



### Service and Culture in India: Through a Sociological Lens

#### Program Evaluation of 2013/2014 Pilot Program

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The purpose of this SoTL project was to explore:	The learning outcomes for the India Study Abroad Program were:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How the pilot program was initially structured,</li> <li>What changes or adjustments were recognized while navigating through this pilot experience,</li> <li>What feedback was gained from the assignments and anonymous student survey,</li> <li>What changes were made to the program based on that feedback,</li> <li>Whether this type of service learning study abroad program is a valuable way for students to think outside of the classroom, and</li> <li>Whether this particular program should be repeated.</li> <li>The possibilities of electronically documenting student experiences in a digital library that could be accessed by future classes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To provide students with an international experience by traveling to, and throughout India.</li> <li>To facilitate the cultivation of cultural competence</li> <li>To apply critical thinking and communication skills, as well as academic concepts to travel abroad experiences.</li> <li>To mutually benefit students and host institutions in a service capacity.</li> <li>To compare and contrast cultures both home and abroad.</li> <li>To disseminate newly gained knowledge, encouraging continued global awareness.</li> </ul>

Is this type of service learning study abroad program a valuable way for students to think outside of the classroom?

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See our handout for detailed literature – but yes, it is an excellent way for students to learn.

Should this program be repeated?
<p>Student Responses to Survey Question: Based on Your Experience, How Likely Would You Be To Recommend This Program to Others?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I would recommend this experience highly!! Now that you know- I would tell the applicants in the interview about the "third world" aspect of the country a little more, just so you can potentially weed out those who might not adjust well to this. Overall this was an extremely successful first trip- and will be even more successful in the future I'm sure, now that you've had the experience of being there and know a little more of what to expect.</li> <li>I would absolutely recommend this trip to anyone and everyone who asked. The trip was extremely educational for me culturally, academically and morally.</li> <li>Very Highly recommend it. This was the most interesting and exciting experience I have ever had. Thank you for setting up this trip and leading it.</li> <li>100%. I am already recommending it to everyone I know. It was amazing. Thank you.</li> <li>I would highly recommend this to anyone that is interested in studying abroad. It is a great place to have your mind blown and your eyes opened wider than they already are. This trip is an experience that I will never forget!</li> <li>Absolutely awesome experience. I'm going to be sure to get more students involved and going on trips. Alissa &amp; Mark, thank you!</li> <li>I would recommend this program to anyone who would listen to me. It really is a once in a lifetime, life changing trip. I'm not going to lie it's hard and you will probably be uncomfortable at some point. By the end you will also probably hate some of the people you are on the trip with.... But, the experiences, memories, and people that you meet are totally worth it. Such an amazing time. Loved it!</li> </ul> <p>For additional examples of student experiences, we encourage you to view our digital images and read through our photo book.</p>

SoTL Project Purpose:	What feedback was gained from assignments and anonymous survey?	What changes have been made to the program based on feedback and assignment/survey results?
<b>Planning, Preparation, and Pre-Departure</b>		
<b>Recruiting</b>	How did you learn about this program (n=8): Kirkwood faculty, TEMPO, Study abroad pamphlet, Kirkwood Kickoff, and Study Abroad website. Suggestion: Tell students about it at the new student orientation	Proposal submitted March 2013 in hopes of recruiting beginning in May. There will be summer info. Sessions, fall info. sessions, and I will reach out to the Iowa City location and other regional centers.
<b>Pre-departure Meetings</b>	Discuss thoughts about meetings (length, number of meetings, content, day-of-the-week, etc.): Helpful/Informative/Great. Suggestion: More team-building, more get-to-know-you time, more sessions but shorter, or give time to digest the information (culture shock, Indian medical care, coping with stress, etc.). What additional speakers would you like to hear from, if any? Suggestion: Someone from the school (in India), or students who have been on the program before.	7 pre-departure meetings will be held (first meeting, academic session, Ken Nesbett, academic session/travel clinic, Dr. Rajagopal, academic session, and final academic session)
<b>Food-Related Experiences</b>	Were these useful activities? Overall, yes (not everyone could attend). Suggestion: Maybe just a night out to see how everyone acts, without partners, not India-related.	I will try again to include Culinary Arts again, and I have two Taste of India dates scheduled for the students to join my partner and me for dinner.
<b>Angel</b>	Angel was used as the course platform: How did it work for you? Summary: Feedback was positive though some students struggled with navigating it and when the second course showed up, it got confusing.	Angel will be used again and will be adjusted with feedback in mind.
<b>Assignments</b>		
<b>Assignments</b>	Survey question asked about assignments and what was included in grading (pre-departure meetings, etc.): Suggestions: Make participation grade worth more. Spend more time on readings as it seemed many students didn't do the reading.	Participation has gone up in points and includes a self-assessment, the service project has changed considerably to include a home-and-abroad component (letter writing, photography, in-country service), and students have very specific journaling guidelines.

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