important aspects of successfully teaching the course are to have a large set of teaching options and to constantly add to those options; for example formal and informal lectures, prepared exercises, guest speakers, visits to production centers and processing facilities, panel discussions by local entrepreneurs, and interaction with local academic and research faculty, staff, and students.

Commercial leisure activities are not always readily available in all locations, so it is also critical that free leisure activities such as walking, hiking, and good, old-fashioned sightseeing are always available. Safety is always a concern, so it is not necessarily advisable to encourage or allow students to “wander aimlessly” for recreation. Organized, and, if at all possible, pre-vetted leisure activities are strongly recommended.

Agricultural class activities are also frequently limited by the season of the year. Offering a course during the planting or harvesting seasons provides the opportunity for students to participate in those activities as part of a class. Classes offered at other times of the year turn the focus of the course to a reliance on the availability of guest lectures, panel discussions, and interaction with experts in research environments.

EVALUATION AND ASSIGNMENTS

This course is graded using the rubric in Table 11.8.

Table 11.8: Course Rubric

| Assessment Type | Criteria | Percentage of Grade |
|---------------------|--|---------------------|
| Formative | Pre-departure meeting attendance and preparation | 5% |
| Formative | Participation and engagement in workday activities | 20% |
| Formative/Summative | Daily reflections while in the host country | 15% |
| Summative | Research paper (written submission) | 25% |
| Formative | Presentation of research paper to the class | 25% |
| Summative | Final integrated reflective essay | 10% |
| Total | | 100% |

Student evaluation is a subset of the larger objective of establishing behavioral expectations for the study abroad course. Both students and faculty members are in a nontraditional educational environment while abroad and the options available for addressing inappropriate behavior are limited. Therefore, expectations must be clearly elaborated upon. While abroad, formative assessment activities predominate as a necessity. However, students must be aware of and not ignore the summative assessment assignments that will be submitted well after their return home.

Many students who study abroad have not previously left their home country, making the experience stressful in unexpected ways. However, that stress is most likely the driving force to learning in the study abroad environment. Students must be or become better self-directed learners while abroad, and the pre-departure briefing, participation in activities while abroad,

and daily reflections offer excellent opportunities for the instructor to monitor and assess learning progress in real-time. Summative assessment is actually the easier format of the two to measure because the documents submitted can be graded well after returning home.

STUDENT FEEDBACK

Although no formal student surveys have been conducted for this course, student feedback abounds. MTSU offers a formal opportunity for students to assess each class and instructor, which is somewhat informative, but the more significant feedback is generally provided by comments made to the instructor and most importantly, to student peers. The ideal situation for study abroad courses is consistently offering a course and relying on participating students to create a “buzz” amongst their peers to ensure future enrollment. It must be noted that generating demand based on previous students’ experience in upper-division study abroad courses is more difficult than lower-division courses because upper-division students are more likely to be close to graduation and as such, do not interact as much with the potential market for future offerings of the course.

The most common response (both verbal and written in the reflective essays) is a desire to return to the country visited as well as a description of the values the students have internalized after the experience abroad. Most find the study abroad experience to be “life-changing” and report a newfound desire to explore other countries not yet experienced. Even students who were injured, became ill, or received devastating news from home while abroad have related their experiences as “life-changing.” The most academically rewarding students are those who relate that going abroad and seeing fruits and vegetables being grown, processed, and packaged with labels written in English for familiar brands opened their eyes to the

interdependence of the world's population. Being abroad revealed they thought the U.S. is completely self-sufficient; this class allowed them to look, with different eyes, at their own culture. The abstract concept of cultural competency took on new meaning by simply being abroad.

A favorite outcome for participating students is the opportunity to tell potential employers they have studied abroad as part of their degree program. For example, one student who took the course included his study abroad experience in his resume. In his first job interview, the bulk of the time was spent discussing mutual experiences in Argentina, and the student was hired.

CAVEATS AND REFLECTIONS

This course was created in response to a growing recognition of the international nature of agriculture, and in particular, agribusiness, the business of agriculture. Multinational corporations are very common today, as they were in the 1990s when the course began. In fact, many of the first multinational corporations were and are still involved in the business of agriculture. In the late 1990s, there were no academic courses at our university that specifically focused on the multi-billion-dollar industry that is agriculture on an international scale. It took time to, first, acknowledge the need for such a course, and, second, recognize the potential value of teaching such a course in an abroad setting. Even educators must evolve, and all evolution takes time.

