

# PittGlobal

## Study Abroad Re-Entry



## Readjustment/Reflection Workshop Facilitator Handbook

Study Abroad Office  
802 William Pitt Union  
3959 Fifth Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15260

## **Table of Contents**

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Workshop Overview.....  | 3  |
| Goals and Student Learning Outcomes.....                          | 3  |
| Workshop Outline.....   | 4  |
| Facilitator Considerations and Tips.....                          | 5  |
| Appendix A: Bell Curve – Facilitator Handout.....                 | 6  |
| Appendix B: Bell Curve – Student Handout.....                     | 7  |
| Appendix C: Thirty-Five for Debriefing – Facilitator Handout..... | 8  |
| Appendix D: Yes, and... – Facilitator Handout.....                | 9  |
| Appendix E: Resources Available – Student Handout.....            | 10 |

## **Workshop Overview**

---

The Readjustment/Reflection Re-entry Workshop is intended to help students with the difficulties of returning to U.S. culture and their home campus after their time abroad. Re-entry can be a difficult process for students, especially if they are unaware of the challenges and do not know what support systems are available on the Pittsburgh campus. This workshop will address reflection, cultural readjustment, and emotional aspects of returning home, while allowing students to reflect on their time abroad in a friendly, shared environment.

## **Goals and Student Learning Outcomes**

---

The emotional and cultural reflection workshop will help students work through the difficulties in their personal re-entry process. Through a number of exercises and activities students will:

- Reflect on their time abroad;
- Identify difficulties of the re-entry process;
- Understand the reasons for difficulties in the re-entry process;
- Understand they are not alone in their re-entry process;
- Better understand cultural differences between the U.S. and their host country; and
- Become familiar with the resources available at the University of Pittsburgh.

# Workshop Outline

---

## Participants

- 10-100

## Time

- 1 hour, 15 minutes

## Outline

Reflection/Icebreaker (15-30 minutes)

- Bell Curve (Good for small workshops)
  - Appendices A/B
- Thirty-Five for Debriefing (Good for large workshops)
  - Appendix C

Cultural Readjustment/Difficulties of Re-entry (15-25 minutes)

- Yes, and...
  - Appendix D

Emotional/Difficulties of Re-entry (5-10 minutes)

- This closing section is meant to let students understand that the re-entry process can be emotional/difficult for anyone and give him or her the resources available if they would like more assistance in the process (Appendix E).
- Students should go back to their seats and the facilitator should talk briefly on why the re-entry process can be difficult.
- Note: Discussing emotional aspects and difficulties of re-entry carries certain taboo topics, and can be a hard subject for students to discuss. Therefore, the facilitator must be careful in choosing how to address this section. Additionally, this section should be delivered last, after group building has occurred.

Closing

- In closing, give students the “Resources Available – Student Handout” (Appendix E) and give students a chance to ask questions in the larger group. The facilitator should inform students that he/she will remain after workshop to answer questions one-on-one so students do not feel pressure to ask difficult questions in the large group.
- Due to the taboo nature of some of the topics in this workshop, the facilitator should remain after the workshop and speak with any participant who would like to speak or ask questions one-on-one.

## Facilitator Considerations and Tips

---

**Be prepared to adjust the workshop once you arrive.** Some activities require more participants than you have in attendance, and time considerations may require an activity to be cut. If an activity takes longer than anticipated but is going well, let the activity continue and adjust the rest of the workshop to compensate.

**Arrive early.** Take the time to arrive early to the workshop space. This gives you time to rearrange furniture if needed and ensure technology is working properly.

**Set ground rules.** Everyone's experience abroad was different, and students should be reminded to respect experiences that were different from their own. Everyone has a valid perspective and has a right for that to be respected.

**Actively engage with participants.** Listening and engaging with participants keeps them interested and serves as a good example for other participants as well. Don't forget to look out for side conversations and ask students to return their focus to the workshop.

**Give everyone the opportunity to participate, but don't force someone to speak who doesn't want to.** Encourage participation among all students, and don't allow one or two individuals to dominate large group discussions. Emphasize the importance of letting many voices and opinions be heard.

**Encourage participants to work with new people.** Suggest that students work with someone who is studying a different major or studied abroad in a different country than they did. This will help students to think of things from different perspectives.

