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11. ILLUMINATING A COURSE TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

INTRODUCTION

Learning about families and culture are going to help me in my future career because I will have the ability to connect and relate to those who are different from me. It is a benefit to learn about different cultures because I am able to have a more mindful perspective of cultures other than my own. There is no universal definition of family.

The need to internationalize higher education is an imperative accepted by most college faculty. The challenge is that most faculty are not prepared for that task, having been trained primarily in their academic disciplines and lacking a solid grounding in international or intercultural content and pedagogy. I found myself in that exact predicament; I fully embraced the charge to internationalize and felt an urgency to transform my courses, but felt unsure about the process to do so.

In this chapter I will recount my journey, beginning with the impetus for internationalizing my undergraduate course and continuing through my development of requisite knowledge and tools for course redesign. I will discuss the way that I articulated elements of theory and pedagogy that shaped the course, the development of primary learning activities and their assessment, and will conclude with my personal reflection about the redesign process and outcomes. My goal is that readers will be inspired to internationalize their courses and learn potential strategies for accomplishing that goal from the journey I share in this chapter.

MY JOURNEY

The Impetus

Global and Diverse Families is an upper level undergraduate course offered at the University of Minnesota in the Department of Family Social Science. It is required for Family Social Science majors and also meets the University's liberal education requirements. I typically have 50 learners in the semester-long course. One might think that a course on global families would by its nature develop learners' sense of the world and their role in it. However, it was not necessarily the case, at least in

the ways that would help them be more interculturally and internationally aware and agile, abilities required of our graduates as they work with families from cultures and backgrounds that are different than from their own. In fact, I was challenged to figure out how to operationalize the goal of developing intercultural competence in learners through this course.

For four years I taught the course using learning activities that are typically found in courses about families from a global perspective: learners read textbook descriptions of families from around the world, hear from culturally-diverse and international student guest speakers who talked about their experiences of family, conduct library research, and write a paper on a particular culture including pertinent aspects of family life such as dating and marriage, parenting, gender roles, and aging. At the end of the semester they share PowerPoint presentations with bullet points and pictures, focusing primarily on data that were found in scholarly literature. When taught in this manner, end of semester assessments revealed that learners were able to talk in broad generalizations about diverse families.... “Vietnamese families are...”. “Dating in Korean culture is...”. They were aware of cultural differences in families but had no sense of the variation of the experience of family within cultures or important ways that families differed across cultures. My concern was that what they were learning in this course would reinforce a monolithic understanding of families and culture. Then, when they encountered a family from a culture different than their own, they would apply that generalized knowledge to make assumptions and arrive at conclusions that missed unique family characteristics that might be very important to whatever challenge that family was experiencing.

I was also struck by how unconscious learners were about their own cultures or how their personal experiences of family had been deeply shaped by culture. In past semesters, *cultural obliviousness* seemed particularly apparent in European-American learners. However, even though learners from non-dominant cultures were aware of how their families and cultures were different from U.S families, they were not able to articulate the heterogeneity of family experiences within culture or how culture shapes the experience of family in cultures other than their own. Non-dominant culture learners compared their own culture’s values with American values, assuming there was an agreed-upon set from both their own and others’ cultures. For example, they would talk about their own cultural value of family and elders, saying that Americans didn’t value family or older people as much as theirs did. In response, learners from the dominant culture pushed back, saying that wasn’t true. I realized that learners, regardless of their own cultural backgrounds, were stuck in a very surface-level understanding of culture as it influenced families. They assumed that families of peers who looked like them were culturally similar and families of peers who looked different were culturally

different. My observation of learners' under-developed intercultural competency was not surprising. As Bennett (2009) points out:

In fact, cultural knowledge does not equal intercultural competence since a person can be an expert on a particular aspect of Chinese culture and yet be unable to negotiate with his Chinese counterparts. This gap between knowledge and competence may be due in part to being unaware of one's own culture and therefore not fully capable of assessing the cultural position of others. (123)

