SWO490

Topical Seminar in Social Work

Taking a Social Work Course Abroad: Impact of a Global Classroom Experience: Germany.

Partnership with Friedensau Adventist University and West Chester University of Pennsylvania
Preliminary Considerations

- Identifying partners
  - At West Chester University
    - Colleague who is bilingual (English-German) who taught at Friedensau University & Served as Program Guide
    - Colleagues in the German language Department who assisted in Understanding German Language and Culture
    - Office of International Programs
      - Assisted in completing Recognition of Risk Form for Faculty-led Study Abroad Programs
  - At Friedensau University
    - Dean of the School of Social Work
Opening thought... from the Berlin Wall

VIELE KLEINE LEUTE DIE IN VIELEN KLEINEN ORTEN VIELE KLEINE DINGE TUN, KÖNNEN DAS GESICHT DER WELT GEÄNDERN.

MANY SMALL PEOPLE WHO IN MANY SMALL PLACES DO MANY SMALL THINGS THAT CAN ALTER THE FACE OF THE WORLD.
Linking Course Activities to Professional Competencies

1. Identify as a professional social worker and conduct oneself accordingly
2. Apply social work ethical principles
3. Apply critical thinking to inform & communicate
4. Engage in diversity & differences
5. Advance human rights and social & economic justice
6. Engage in research-informed practice
7. Apply knowledge of human behavior and the social environment
8. Engage in policy practice
9. Respond to contexts that shape practice
10. Engage, Assess, Intervene, and Evaluate
## Frequencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Task</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify as a professional social worker</td>
<td>12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apply social work ethical principles</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apply critical thinking</td>
<td>26</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage in diversity &amp; difference</td>
<td>59</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advance human rights &amp; social justice</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage in research-informed practice</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apply knowledge of HBSE</td>
<td>17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage in policy practice</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Respond to contexts that shape practice</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Engage, assess, intervene, &amp; evaluate</td>
<td>19</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. Identify as a Professional Social Worker and Conduct Oneself Accordingly—Burg Youth Program—
2. Apply Social Work Ethical Principles--Anti-racism--Berlin
2. Apply Social Work Ethical Principles to Guide Professional Practice--Visit to the forensic psychiatric center--Burg
2. Apply Social Work Ethical Principles--Sachsenhausen Project—Remembering, personalizing, humanizing. . .
3. Apply Critical Thinking—Student team presentations with international partners
3. Apply Critical Thinking to Inform and Communicate Professional Judgments
3. Apply Critical Thinking--Classroom discussion
3. Apply Critical Thinking--Sachsenhausen Project
4. Engage Diversity & Differences
What do you notice in this pic?
What do you notice in this pic?
4. Engage in Diversity & Differences--Karneval der Kulturen--Kreutzberg
5. Advance Human Rights and Social and Economic Justice -- Anti-Racism Program
5. Advance Human Rights and Social & Economic Justice - Asylum Seekers Program Organizers -- Berlin
5. Advance Human Rights--Gates at Sachsenhausen Labor Camp
8. Engage in Policy Practice to Deliver Effective Social Work Services--Open House at the Children’s ARCHE
9. Respond to Contexts that Shape Behavior--Berlin U-bahn
9. Respond to Contexts that Shape Practice--Cultural awareness...
Glenn at Tachales community
Berlin—Tacheles community
10. Engagement: Use Interpersonal Skills--Arrival at Friedensau—Opening social at the Eco-house
Challenges

• Communications
  • Use of Skype Teleconferences in preparation for the trip and program
  • Completion of the Memorandum of Agreement that clarified the relationship between WCU and our partnering university
    • WCU granted credits to WCU students
    • Effectively linking my course SWO490 to a course being offered in the International Social Work Program at Friedensau University
    • The MOA needs to be signed by administrators from both partnering universities (original signatures)
• Funding limitations
  • We applied for a DAAD grant to offset expenses, but this required language proficiency of students and faculty
  • If we offered such a course again, we would include a 1 credit language component
• US phones were not reliable. Need to purchase temporary phones in host country. These are readily available once abroad
• Need to remind everyone to wear or bring comfortable walking/hiking shoes
Field Visits to Social Service Programs

- Cornelius Heim Services for Children & Youth
- Forensic Psychiatric Hospital in Möckern
- Arts Center in Falkensee, Berlin
- Arché, Children and Family Services Berlin
- Integration Project, Burg
- Church Asylum program in Berlin/Kreuzberg
- Carnival of Cultures, Berlin/Kreuzberg
Key Outcomes

- Increased cultural awareness and desire to learn a language
- Challenged student’s ethnocentric (American) assumptions and perspectives about other cultures and nationalities
- Challenged notions of U.S. “superiority”
- Increased students awareness about being negatively (as “stupid or unsophisticated Americans”) and positively stereotyped (“rock stars”) by students from other cultures and nationalities, as well as German peers in other social situations
- Increased level of cultural/global sophistication
- Shift in social justice perspective in terms of a (German) humanistic social capital value system
- Challenged stereotypes of Germans as a monolithic and rigid culture, and viewing German culture as much more diverse and humanistic than previously understood
- Enabled students to move out of their comfort zones, and expand their international social networks and contacts
- Enabled students and faculty to interact on a 24x7 basis in different roles
Opening dinner & social at Friendsau
Student residence at Friedensau
Faculty residence at Friedensau
Program Faculty by Adenauer Bust
Castle Wendgräben near Friedensau -- Reception
Classroom at Friedensau University
Teamwork at our Berlin Apartment
Anti-racism program in Berlin
At the Pergomon Museum--Berlin
Friends from Friedensau—Boat trip