Matrix for Self-Care and Creating Brave Spaces as Education Abroad Program Directors
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This Matrix for Self-Care and Creating Brave Spaces is intended to be used by Program Directors and others who lead education abroad programs. The first set of questions is for self-reflection, and is intended to be offered as questions Program Directors can ask themselves in order to maximize self-care (pages 6–7). The next sets of questions are intended to assist Program Directors in thinking about how to foster brave spaces within their program design and in relationships with the student group, their institution, and/or the communities where the programs take place (pages 6–9).

This matrix has been developed with the assumption that the Program Director may leverage these questions to create and design the program (groundwork), utilize these questions throughout the education abroad program cycle (courageous moments), and/or lean into these questions as resources (to foster reflection and processing). These questions should also be a tool for education abroad colleagues or faculty development professionals who are working with and supporting Program Directors. This matrix may be applied to various program-types abroad (i.e., short-term, faculty-led programs, center-based programs, internships, service learning, and research abroad). The experience of the Program Director may also influence the extent to which the matrix contributes to their new or existing knowledge.

In addition to these assumptions, it is our hope that fostering courageous conversations can support the self-care process, as Program Directors are often pulled in multiple directions prior to, during, and after an education abroad program. We see the value of this matrix in its emphasis on self-care and positive reinforcement of activities and reflection questions that support group cohesion, faculty development, and ethical global community engagement.

The Creating Brave Spaces Action Plan Templates provide the education abroad and global education community with four distinct cases where brave spaces may be applied: 1) Community of Practice for Program Directors, 2) Pre-Departure Orientation for Students, 3) Program Director Workshop, and 4) Program Renewal Meeting. These templates can be used individually or as a group to reflect upon taking action to create brave spaces and measure whether it’s successful.

Finally, the scholarly content in this document is the intellectual work of the authors and, in some cases, contributions from members of the 2017-2018 Diversity Abroad Faculty Development Task Force. A list of resources has been provided for further information on faculty development in education abroad (pages 14–15).
DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this matrix, we define the following terms:

**PROGRAM DIRECTOR**
Person in a position of leadership or authority for developing, implementing, and/or facilitating curricular and co-curricular programs for students abroad.

**COMMUNITY OF SUPPORT**
The network of people that are relied upon for emotional and spiritual support. These include but are not limited to family, partners, friends, colleagues, health professionals, religious or spiritual advisers, pets, etc.

**COURAGEOUS MOMENTS / CONVERSATIONS**
Spaces that build awareness of how our own identities and those of others may impact interactions and behaviors that reinforce dominant narratives or promote multiple narratives.

**DOMINANT NARRATIVE**
An explanation or story that reflects the interests or ideologies of a dominant social group or culture. Dominant narratives suggest that the perspectives of the majority represent the lived experience of all. This ignores the lived experiences of those in the minority. Examples include: oppression of women, color blindness, savior mentality.

**COUNTERNARRATIVE**
An explanation or story that reflects the interests or ideologies of marginalized groups or cultures.
# Creating Brave Spaces as Education Abroad Program Directors