However common cultural obliviousness might be in U.S. undergraduate learners, I found surface-level generalizations about culture and family, learners' minimal awareness about themselves as cultural beings, and my inability to influence learners' understanding of these important ideas both disturbing and unacceptable in an increasingly globalized world. First, I was preparing undergraduates to work with families in a variety of settings such as homeless or domestic violence shelters, youth development and parenting programs, and transitional housing programs. I imagined them sitting down with a family whose culture or socioeconomic status was different than their own and making assumptions based on their generalized knowledge of another. For example, a U.S. born person working with a Somali family would work from a set of key assumptions about that family. Similarly, a Somali second-generation immigrant working with a European-American family would make assumptions based on their generalized knowledge of U.S. culture. This could lead to misunderstanding at best and discrimination at worst.

Second, their ethnocentric view of the world, and, for the majority of learners, their privilege as members of the dominant culture, seemed to affect their curiosity about how families had been and were being affected by poverty, natural disasters, racism, war and trauma, or governmental policies. For example, they might attribute causes of poverty solely to individual failures and be oblivious to the existence of structural inequality and racism.

Meta-Cognition / Awareness

As a fellow in the University of Minnesota Internationalizing Teaching and Learning (ITL) 2012-2013 program, I was guided through a process to develop an internationalized sense of "academic self" (per Sanderson, 2008), identify global learning outcomes, expand my teaching strategies, and develop course materials, activities, and assessments aligned with international, intercultural, and global learning. The ITL program providing me with incentive, intentional time, and space to systematically think about and make changes to the course.

This leg of my journey was perhaps the easiest for me due to my previous international and cross-cultural experience. Beginning with an initial cross-cultural immersion experience during young adulthood and continuing over three decades,

I became very aware of how my own cultural context had shaped and continued to shape me in many ways. However, I was challenged to translate that important developmental process and the knowledge I had gained from it into the classroom setting. After reading Cranton (2001), I realized that I needed to be more authentic by integrating ‘self’ and teacher. I consciously reflected on my own development process and the catalysts that prompted me to reflect and grow into a more nuanced intercultural self. I then used my own transformative process of learning about who I was as a cultural being to inform how I might shape learners’ intercultural learning processes.

As one example, I became very aware that I was instinctively, but unconsciously, using a particular theoretical perspective and pedagogical approach to shape the course. Bringing that into my own consciousness moved me to intentionally affirm that the course is grounded in a social constructivist paradigm using a human ecology theoretical lens (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). This means that I approach my teaching and students’ learning with a frame that one’s reality is constructed by interactions with others and our life experiences. Moreover, these interactions and experiences occur in nested and interdependent contexts – our families, our human-built environment, our socio-cultural environment, and our natural-physical environment. Therefore, our understanding of family and culture is socially constructed through observations of and interactions with others with whom we come in contact on a regular basis and through a variety of experiences that occur in multiple, layered, and interconnected contexts. By being explicit about my approach, learners seemed to make better sense of the overall structure and content of the course, and better understood my expectations of them as learners.

I was primarily concerned with how I could help learners be more aware and self-reflective about their own cultural identities and move toward a more ethnorelative and nuanced awareness of culture, globalization, and families. Research highlights the importance of self-knowing to the development of intercultural awareness. “First and foremost, cultural awareness involves processes of promoting the reflection upon one’s own cultural norms and values, and on how these shape social identities of individuals and groups” (Eisenclas & Trevaskes, 2003, p. 91).

The following paragraphs describe the three major assignments used in the course to engage learners in multi-sensory and technology-enhanced learning experiences and their respective assessment tools: 1) creating a personal culture digital story; 2) conducting an ethnographic interview and creating a digital narrative; and 3) engaging in 20 hours of volunteer service-learning in Twin Cities’ community-based organizations that served diverse populations.

PEDAGOGY AND PROCESS: SUPPORTING STUDENTS’ INTERCULTURAL LEARNING

Scholarly literature clearly supports the importance of scaffolding learning experiences to effectively develop intercultural competence.

