Intentionality

The following examples of prompt questions reflected CBS student learning outcomes, and guided students through their reflection process:

**Self-Awareness:** How did your learning abroad experience impact your values, interests, and/or perspectives?

**Goal orientation:** Did you establish goals prior to your learning abroad experience? What helped/hindered you in achieving these goals?

**Responsibility and accountability:** Think about a time when you took the initiative to seek out a learning experience during your time abroad.

**Independence and interdependence:** How did you engage with your surrounding community while abroad? What role did faculty and/or staff play in your experience abroad?

**Appreciation of differences:** What skills and perspectives did you gain as a result of interacting with others from diverse backgrounds? How can you apply this knowledge to the remainder of your college career and beyond?

Program Development

Many students go abroad, but struggle with articulating their experiences on a deeper level. They use vague descriptors such as “life changing,” or “amazing” without much more detail.

- Encouraged students to think more intentionally about their international experience(s) and how it impacted them
- Helped prepare students for job, internship, and graduate school interviews
- Allowed them to practice articulating their experiences on paper and in person
- Encouraged more visual creativity than an essay or discussion

Event aligns with larger institutional goals as well.

- Learning Abroad Center was present at the event with brochures and general learning abroad information
- CBS Dean Robert Elde strongly supports the Reflections event and other learning abroad initiatives in the college

Event Planning

1. Recruited students to submit posters and photos
   - Contacted U.S. students who went outside of the U.S. and international students studying at the U of M
   - Via e-mail and by targeting highly engaged students noted by staff

2. Coordinated Logistics
   - Reserved event space
   - Ordered appetizers and desserts from local international venues
   - Procured photo contest prize

3. Invited students and campus guests
   - Learning Abroad Center (staffed info table)
   - Emailed all CBS students
   - Distributed quarter sheets in advising appointments
   - Hung posters in places such as: CBS Student Services office, Career Center for Science and Engineering, BioHouse Living Learning Community, and the Molecular and Cellular Biology Building
   - Advertised via Nature of Life
   - Distinguished campus figures (e.g., CBS Dean, Vice Provost for Student Affairs, University President)

Assessment

- Surveyed participants and attendees
  - Emailed participants and attendees to obtain quantitative and qualitative data

Quotes

- From participants:
  - “This experience was helped me learn to explain my experience to others, and it was interesting hearing their reaction.”
  - “I was able to engage in one-on-one conversation with people about it.”

- From attendees:
  - “Get the exact same food. Honestly. Did you eat that cake? I hope for your sake you did. Also, the visuals were very interesting and motivating. The entire event was very enjoyable, yet informative. Excellent work.”
  - “[I enjoyed] Getting to hear the work people got to do and learn more about some programs that I myself am interested in. Plus the food was very good!”

- Future plans
  - May select a different assessment structure in the future
  - Survey at the event on a laptop
  - Send survey directly after the event

Beyond Food, Photos, and Tourist Traps

Helping students leverage international experiences in pursuit of academic and career goals

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