The projected (and realized) strength of this course is the experience students gain by being abroad. Intercultural competency is a valuable life skill that can only be learned by

meeting and interacting with people from other cultures. As the most basic of human needs, food is an ideal tool for teaching intercultural competency since none of us needs food more than anyone else. Focusing on food also powerfully illuminates humanity's worldwide interdependence and the need for trade.

Having experienced another culture for a short period of time also places these students in a very small but significantly elevated category of job seekers, and employers recognize their value. Employers know it is not necessary to know about every culture in the world, it is just important to be aware that differences in culture exist and be willing to learn about and identify those differences. Students who study abroad have already internalized these lessons and make highly valuable employees in our modern, highly interconnected world.

Challenges to teaching abroad abound, but the most significant challenge in teaching this specific course is finding the right contacts in the chosen country. Teaching the course in Argentina is very simple because the hard work has been done. Relationships have been made, contacts have been established, superior logistics providers have been identified and used repeatedly, and familiarity breeds comfort. The hard work of identifying a logistics provider, planning around national holidays and transportation bottlenecks, and coordinating with potential and intended speakers must be done from scratch, and it is a time-consuming task. In my opinion, study abroad is unnecessary if the objective is to create run-of-the-mill graduates, but if the objective is to help students stand out amongst their peers, the time and effort required are well worth the investment.

Very few subjects or problems can be addressed by simple or single-dimensional answers, and the *International Agriculture* course, being focused on the worldwide system we depend on

to feed ourselves, is no exception. A new course delivery model was developed to expand the learning potential for students of both *International Agriculture* and related courses: teach two courses simultaneously while abroad. Non-agriculture instructors were invited to teach their courses at the same time as *International Agriculture* while abroad, and all students would be exposed to the content of both classes. The first course offered in conjunction with *International Agriculture* in Argentina was an upper-division marketing class. Since all products are marketed and so many Americans are unaware of where their food comes from, the combination of these courses was seen as a natural fit. Students in both courses learned extensively from each other as they discussed and explained course content formally and casually.

The second course offered in conjunction with *International Agriculture* was an aerospace course focused on remote sensing using remotely piloted vehicles, known today as, “drones.” When these courses were offered together, agriculture and aerospace students worked together to collect data from agricultural fields, analyze the data, and report on how this data could be used to improve crop health, yields, and values. Students were assigned to teams composed of members of both courses, who then worked together to present their data to the instructors of the courses.

As counterintuitive as it might seem, teaching this course in conjunction with a second related course is also an outcome multiplier. The planning and execution of the course are somewhat more complicated when two (or more) faculty member(s) and their students are involved, but the synergistic effects of co-teaching are significant. If the faculty members involved take the time to carefully plan their courses and coordinate on venues visited, lectures provided, and expected outcomes, the teaching of the courses is much easier. Having a second

faculty member present while abroad also helps ensure continuity of operations if a student, or even a faculty member, falls ill or otherwise requires independent assistance.

Faculty who wish to teach abroad take on an enormous amount of responsibility beyond the basics of teaching their courses, and many of those extra responsibilities can be shared if two or more classes are taught simultaneously. By teaching multiple courses simultaneously and collaboratively, instructors can highlight the ways course content is interconnected and help students understand that like intercultural competency, course content should not be understood to exist in isolation. Course content and intercultural competency, therefore, can and should be taught simultaneously.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 11.1: Pre-Departure Discussion Topics

Finances

- Currency exchange
- How much cash to bring
- Travel purses

Health and Safety

- Immunizations
- Medications/medical disclosure
- Carrying of valuables around town
- Safety in the room

Food, Clothing and Housing

- Proper dress
- Medium sized suitcase/limited clothing
- Alcohol consumption
- Food in country
- Housing arrangements
- Nested suitcases
- Light jacket

Travel and Weather

- Travel buddies
- Driving/Cabs
- Where to meet at the Nashville airport
- Weather
- Itinerary/changes
- Water purchases

Things to Bring

- Power converters
- Laptops
- Course syllabus
- Cell phones
- Viber (app)
- External HD/Zip drive
- Preparatory language training
- Expected behavior