The first use of an intercultural positioning system is to locate ourselves, to develop our own cultural self-awareness through understanding our cultural patterns. Only then can we begin exploring the gap between our values, beliefs, and behaviors and those of others. (Bennett, 2009, p. 27)

Informed Learning Goals, Assignments, and Scaffolding Decisions in the Course

I identified three primary learning goals for the course: a) to understand the role of culture in the experience of family, b) to become aware of ways that families impact and are impacted by global trends and issues, and c) to consider how they can use their skills and talents to support marginalized families achieve their goals. I share the graphic below at the beginning of the semester to communicate the three threads that are woven throughout the course. I also bring this visual back when the emphasis shifts from thread to thread, helping the learner keep the overall picture in mind while considering separate strands. (Insert image here)

Two assignments, the personal culture digital story and the ethnographic digital narrative, were completed sequentially, allowing learners to first build awareness of themselves as cultural beings before engaging with a person from a culture different than their own. The third major assignment involved volunteering through service-learning throughout the semester, submitting weekly reflections, and debriefing through class discussions. This assignment gave learners first-hand experience with people from diverse races, socioeconomic classes, cultures, and family structures.

ITL scholars including co-author Mary Katherine O'Brien exposed me to key research and teaching resources that influenced my thinking throughout the course redesign process. They were instrumental in helping me craft explicit and appropriate learning goals and create assessments to evaluate learner outcomes.

Crafting the digital media assignments was greatly influenced by my conversations with co-author Scott Spicer, media outreach librarian. Over a series of meetings, Scott pushed me to clarify the learning objectives for the assignment and offered suggestions for shaping the digital media dimension of it. His expertise was invaluable as I honed in on options that best fit what I was trying to accomplish. Moreover, he came to class to provide technical expertise in videography and media production, something about which I had little expertise and, with all the other demands of a faculty member, would most likely never fully attain.

Understanding Self as a Cultural Being: Personal Culture Digital Story

The personal culture digital story assignment, scheduled at the beginning of the semester, provided an initial opportunity to explore how culture shapes the experience and understanding of family. The learning objectives were two-fold, one content-related and one technology-related. The content objective was to identify who the learner was as a cultural being, noting how their background,

experiences, values, and relationships had shaped their personhood. As noted earlier, this is a necessary and important first step in developing intercultural awareness. Theodore and Afolayan (2010) found that digital stories were effective in helping undergraduate teacher education learners become more culturally self-aware and thus more culturally competent. In the *Global and Diverse Families* course, creating personal culture digital stories gave learners an opportunity to examine themselves as cultural beings before they learned about a person from a culture different from their own through the subsequent ethnographic digital narrative assignment. The second objective was to provide a low-stakes technology assignment that allowed learners to practice technical skills needed to complete their ethnographic digital narrative assignment.

Learners used the human ecology framework (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993) to identify their culture by considering nested contexts and influences that had shaped who they are as persons – their family environment, their human-built environment, their socio-cultural environment, and their natural-physical environment. They first identified and described three salient aspects of their cultural self. Then they identified images or other visual artifacts that represented those three aspects. Many learners used pictures of family and friends. Some chose icons or symbols to represent religious or educational influences. Some shared images of their experiences abroad or maps of their hometowns.

The personal culture digital stories were created using iMovie, Windows Movie Maker, or PowerPoint. Learners were allowed to use a voice over narration for their stories or manual text captioning to guide the viewer and describe how the images portrayed their cultural influences. Most chose music that was either a favorite of theirs or that represented some aspect of their lives. Finally, learners published and uploaded their digital stories to the course management website. They viewed others' stories in class and analyzed them to identify key themes woven throughout their peers' stories. At the end of each class, we debriefed as a group by writing the key themes on a white board and discussing similarities and differences across stories.