## Matrix for Self-Care and Creating Brave Spaces

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Groundwork</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Creating or Enhancing Self-Care</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Directors can consider these questions to create or enhance their self-love, mindfulness, and self-care, as well as leverage their communities of support.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Know Yourself:</strong> Do I understand my own privilege / bias? Do I know how I might react during moments of difficulty or uncertainty (e.g., what is my typical stress response)? What are my typical health and wellness strategies and routines? Will I be able to continue these while abroad? If not, what can I do to stay healthy, be present?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Find Community:</strong> Who is in my community of support? What communities of support do I rely on in a time of crisis? How can I tap into these communities of support while abroad?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Facilitating Brave Spaces for Yourself</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Program Directors can consider these questions to inform their pedagogy, to design programs abroad, and/or to seek institutional support.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Pedagogy:</strong> Have I had practice leading courageous conversations? Can I identify dominant narratives that may play out in my program/location and why they are problematic? What are some counternarratives? Do I have strategies and resources that I can draw on to address dominant narratives and facilitate courageous conversations in case of incident (bias, safety, other)? What is my comfort level in revealing my own social identities and asking students to reflect upon and share theirs?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Program Design:</strong> Have I considered diversity and inclusion while developing my program/syllabus? Have I worked to establish norms for respectful engagement in my program/syllabus? Have I left time and space for down time/reflection within my program/syllabus?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Institutional Support:</strong> Have I set expectations with my home institution about what my duties and responsibilities are to foster diversity and inclusion in my program and what to do in case of incident? Do I know my resources or opportunities for training and development at my institution? Are there structures in place to ensure that I have backup?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Facilitating Brave Spaces for Your Student Group</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program Directors can consider these questions as a means to building, maintaining, or reinforcing trust between and with students, and to set, revise, and regulate expectations with student groups. Program Directors may leverage these questions to better understand, maintain awareness of, and value group identities.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Building Trust:</strong> What are ways I can build trust and respect within the group? How do I show my trust with the group? How do I model trust-building behavior with each individual in the group?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Setting Expectations:</strong> How are individual expectations being understood within the group? What are the group expectations for each other (e.g., community codes of conduct)? How do I support the group members to establish these expectations? Is everyone aware of and committed to the group expectations? How will the group self-regulate to hold each other accountable to the group expectations?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Understanding Group Identities:</strong> What are the strengths and social identities of each group member? What situations make group members feel vulnerable? How does the group respond to conversations and activities that explore identities and areas of difference? Does the group have experience participating in courageous conversations? Have members of the group practiced using tools and strategies to encourage courageous conversations?</td>
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## COURAGEOUS MOMENTS

### Be Yourself:
Am I present? Have I demonstrated compassion with myself and others? Am I taking care of myself? (Have I eaten, slept, exercised, drank water?) Have I used my standard strategies for managing and diffusing stress?

### Engage Community:
Have I reached out to my communities of support for input and/or assistance? Why or why not?

### Pedagogy:
Am I satisfied with the results of this courageous moment? Have I modeled the behaviors I seek in my students? Have I demonstrated compassion, humility, active listening, help-seeking?

### Program Design:
Can I activate time and space in the moment for students to reflect and engage in respectful conversation? How can I (best) activate the norms I established for respectful engagement? How am I able to connect this courageous (difficult) conversation with the larger learning goals of the program/course?

### Institutional Support:
Should I communicate the incident to my home institution? Have I engaged resources at my home institution, as necessary? Am I able to handle this myself, or do I need to call in backup and/or reinforcements?

### Maintaining Trust:
How does the group behave during a courageous conversation? How are the group members expressing compassion with each other, the hosts, and with myself? How do individual and group identities engage with multiple narratives? What are ways that the group can reinforce the trust and respect they have with each other? How are group members staying present in each moment?

### Regulating Expectations:
How is the group self-regulating? In what ways can I encourage group members to remind each other of the group expectations?

### Maintaining Awareness of Group Identities:
How are the strengths and social identities of each group member being acknowledged? How is the group respecting individual and group limitations? How is the group expressing appreciation of each other when students are being vulnerable?

## REFLECTION & PROCESSING

### Respect Yourself:
Have I carved out time/space for reflection and recovery? Have I been able to (re)establish my typical health, wellness, and stress management strategies? Was I able to let go of things that I cannot control?

### Connect with Community:
How am I including my communities of support in this time of reflection and recovery?

### Pedagogy:
If dominant narratives or bias incidents emerge, how do I use them to reinforce respectful dialogue for the rest of the program? How can I balance the need to address and learn from the courageous moment, while also making sure the program/course is not defined by it?

### Program Design:
Do I need to make modifications to the program/syllabus? Are there any interventions (curricular or co-curricular) that may be needed to help to repair a harm and/or reestablish trust?

### Institutional Support:
Do I have the resources and support I need to repair a harm and reestablish trust, even if this means making modifications to the program and/or imposing consequences? Do I understand my institution’s policies and procedures?

### Reinforcing Trust:
How can I ensure that the group continues to exhibit trust in and respect for others? How do I open spaces for discussions about group dynamics? If dominant narratives or bias incidents occur, how do I determine if the group has lost any trust in me? What steps can I take to repair any harm and rebuild trust?

### Revising Expectations:
What discussions are necessary to revisit the expectations and revise if needed? How can the group expectations support the trust-building process?