Appendix 11.2: Daily Program Itinerary

| Day | Morning | Afternoon | Evening |
|--------|---|---|--|
| Day 1 | | Arrival, welcome lunch (light) | Open air bus tour of the city and pre-arranged dinner |
| Day 2 | Tours of Agricultural Research Station, Commercial Olive Oil Production Company, and Winery | Pre-arranged lunch and tour of vineyards | Daily reflection, lecture |
| Day 3 | Cooking class, hike with local citizens, and lunch | Cooking class, hike with local citizens, and lunch | Guest lecture on Argentina Wine Industry |
| Day 4 | Pre-planned recreation day with lunch | Pre-planned recreation day with lunch | Guest lecture on Argentina Wine Industry |
| Day 5 | Grocery Store Activity and Reflection | Grocery Store Activity and Reflection | Formal Dinner |
| Day 6 | Guided tour of city and lunch | Guided tour of city and lunch | Course related movie viewing (non-commercial) and reflection |
| Day 7 | Tour of horse farm and lunch | Tour of horse farm and lunch | Expat entrepreneur panel discussion |
| Day 8 | Tour of commercial nursery and large-scale winery; lunch | Tour of commercial nursery and large-scale winery; lunch | Daily reflection, lecture |
| Day 9 | Tour of chicken and fruit/vegetable processing plants; lunch | Tour of chicken and fruit/vegetable processing plants; lunch | Daily reflection, lecture |
| Day 10 | Spa day/lunch | Spa day/lunch | Daily reflection, lecture |
| Day 11 | Free day (laundry, shopping, etc.) | Free day | Free day |
| Day 12 | Tour of commercial nursery and large-scale winery; lunch | Tour of commercial nursery and large-scale winery; lunch | Daily reflection, lecture |
| Day 13 | Tour of small-scale farm operation, larger scale winery and lunch | Tour of small-scale farm operation, larger scale winery and lunch | Daily reflection, lecture |
| Day 14 | Tour of supermarket distribution center, | Tour of supermarket distribution center, | Daily reflection/lecture |

| Day | Morning | Afternoon | Evening |
|--------|--|--|--|
| | conference with management | conference with management | |
| Day 15 | Visit local retail venture owned by Argentinians, meet with owners | Visit local retail venture owned by Argentinians, meet with owners | Dinner on own |
| Day 16 | Research Presentations/Discussion | Research Presentations/Discussion | Daily reflection, lecture Prep for departure |
| Day 17 | Departure | | |

Appendix 11.3: Supermarket Exploration Exercise

CarreFour Supermarket Exploration Exercise

The class has been divided into groups and each group has been assigned one or more of the food groups listed below to explore and analyze in the CarreFour Supermarket near our hotel in Mendoza. You will report on your observations to the entire group when we return from the market. Everyone in the group must participate in the presentation of your report (remember, everyone is being graded).

Your report will provide a basis on which to make inferences about Argentine culture and international agriculture. Specifically, you should focus on what products are offered in the store as well as how much of any given product is there. We are most interested in how this store is different from the typical grocery megastore in the U.S. and where the products being sold here are sourced from.

Your report must include the following points at a minimum:

- 1) Description of the types of products available, focusing on products similar and different from those sold in the U.S.
- 2) Relative price (in U.S. dollars and dollars/lb., as applicable) for the products available.
- 3) Placement of the products in the store and on the shelves.
- 4) Variety range and number of competitive products available.
- 5) Implications of the product placement, number of options available and prices.
- 6) Sources of products sold (Argentina or somewhere else in the world).
- 7) Total floor space devoted to your assigned products (compare to typical floor space devoted to these products in the U.S.).

Each group will be assigned to explore one of these sets of products:

- Meats (including cold cuts) and Cheeses
- Produce, Spices, and Non-alcoholic drinks
- Breakfast Cereals, Canned Goods, and Dry Goods
- Breads, Crackers, and Cookies
- Dairy Products, Eggs, and Frozen Foods

Each product group includes a variety of different products. Be sure to investigate all of them.

Finally, we will use the posted exchange rate for pesos to dollars in the bank on the opposite corner from the store. Don't forget to write it down to allow you to make your comparative calculations.