Learning was assessed by asking a self-reflective question about how the assignment had deepened their understanding of cultural and global families. One learner shared an introspective response: *"The personal narrative was significant because it made me deeply analyze who I was as a cultural being."* Another looked beyond his own story to connect with others: *"Watching the personal narratives was great to see that even though there are many Caucasian Americans in our society, they all have a very unique history that comes from many diverse cultures and traditions."*

The assignment helped learners dig below the surface to see difference. One person shared: *"It really made me realize that just because someone looks and seems like they are in your culture, doesn't mean they have the same beliefs and values as you. People come from all different backgrounds."* Reserving judgment until knowing a person was noted by a learner:

I learned that it is impossible to know who someone is or where they come from or their social class or what their ethnic and cultural background is just by looking at them and therefore shouldn't pass any judgment or make assumptions because they can be hurtful.

Finally, there was evidence that the intentional scaffolding of the personal culture digital story assignment prepared learners for the ethnographic digital narrative assignment. One learner noted: "... *the idea that self-reflection is essential in understand(ing) culture. Before we interviewed someone from another culture, we conducted our own digital narrative highlighting some of the ways that culture impacts our lives.*" This assignment provided a low-stakes opportunity for learners to begin understanding themselves as cultural beings before exploring another's experience of culture. Moreover, it allowed them to learn how to access University digital media resources and to practice and gain confidence in the process of creating a digital media product to communicate their ideas using images, text, music, and voice.

Understanding of Culture and the Family Experience: Ethnographic Digital Narrative

The primary purpose of this assignment was to capture family narratives from individuals whose lives are shaped by diverse cultures so that learners could understand the variability of families' experiences within and across cultures. This was the most comprehensive assignment in the class that required learners to integrate and apply the concepts and skills cumulatively learned in the course. Additional purposes included developing learners' qualitative research and digital media literacy skills.

Learners acted as ethnographers, conducting research through a qualitative interview with a person from a culture different than their own. I encouraged them to focus on Minnesota's recent immigrant populations, but they were free to identify interviewees from their own social networks. As a result, cultural informants were from recent immigrant communities such as Hmong, Somali, Vietnamese, and Cambodian, international students from Russia, Malaysia, India, Israel, Tanzania, and China, and Native Americans. One learner interviewed a homeless youth who articulated how aspects of her homeless culture shaped the idea and experience of family.

Step 1. In teams of two, learners identified a person to interview. This information was submitted by week 3 of the semester, primarily to move learners to action early in the semester to avoid rushing this important assignment.

Step 2. Teams conducted preliminary demographic research on the culture and/or country of origin of their cultural informant. They also looked for research that

provided some information about families in the culture/country of their informant, often from the anthropology literature. This information helped them shape the questions they would ask their cultural informant. Key points from their preliminary research were submitted in week 5.

Step 3. Teams submitted a draft of their interview questions in week 7 and received feedback from me. Initially, submitted questions tended to focus more concrete ideas related to culture such as food, holidays, etc. Learners needed a fair amount of coaching from me to craft good interview questions that went beyond the artifacts of culture and probed in more abstract ideas related to family dynamics and relationships such as values, beliefs, norms, dating and marriage, parenting and parent-child relationships, sibling relationships, gender roles, etc. Learners also needed help sequencing questions and writing probes to use to encourage richer descriptions from their informants during the interview. In this step they also outlined logistical plans for the interview including a) the roles each person would play, i.e., interviewing and video-taping, b) equipment they would use, c) where and when they would secure it, and d) the location the interview would take place.

Step 4. One class period was devoted to practicing the qualitative interview. After providing some initial tips related to interviewing, teams paired up and practiced asking each other the questions they had crafted. This helped them get comfortable asking questions and also allowed them to hear peers' questions that they might add to their own interview protocol.

Step 5. Teams conducted the interviews with their informants using personal equipment such as iPads or cameras, microphones, etc. that they checked out from the University's media lab. At the time of the interview, they requested suggestions for music and obtained pictures from their cultural informants to use in the narratives.

Step 6. Learners used a variety of software tools to edit their digital ethnographic narratives. At the start of the semester, learners indicated beginner to intermediate experience and comfort with media production processes. Accordingly, they were encouraged to use lower barrier, consumer-level video editing software tools to edit their ethnographic interviews, such as iMovie (Mac) and Windows Movie Maker (PC). Final Cut Pro X (Mac) has a slightly higher learning curve but additional functionality.

