Global Discussions

Ideal for:
- Advising Centers
- Bi-national Centers
- American Corners
- Language Institutes

Technology Considerations:
To conduct a student interaction session, sufficient technology and technical support personnel are needed:
- Reliable Internet connection for video/audio transmission, minimum bandwidth of 384 Kbps bi-directional (download and upload).
- Access to web based video conferencing via a modern computer
- Camera, speakers, microphone, and data projector suitable for a group discussion environment.
- Test links to be conducted prior to scheduling student interactions to ensure connection capability and quality.
- Technical support personnel to be present during test links and student interaction sessions.

About East Carolina University
- ECU is public, doctoral level university with a medical school that offers over 100 degree programs.
- With approximately 21,000 undergraduate students and 6,000 graduate students, ECU is the third largest university in the University of North Carolina system.
- ECU has many extracurricular options that students enjoy including numerous clubs, sporting and cultural events.
- Located on the East Coast of the United States in Greenville, NC, about 5 hours by car south of Washington, DC.
- ECU’s mission includes using innovative learning strategies and delivery methods to maximize access while preparing students with the knowledge, skills and values to succeed in a global, multicultural society so they can serve as tomorrow’s leaders and inspire positive change.

For more information about ECU visit us at http://www.ecu.edu

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Greetings from East Carolina University’s Global Classroom. Our goal is to give our students and students from around the world the opportunity to have a meaningful international experience from their own home institutions. We accomplish this by using technology for real-time interaction where students participate in facilitated discussions. Students learn about each other, from each other and although the interaction is short, it is powerful!

Objectives:
For ECU:
- Promote interest in study abroad.
- Recruit students for additional Global activities.
- Promote ECU as a potential destination for international students.

For International Participants:
- Promote university study in the U.S.
- Provide students interested in studying in the U.S. the opportunity to learn about what college life is like from their U.S. peers.
- Provide students an opportunity to practice English with native English speakers.

In this Program:
- Using technology, groups of 10 -20 late high school or college aged students from outside of the U.S.A. meet with first year students at ECU for a single approximately 1 hour discussion in English.
- Prior to the meeting, ECU students are provided information about the country they will be working with as well as guidance on how to effectively interact with their international peers. Similarly, information about ECU, our students and the surrounding region will be shared with those with whom we will be connecting.
- During the connection, local facilitators representing both ECU and the group with which we will connect collaboratively lead a discussion with the main focus being on College Life.
- After the connection, the facilitators will work with their students to help them synthesize their experience.

Benefits of the Program:
- Students from both ECU and the participating countries get an opportunity to expand their horizons by meeting and learning from peers in another country.
- Students from participating countries who hope to go to the U.S. for a university education will gain insight into what university life is like in the U.S. from students who have recently made the transition to university student and are experiencing it firsthand.
- For students in participating countries, this connection provides an opportunity to practice their English speaking and listening skills with native English speakers. Similarly, it gives ECU students the opportunity to develop and practice skills for effective intercultural communication.
- Although there are facilitators, these discussions are peer to peer, giving the students much latitude to discuss what is important to them.

Outcomes:
Assessment of this program shows that even though it is only a single, 1 hour connection, it has a high impact on both the ECU students and the participating international students.

For ECU Students:
- 82% express an increased interest in learning more about the people they talked to.
- 70% report an increased interest in participating in other international opportunities available on campus.
- 78% indicate an increased interest in participating in study abroad.

QUOTES: “I really enjoyed talking to the students and meeting new people that were my age. I also liked that I could give advice and help students that want to come to America for college.” ECU student after talking to a group of students from Armenia.

For International Participants:
- 91% express an increased interest in learning more about the people they talked to.
- 92% report they are interested in studying abroad.
- 95% indicate they are more interested in the US as a potential study abroad location.

In addition, 95% of international participants indicated the experience was useful for practicing their English speaking and comprehension skills. Also, reported that one of the most beneficial aspects of the program is learning that some previous perceptions of Americans were incorrect & being able to dispel some stereotypes the American students have of their own cultures.

QUOTES: “I really liked learning more about American culture, know about their points of view about the different topics. I modified some wrong ideas that I have about Americans”. Student from Huancayo, Peru

“That was really a great chance to interact with the foreign students to discuss their way of learning, living and treating things”. Student from Lahore, Pakistan