

TRAINING AND GUIDING MULTI-CULTURAL STUDENT GROUPS

Welcome



Nicole Kienhuis, 6 November 2015

INTRODUCTIONS



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Intercultural trainer,
(team) coach and
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BACKGROUND:

- International Business Communication and Development Studies
- Working experience in Kenya, Tanzania, Madagascar and Bhutan
- Coordinator/Facilitator international youth exchange programs
- International projects manager in Culture and Sustainable Tourism

CURRENT ACTIVITIES

Since 2011:

- **Training and workshops in: intercultural communication, intercultural competences, cultural diversity and inclusion, intercultural management, dealing with the Dutch (education)**
- **For: a wide variety of non-profit and public organisations in (health) care, welfare, social change, humanitarian aid and universities (of applied sciences)**

PROGRAM

- Check-in & Teaser
- Best practices and challenges at Arnhem Business school
- Insights from an outsider
- Exchange of experiences
- Conclusions and Check-out



CHECK-IN

Exchange in pairs (10 min):

- Your name and current position
- What do wish to *take* from this workshop?
- What do you wish to *give* to this workshop?

TRUE OR FALSE?

The amount of incoming students doing a compete study in the Netherlands represent 9% of the Dutch student population

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Netherlands receive more incoming students than the European average

TRUE OR FALSE?

Third place in the top of countries of incoming students to the Netherlands is China

TRUE OR FALSE?

The Gerrit Rietveld Academy receives relatively most incoming students in the Netherlands

TRUE OR FALSE?

Economy and Society & Behaviour are most popular disciplines among incoming students

TRUE OR FALSE?

A slight majority of incoming students are male

TRUE OR FALSE?

About 6,000 refugee students will join Dutch higher education in 2016

SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF DUTCH EDUCATION

- **Active learning**: reflection, what do I wish to learn? What do I know? What knowledge is available? Do I agree?
- Focused on developing your **own opinion** and being **critical and vocal**
- **Interaction** in class, project work in small groups
- Calling the teacher by **first names**
- **Rules are rules**, exceptions are rare
- High **grades** are **not most important**
- School is fairly important, but so is **free time**

GUIDING AND TRAINING MULTI-CULTURAL STUDENTS GROUPS

Entails for all involved:

- **Dealing with cultural differences**
- **Dealing with education change (shock)**
- **Dealing with mechanisms of exclusion to create inclusion**

All of which require the active development of intercultural competences

CASE ARNHEM BUSINESS SCHOOL



Arnhem
Business School



ARNHEM BUSINESS SCHOOL (ABS)

- An International business faculty within HAN University of Applied Sciences.
- That offers several English-taught Bachelors and Masters degree courses in business, logistics and management.
- With around 1,000 students from 60 different countries

Main objective is to enhance employability and internationalisation.

SOME FACTS & FIGURES

Per November 2015:

- **Total of 1,010 students**
- **527 international students (52%)**
- **62 different nationalities**
- **Even richer in terms of cultural diversity: bi-cultural, mixed heritages**

This excludes exchange students

ORIGIN: COUNTRIES AND REGIONS

| Foreign origin | Prevalent regions |
|----------------|--------------------------------|
| China (13%) | West and Southern Europe (63%) |
| Germany (11%) | Asia (25%) |
| Vietnam (6%) | Eastern Europe (6,7%) |
| Indonesia (4%) | Africa (1,4%) |

To compare: teachers from outside of the Netherlands: 8%

SUPPORTING INCOMING STUDENTS

Getting started, outside the classroom:

- International office (IO): logistics, administration, housing, etc
- Introduction week with all students, many activities in mixed groups
- Optional student mentorship: a 2nd year student for a starter
- Good contacts between IO and international student associations, e.g. Chinese and Vietnamese (collecting students from the airport etc)
- Study career coach: regular talks and coaching

TRAINING ALL STUDENTS

In the classroom:



- Intercultural competencies' development incorporated in most subjects from 1st to last year (e.g. marketing, intercultural management, international operations management, business communication), including IRC coaching
- Striving towards synergy between subjects: e.g. student groups working on a business plan and during 'intercultural management' they reflect on their team and practice skills for successful intercultural team cooperation

TRAINING TEACHERS



- A select group of 10 teachers have been trained in the IRC and coach students on their IRC tests (2011)
- Baseline IRC assessment among all ABS teachers to monitor their development
- Study days on intercultural competencies
- Optional request for intercultural training provided by the HAN
- Monitoring of intercultural competencies as part of teachers' performance talks

NEEDS' RESEARCH AMONG TEACHERS

Conclusions:

- Most teachers are aware that cultural differences have an impact in learning styles/preferences
- Only 35% of the teachers suggested activities that encourage cultural disclosure and dialogue
- Teachers' levels of English needs to be improved
- Need for exchange with other teachers who have dealt with different learning styles (almost none have)
- Interest in workshops, seminars, case studies, brainstorm sessions and role plays to enhance own teaching in a culturally sensitive way

AMBITIONS

- Further improvement of the integration of intercultural learning throughout the years and explaining it to teachers and students
- Increasing teachers' awareness on the dynamics of majority and minority groups
- Practicing and exchanging with colleagues on how to assess students' intercultural competencies within the same discipline
- Training new teachers on cultural awareness as part of their introductory didactics course
- Offering ongoing courses for teachers, SCC's and tutors and also for support staff, including International Office

INSIGHTS FROM AN OUTSIDER: TEACHERS

- Differ greatly in interests and intercultural competency development
- Hold different views on internationalisation
- Are mostly not representative of the students' population in terms of cultural diversity
- Are in need of practical tips and tricks -> expectation management
- Often have not been equipped with knowledge and skills on how to create inclusion in culturally diverse groups (e.g. dominant and marginalised positions)

INSIGHTS: TRAINING STUDENT GROUPS

- **Composition of class** matters in terms of subgroups along the lines of national culture, gender,...
More diversity helps!
- Create opportunities for students to **experience intercultural dilemma's**: simulation, mixed group work, interview assignments, etc.
- Create opportunities for students to **reflect**: recording meetings, observing each other's behaviour in meetings
- **Use the cultural diversity in the group** to demonstrate cultural theories and differences

INSIGHTS: STUDENT GROUPS

- Being **mindful about English** being a second, third or fourth language for many: adjusting pace of speaking and choice of vocabulary
- Create opportunities for students to practise intercultural skills (small training groups)

INSIGHTS: STUDENTS AND SUPPORT STAFF

Students:

- Dutch students are mostly not prepared interculturally for choosing an international study, whereas most international students are.
- Dutch is mostly not part of the curriculum for international students
- Important to consider the special position of bi-cultural students

Support staff:

- Mostly not the first to be trained, but remains vital they will be as well.

EXCHANGE IN GROUPS OF 3

- What practice are you pleased with in your organisation in relation to facilitating intercultural learning (students, teachers, staff)?
- What do you struggle with or what current practice would you would like to see changed/improved?

CHECK-OUT AND THANK YOU

More information?

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