Step 7. Final digital ethnographic narrative videos ranged from 12-20 minutes, allowing for three to be presented, analyzed, and discussed within a 90 minute class period. As they watched, learners analyzed peers' narratives using a rubric that included four criteria, the same criteria I used to grade the assignment. The first criterion focused on the technical quality of the audio and video including how well it was edited. The second criterion assessed whether or not the narrative

clearly provided the cultural context in which the person experiences family. This included providing some basic demographic data about the country, in addition to researched-based knowledge relating to general and family specific cultural aspects of the informant. A third criterion evaluated the overall effectiveness of the use of digital media to communicate key aspects of family, as well as the specific uses of music, images, video clips, and audio to engage the viewer. The final criterion, the one weighted most heavily in the grading rubric, focused on how well the narrative connected the dots between family and culture. Were topics about aspects of family life clearly explored? Were interviewers able to elicit solid descriptions of family life and how their informant's culture impacted who they were as individuals and family members? Viewers completed and submitted a rubric for each narrative. This process allowed them to critically evaluate the content and presentation.

Step 8. At the end of each class period and cumulatively over the weeks in which narratives were presented, I led large group discussions that encouraged learners to share their analysis across narratives: What were similarities and differences? Were there things shared that challenged your ideas of family? Were there aspects of the cultures presented that were new to you or that piqued your curiosity? Narrative creators were able to respond to questions and share additional background and insights that helped us understand what had been presented.

It was particularly helpful to have more than one narrative from informants from the same culture of origin to allow learners to see variation within as well as across cultures. I strongly encouraged learners to select key informants from communities of recent immigrants to the Twin Cities to increase the likelihood of having the ability to compare and contrast within culture. For example, we viewed three narratives from informants who were shaped by Vietnamese culture. Differences were quite apparent in areas of dating and gender roles across these young women's experiences. This allowed me to highlight the importance of not imposing assumptions based solely on an apparent cultural background.

Large group discussions were also critical to help learners unpack their reactions to what they'd seen and move to a deeper awareness of how others' ideas could potentially conflict with their own. When a learner verbally expressed a judgment about something a key informant or a peer said, I used questioning to help them consider the basis for their reaction. This gave them an opportunity to become more aware of when that occurred. I did not criticize their response, but rather encouraged them to reflect and consider whether or not their reaction was connected to their own cultural norms, values, and beliefs and how the informant's idea might similarly be shaped by culture. I helped them think through how they might reframe their observations as differences, and work to understand how the idea made sense in the particular cultural context of the informant, rather than move quickly to an unexamined judgment call. I found that these discussions were particularly rich when informants talked about dating, marriage, and gender roles in families and cultures that were quite different than those in dominant U.S. culture. As Bennett

(2009) stated, “Through exploration of our own position on cultural variables, we can identify similarities and differences with others and thus begin the process of building intercultural competence” (p. 127).

Step 9. After narratives were shown and analyzed in class, narrative creators individually submitted a self-assessment of their learning experience. They were asked a series of questions that helped them reflect on a) what they learned about family and culture, b) their own analysis of how culture shaped their informant’s experience of family, c) what they enjoyed about the assignment, d) how they were challenged by creating the digital narrative, and e) what advice they would give to future learners about this assignment. Finally, they assigned points to their own and team member’s contributions to the assignment. This helped communicate the need for accountability to the team and gave me a basis for adjusting points according to relative contribution if needed, always a challenge in assignments involving teams.

Viewing and analyzing the ethnographic digital narratives occurred during the last weeks of the semester. In addition to submitting individual rubrics, I used the final class synthesis (exam) to evaluate learning from this assignment. I asked them to choose three narratives and compare and contrast them in terms of similarities and differences in how informants’ family experiences were shaped by culture.