**Explain instructions clearly, before telling students to move.** Otherwise, they will be focused on getting into place and are likely to miss important information.

**Debrief activities where they occur before allowing participants to return to their seats.** Participants will start to think about other things and have side conversations as they settle, so it is important to make sure that they are still focused on the activity when they debrief.

**It's okay not to know all of the answers.** If a student asks a question you don't know the answer to, you can ask other participants for their feedback or offer to look up the information and follow up with them after the workshop is over.

**Go with the flow.** Sometimes a participant does or says something unexpected that may cause an activity to get off track. If that happens, debrief it with the group and move on. Students (and you!) will still learn through this process.

# Study Abroad Bell Curve

Facilitator Handout

In-person, Reflection

## Description of Activity

The Study Abroad Bell Curve is a post-study abroad activity involving reflection, storytelling, articulation, and formation of skills learned abroad. The bell curve represents the number of emotions/experiences surrounding their study abroad experience, with the majority of experiences during the time abroad.

### Materials Needed:

- “Study Abroad Bell Curve” hand out (1 per person) – see Appendix B
- Writing utensils (1 per person)

### Time:

- 15-20 minutes (can be adapted to be longer/shorter)

## Process

### Step 1 (5 minutes)

- All participants are given “Study Abroad Bell Curve” handout and writing utensil.
- Student Instructions:
  - “Write or draw about your experience pre, during, and post-study abroad on your handout. You can include feelings, stories, places, people, etc.”
- Facilitator is encouraged to give examples to help students start. E.g.
  - Pre: Nervous, excited, stressed, last meal with friends, etc.
  - During: Stories, favorite restaurant, new friends, feelings, etc.
  - Post: No money, feelings, saying goodbye, pictures, etc.

### Step 2 (5 minutes)

- With a partner (or in a small group), assign roles:
  - Sharer (will share stories)
  - Listener (will listen to stories and ask questions)
- “Sharer” will tell one (or more) story/experience/ feeling from each section (pre, during, post) with their partner
- Instruct “Listener” to choose one thing their partner talks about that they want to know more about. After “Sharer” is done speaking, “Listener” will ask questions to dig deeper into topic

### Step 3 (5 minutes)

- Students switch roles

## Closing

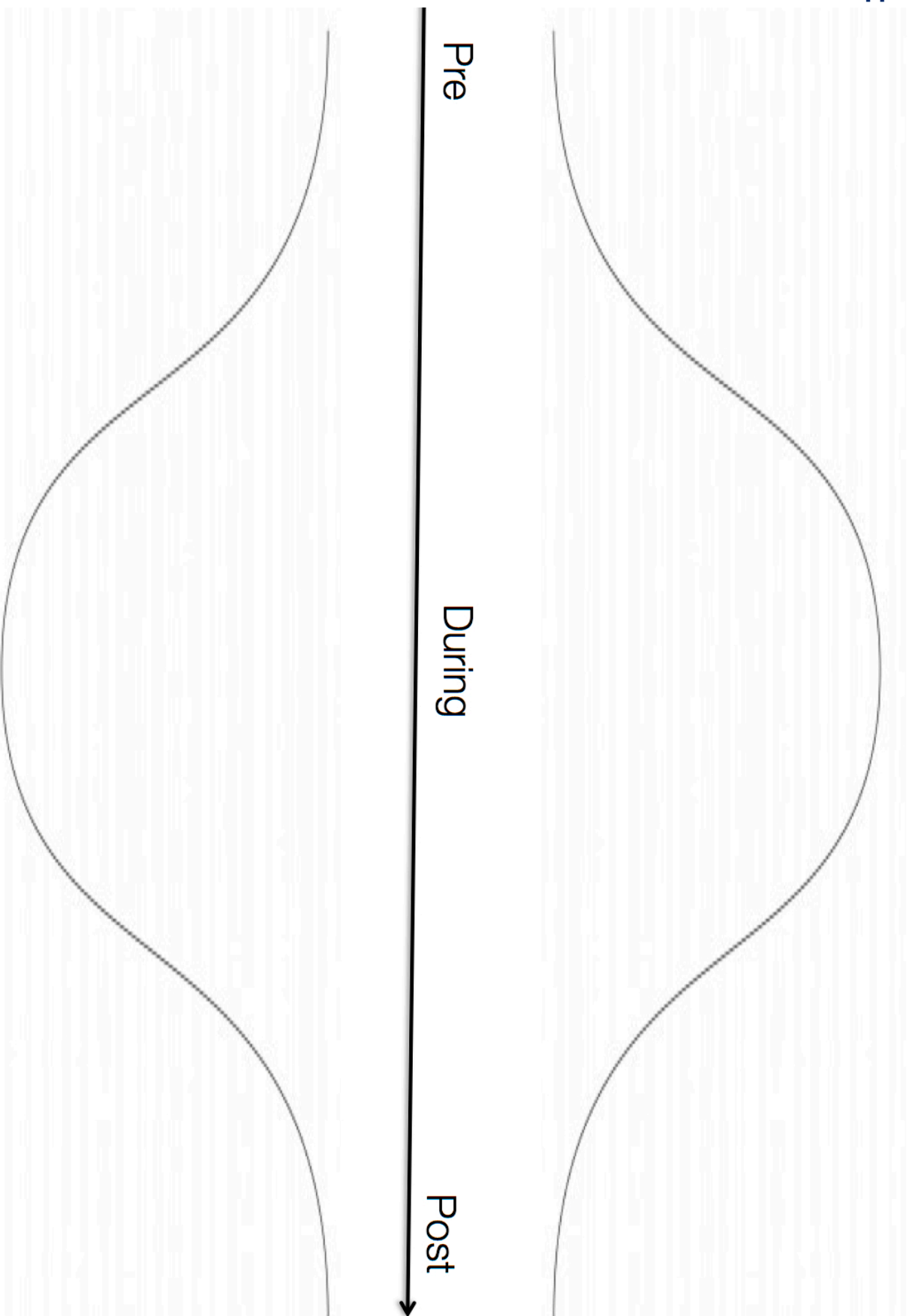
As a small group/partner activity, the facilitator should bring students back together to debrief. Students can be asked, by show of hands:

- Did you and your partner share some familiar experiences being abroad, even though you may have been in different places?
- Was there anything that you found interesting about your partner’s story?
- Did asking questions about a particular part of your partner’s story help you understand your partner’s experience?

Students can be invited to share something they learned about their experience or their partner’s experience, however, they should not be forced to share if they do not wish to.

# Study Abroad Bell Curve

University of Pittsburgh



# Thirty-Five for Debriefing\*

Facilitator Handout

In-person, Reflection

## Description of Activity

Thirty-Five for Debriefing is ideal for an icebreaker. The activity is a post-study abroad activity involving reflection, storytelling, articulation, and formation of skills learned abroad. Students will reflect upon their time abroad and choose one “lesson learned” to anonymously share by writing on one side of their index card. The cards will then be passed and scored – the card with the highest score will be “the winner.”

### Participants

- 10-100; the more, the better.

### Time:

- 15-30 minutes

### Materials Needed:

- Index cards
- Writing utensils (1 per person)
- Whistle, or other noise making device

## Process

### Step 1 – Brief Participants (5 minutes)

- Distribute index cards and ask each participant to reflect on his or her time abroad and write one “lesson learned” on ONE SIDE of the card. Care should be given to this exercise so that students who studied abroad for a short time, in an English speaking country, etc. do not feel their experience is less important than others.
  - Students should be assured that their responses will be anonymous, unless they would like to share at the end.
  - Example statements:
    - “Take time to listen to the elderly at the bus stop”
    - “Always make sure what you bought is what you were handed”

### Step 2 – Switch Cards (1 minute)

- Tell students to turn their cards down to hide their writing. When you blow the whistle, students should walk around and exchange the cards with each other. Students should not read the cards, but should immediately exchange it with someone else. They should continue doing this until you blow the whistle again.

### Step 3 – Find a Partner; Compare; Score (3 minutes)

- Ask participants to stop moving and to pair up with any nearby participant.
- Each pair will review the two cards they ended up with and score them. They should distribute seven points between their two cards (no fractions or negative numbers) to reflect their relative merit. Participants should write these numbers on the back of the cards.

### Step 4 – Repeat (6-12 minutes)

- Repeat steps 2 and 3 an appropriate number of times for the size of the group (no more than 5 times total). Tell students to disregard earlier numbers and keep a poker face when they have to comparatively evaluate the item they themselves wrote.