Many learners’ eyes were opened to the richness and diversity of cultures that were beyond their own experiences. However, this assignment not only helped them see ‘another’, it helped them think more deeply about their own culture, as these two students’ words illustrate:

Viewing the digital narratives. It was so neat to witness all of those different cultures. It also made me aware of my own culture and biases I had towards other cultures. I looked forward to “traveling the world” and learning about different perspectives just by sitting in class!

The cultural identity of my being was challenged because I questioned how my cultural identity would come across if I were the one being interviewed. I do not identify with any or few ethnicities, which seems to occur among many American with European ancestry that dates back farther than I know, so I really had to think of how I identify myself.

Other learners were quite challenged by ideas, norms, or beliefs expressed by cultural informants. As mentioned earlier, I encouraged them to pay attention to times when something expressed in a narrative evoked feelings of discomfort, perhaps even shock or anger, to examine why that might be happening, how a different cultural perspective or practice might clash with their own, and to consider how they might handle their response and make sense of their reactions. I was pleased that several were able to write about that happening to them and even more pleased to read how they worked through their feelings to a non-judgmental response. One learner expressed this particularly well:

In the digital culture stories we watched, some of the individuals expressed their belief in wife prices/dowries. I do not come from a culture where this is practiced and had learned this as a harmful practice in a social work course I took. This challenged my idea of marriage within this culture. I was originally shocked and could not believe this was still viewed as an acceptable practice; viewing women as a commodity, but after hearing more, my opinion changed. In learning more about the practice, I do not necessarily believe in it, but do have a better understanding of why it exists culturally and think more openly on the topic now. By challenging my view of marriage in this culture, I was able to enforce my own personal views on marriage and how it fits into my life culturally.

Importantly, only a few learners were cognizant of the research skills they were developing through this assignment:

Asking good questions – it sounds basic, but I really learned the importance of asking a high quality question; one that opens doors for good discussion and digs down deep to the root of a feeling or belief. I learned more from [my friend for 3 years] in that hour-long interview than I ever have before.

This is an important learning goal to which I will pay careful attention in the future.

Digital Media Reflection and Decisions

It is important to note that there is a wide spectrum of student-produced digital media genres that allows instructors to adapt the use of digital media to fit an assignment's learning objectives. In this specific course, both digital stories and digital narratives were used. The ethnographic digital narrative differed from the digital story in a number of ways. For example, as described earlier, a digital story is often designed to communicate a personal story or at least a strong personal point of view from the perspective of the digital story creator. In contrast for the digital narratives, students were acting as ethnographers, so it was critical for these videos to communicate the voice of the interviewee. That necessitated more minimal crafting of narrative from the creator's point of view (acknowledging that all produced media has embedded some elements of creator bias, such as the questions chosen, how the video clips are edited and ordered, camera angles, lighting, etc.). Further, choosing the ethnographic narrative over the story approach for this assignment was appropriate for several reasons: a) It gave voice to those being interviewed – it was their story and it was important to honor it as such; 2) Interviewing and creating one informant's narrative gave learners an opportunity to have an in-depth conversation with someone from a culture different than their own and really focus on their informant, rather than thinking how they (the interviewer) would later communicate the story; 3) Viewing multiple narratives provided an opportunity for students to analyze cultural influences on family dynamics by hearing from cultural insiders, the primary learning objective

for this assignment. This would have been harder to discover or even completely missed if presentations were composed from the creator's point of view.

Service-learning. Over the semester-long course, learners were required to volunteer a minimum of 20 hours in community agencies and organizations that served culturally and/or economically diverse children and/or families. My partner in this assignment was the University of Minnesota's Community Service-learning Center which describes service-learning as a "teaching and learning strategy that integrates meaningful community service with instruction and reflection to enrich the learning experience, teach civic responsibility, and strengthen communities. Students use what they learn in the classroom to address community-identified issues. They not only learn about practical applications of their studies, they also become actively contributing citizens and community members through the service they perform" (<http://www.servicelearning.umn.edu>, 2014). Sites offered for this course ranged from a drop-in center for homeless persons, recent immigrant adult tutoring in libraries, domestic violence shelters, etc. For most learners in this course, the service-learning assignment provided an opportunity to interact with people whose social addresses were very different than their own and to travel to unfamiliar neighborhoods across the Twin Cities metropolitan area.

Learners spent approximately two hours per week at their sites. Each week they responded to a set of questions about their experiences, examined through the lenses of the human ecology conceptual framework. For example in week two, learners responded to these questions: How does culture play out in your agency or organization - in the human-built environment, in the socio-cultural environment, in the natural/physical environment? What cultures and ethnicities are represented in this agency/organization and the people it serves? Is the diversity the result of past or recent immigration? If so, explain. Are staff and/or clients culturally different than you? How do you know; what evidence suggests that is so? What questions does the diversity represented raise for you in terms of service delivery? How does your agency/organization embrace and support cultural diversity? After responding to the questions, learners shared their personal thoughts and reactions to the service experience, providing rich descriptions and critical evaluations.

The eight weekly reflections gave me opportunity to monitor learners' experiences and whether or not they were fulfilling their commitment to our important community partners. I was able to respond to learners' frustrations and offer suggestions for dealing with them. I was also able to celebrate the positive experiences. In both cases, I tried to affirm what they were learning and normal and important parts of the process of interacting with others whose lives were very different than theirs.

At the end of the semester, learners were asked to reflect on their overall experience and articulate what they had learned about family, culture, and social justice through their volunteer experiences. The idea of learning through service to society's vulnerable families was new to some: "*Service-learning is an idea that*

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I had never been exposed to before. The idea that people are in need all over the country and that I can help them simply by donating my time, is something really unique.” Others appreciated the opportunity to meet people whose life experiences and cultures were very different than theirs. One learner wrote: *“My service-learning project was beneficial for me because it allowed me to interact with a group of people that I wasn’t familiar with.”*

Another shared:

Actually interacting with people from another culture was a really great experience. I learned a lot about the Latino culture just by talking to the clients in the organization. It was really helpful in terms of broadening my knowledge and understanding of culture.

Some learners expressed frustration when situations or people at their sites were difficult but they recognized that they’d grown and learned about themselves and others by working through those challenges.

Service-learning was important to me because it was hands-on and I was able to put myself in the situation itself with people different than me. This helped a lot because it really tested my patience and my acceptance, but I came out a changed person.

REFLECTING ON MY JOURNEY

Intercultural competence has increasingly been acknowledged as important in today’s globalized reality. Bennett (2009) argues that is a key contributor to global and domestic effectiveness, and a prerequisite for “capably addressing issues of race, class, and gender” (p. 124). A recent Council of Europe report began with the words “Mutual understanding and intercultural competence are more important than ever today because through them we can address some of the most virulent problems of contemporary societies” (Barrett, Byram, Lázár, Mompoin-Gaillard, & Philippou, 2014, p. 2). Clearly developing intercultural competence is important for our future professionals and citizens. For me, it is an ethical imperative; my students will be launched into an increasingly diverse and complex world that requires perspective taking and the ability to “check” ones familial ethnocentrism at the door. My sense is that goal is applicable regardless of the disciplinary ‘flavor’ of ones’ graduates. But developing intercultural competence is not easy. It’s particularly challenging due to its process-oriented and developmental nature (Bennett, 1993; Deardorff, 2009), which presents an onerous task of creating authentic intercultural learning opportunities in the context of one course.

But the task is doable with an investment of time and the support of colleagues who have complementary expertise, in my case, in intercultural education and technology. I have three primary but interrelated lessons/recommendations to share with anyone undertaking the course internationalization task. First, it is critical to take the time to engage in self-reflection to consider how you have been shaped by

your own culture and disciplinary training (Sanderson, 2008). This awareness can highlight areas in which you might be teaching from an ethnocentric position that neglects the consideration of multiple culture- and discipline-based perspectives that shape our knowledge base. Second, I encourage careful consideration and decisions about using the most appropriate pedagogical approach to shape the classroom environment and learning activities. After I embraced my social constructivist approach to culture and family, I was able to design and align learning activities to achieve course objectives and create assessments that reflected that pedagogical approach. This alignment contributed to a more authentic presence in the classroom. Third, I recommend Fink's (2003) model as a road map for the redesign journey. I had previously used this model to 'flip' a course and integrate a team-based learning pedagogy. It's probably fair to say that most faculty inherit learning goals for a particular course and probably don't pay a lot of attention to (re)designing a course to achieve those outcomes. The process of identifying course goals, designing learning activities to achieve them, and appropriately assessing learner outcomes is critical and worth the effort.