### Step 5 – Add up and share

- Have students add up the scores on the cards they were ended up with.
- Collect the cards and find the top 3 (or more) cards to share anonymously with the group.
- If the students of the winning cards (or any other cards) wish to share, they are free to do so, but it is NOT MANDATORY. Giving students who share a reward (like candy or swag) is a good incentive to get students to share.

\*Adapted from [www.thiagi.com](http://www.thiagi.com)



# Yes, and...

Facilitator Handout

In-person, Reflection

## Description of Activity

“Yes, and...” is a post-study abroad activity to help students understand and reflect upon cultural differences between the United States and their study abroad host country. Through reflecting with other students on the cultural differences they noticed in the U.S. upon returning home, students should understand that they are not alone in their re-entry struggles and share thoughts with other students.

### Participants

- 10-100 (split into groups of 4 or 5)

### Time:

- 15-20 minutes (Depending on size of workshop)

### Materials Needed:

- Large pieces of paper – Butcher Paper, Anchor Chart Paper, etc. (1 per group)
- Markers (1 per group)

## Process

### Step 1 – Groups (2 minutes)

- Have students separate into groups of 4 or 5.
- Give students materials needed for activity.
- Give instructions:
  - Students will work in groups to share the things they noticed about U.S. culture and their campus culture upon returning from abroad.
  - Have groups designate one student to be the writer, who will write down what everyone says.
  - Every time a new idea is shared, students will start their idea with “yes, and...”
  - Inform students that there are no wrong responses; if they noticed it upon returning (or even while abroad) it counts!
  - (Optional) to encourage participation, a prize can be given to students who come up with the longest list

### Step 2 – Brainstorm (7-8 minutes)

- Students will be given 5 minutes (this time can change if students are still working/stop working early) to complete their list.
- After students complete their list, give them a couple minutes to debrief with their group and discuss which two or three items they will share with the larger groups.  
Talking points if necessary:
  - Choose one thing from the list to tell a story about or
  - Telling a funny story about a cultural difference from abroad

### Step 3 – Share (5-10 minutes – Depending on number of groups)

- Each group will chose two or three differences from their list that they came up with and share with the entire group.

# Resources On- and Off- Campus

## Student Handout

- **Study Abroad Office**  
<http://www.abroad.pitt.edu/>  
 802 William Pitt Union, 3959 Fifth Avenue  
[abroad@pitt.edu](mailto:abroad@pitt.edu)  
 1-412-648-7413
- **Counseling Center**  
<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/cc/>  
 Nordenberg Hall - Wellness Center (119 University Place)  
 M, T, F 8:30-5:00; W, Th 8:30-8:30  
 412-648-7930
- **Student Organizations:**  
<https://pitt2.collegiatelink.net/organizations>
  - Amnesty International
  - Arabic Language and Culture Club
  - Brazil Nuts
  - Chinese Language and Culture Club
  - Cultural Cuisine Club
  - Engineers Without Borders
  - French Club
  - German Club
  - Global Brigades
  - Italian Club
  - Japanese Culture Association
  - Liberty in North Korea
  - Panther Tango Club
  - Pittsburgh Hope Initiative
  - Russian Club
  - Spanish Club
  - Student Slovak Club
  - Students for Water
  - Swahili Student Association
  - Taiwanese Student Interest Club
- **Pitt Serves:**  
<https://www.studentaffairs.pitt.edu/pittserves/>
  - Alternative Breaks
  - Community Partners
  - Student Civic Engagement Council
  - Large Days of Service
  - Sustainability
  - Education Programming
- **Living Learning Communities**  
<http://www.filmtini.com/studentaffairs/reslife/lc/>
  - Global Village
  - Cultura LatinoAmericana
  - Emerging Leaders
  - Innovation & Entrepreneurship
  - Healthy U
  - One Pitt, One Planet
  - Women Lead
  - Multicultural
- **Local Organizations:**
  - Three Rivers Lessons From Abroad: <http://www.lessonsfromabroad.org/three-rivers/three-rivers-local-resources/>
  - Global Links: <https://www.globallinks.org/>
  - Global Pittsburgh: <http://www.globalpittsburgh.org/>
  - The Japan-America Society of Pennsylvania: <http://www.us-japan.org/jasp/>
  - Latin American Cultural Union: <http://www.lacunet.org/>