So, did I succeed in creating a learning environment that fostered the development of intercultural competence? I believe learners' reflections affirmed that this was indeed the case. In a self-reflexive mode, learners were asked to state their post-course location on the continuum of an ethnocentric to ethnorelative understanding of humans and relationships (Bennett, 1993), to discuss if they had moved as a result of their learning in this class, and if yes, how might they continue to develop intercultural sensitivity. Ideally, I would have preferred to administer the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Hammer & Bennett, 1998) for more valid and reliable pre- and post-course comparisons, but it was cost-prohibitive. Learner reflections, however, provided evidence of their development of perspective taking which demonstrates movement toward the ethnorelative end of the IDI continuum. *"I learned that we cannot expect to fully understand someone who is different than ourselves unless we are willing to learn about their background and look at things from their point of view."*

Another learner demonstrated perspective-taking:

One of the most salient aspects of my learning in this course was my increased awareness of my own cultural perspective and how it shapes the way I view other cultures. Also it was emphasized to me that we must define our cultural selves and not define the cultural beings of others.

It was particularly rewarding when learners articulated that they were more conscious of how their reactions to ideas were culture-bound; they needed to consider new or challenging ideas in cultural contexts and refrain from rushing to judgment.

I have become more accepting of other views and willing to challenge my own views. I was raised with a specific religion and taught certain values in regard to gender roles, norms, etc. but now I question why I have always perceived these to be "right".

Similarly, one learner reacted to something she heard in a digital ethnographic narrative:

My moral identity, religion and freedom felt like it was challenged by the matchmaker idea. I was very confused the first time I heard of it and immediately just thought it was weird. I did not give it a chance to understand why they did that and how it works for those who participate in it. I learned to not jump to conclusions and to listen to those of that particular culture explain the reasoning as to why they partake in matchmaking.

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, a strong motivation for redesigning this course was feeling an obligation to develop graduates who would bring intercultural awareness to their future work with diverse families. In their final synthesis (exam), I asked learners to speculate on how they would apply what they'd learned to their future professional careers, specifically to describe a) strategies they would use to understand themselves and others in their work, b) why this is important, and c) how their learning might contribute to their success. It was evident that learners saw potential application:

One of the main concepts I've learned from this course that I will use in the future is not to make assumptions about individuals and to respect culture. There are so many elements that can affect how people act, think, contribute, and fit into their communities and this diversity should be respected and not judged by what appears on the surface. I've learned and will take with me that when dealing with individuals in this profession, and ideally in every profession, cultural background must be considered when trying to help people make decisions in their lives.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the process of transforming my *Global and Diverse Families* course has been worth the time and effort required. I am so much more confident in my teaching as a result of consciously integrating a social constructivist approach, consistently using a strong theoretical framework through which to consider course content, and integrating experiential learning, the use of digital media, and service-learning to effectively achieve learning outcomes. Although the transformation resulted in a course that requires more time, energy, and intensity than the previous version, I am deeply satisfied when I read learners' reflections. This final quote captures both the inward-focused self-reflection and the outward-focused consideration of another's culture that are primary goals for the course.

I think I get stuck in this American bubble with my American ways and forget that other people may live life a different way, have a different way of thinking, treat family a different way, eat different foods, dress a different way. Even though I was always aware of other cultures, I think I always thought that my

way was the “right” way. I have become more ethnorelative in realizing that the way I live is not the only right way, but that there are so many different cultures and values that other people have that are also right. It will be important moving forward to keep that in mind and ask more questions to learn about people.

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