### Valuing Group Identities:
When appropriate, how can I encourage the group to express appreciation and gratitude for each other? In what ways is the group behaving to promote values of difference and multiple narratives?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FACILITATING BRAVE SPACES WITH HOST COMMUNITIES &amp; PARTNERS ABROAD</th>
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<tr>
<td>Program Directors can consider these questions as a means to building ethical global engagement with host communities and partners abroad.</td>
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<tr>
<th>GROUNDWORK</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Developing Institutional / Community Partnerships:</strong> Have I researched attitudes of my host community towards the different identities of the students in my group? How can my local partner(s) help with this research? How will conflict be handled should there be an issue between students, between students and local individuals, between students and our host community, etc.? Do values of the local partners align with my values and the values of my home institution, particularly around anti-discrimination and supporting multiple narratives? Where might there be tensions with each other’s values? Was commitment to diversity and inclusion included in the evaluation of and decision to affiliate with the local partner(s)? How was that credibility with the local partner(s) established? Is the value and mutual benefit of the partnership clearly articulated in the terms of agreement?</td>
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| Acknowledge Community: | Have I contextualized the history of my relationships with local communities/partners with my students? Have I shared with students the expectations that I have for them while abroad, and what it means to engage ethically and reciprocally with our host communities and partners? Have I discussed with the local community members and/or partners how I plan to “show up” over the period of the relationship, i.e., interacting prior to arrival on-site, maintaining the relationship over time, following up and learning about new developments on both sides? Have I listened deeply to the needs of my local partners and/or community members? Have I co-created the curriculum and student learning outcomes in partnership with my local partners and by integrating local perspectives? Have I asked my partners what reciprocity looks like to them within the context of the education abroad engagement or more broadly? |

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<th>BRAVE NOTES</th>
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<tr>
<td>Program Directors may use this space to reflect on other questions or ideas that come to mind.</td>
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</table>
### COURAGEOUS MOMENTS

**Nurturing Institutional / Community Partnerships:**
Have I communicated appreciation and respect to our host communities and local partners? Do we have a communication plan of action in the case of a disagreement, student issue, or issue that could jeopardize the partnership and/or relationship with the host communities? Are we following the expectations that we established with partners and holding students accountable for embodying and exhibiting these expectations in their interactions/engagements with local colleagues and host communities?

**Engage Community:** How am I modeling ethical/reciprocal partnerships in the way that I’m interacting with local colleagues? How am I modeling humility and respect in every interaction with the local population and colleagues?

### REFLECTION & PROCESSING

**Sustaining Institutional / Community Partnerships:**
How can I continue to foster trust and mutual respect with the host communities in which we visit/collaborate? What is the impact of the education abroad program on local partner’s/community’s and home institution’s reputations? How can we continue to demonstrate and reinforce the added value of the partnership?

**Connect with Community:** How can I or our students continue to maintain a connection with members of the communities (post education abroad experience)? What does “give back” look like and feel like to support the communities visited or that we collaborated with during the program abroad? How can I recognize and appreciate the efforts of the community members and local partners that spent their time and energy to ensure student learning and contributed to the program’s success?
A. Community of Practice for Program Directors

**LENGTH**
Six two-hour meetings will be held three times a semester, spanning the academic year.

**DESCRIPTION**
Diversity in education abroad has long been a priority for the Education Abroad Office, but outreach efforts have yielded mixed success. Although 45% of the student body at the institution identify as persons of color, they only constitute 20% of the study abroad population. Since 70% of the students at this university study abroad on short-term, program director-directed programs, the office decides to take a new approach, specifically, it decides to target historically underrepresented faculty and recruit a new pool of diverse Program Directors. To accomplish this, the office opens up a Call for Proposals for prospective Program Directors. Five grants of up to $5000 each will be awarded to support the development of a study abroad program, designed to encourage the participation of underrepresented student populations. As a condition of the grant, Program Directors will participate in a Community of Practice which will give participants space to share best practices and innovative best practices for increasing diversity in education abroad.

**INSTRUCTIONS**
Review the above scenario and using the Matrix as a resource, create an action plan which addresses the following questions:

- How would you design overarching goals for the Community of Practice so as to foster brave spaces for critical self-reflection?
- What specific groundwork questions would you ask a prospective Program Director to consider when creating their program?
- In thinking about the six two-hour meetings with Program Directors, what are the themes or areas that you believe must be addressed in the Community of Practice?
- What resources could you tap into to support the development and delivery of these six sessions that you’ve identified?
- What would a successful Community of Practice look like and how would you measure it?
B. Pre-Departure Orientation for Students

LENGTH
2-hour workshop for students led by the Education Abroad Office

DESCRIPTION
A 6-week faculty-led program in Spain hosts a large number of students each year. The Program Director has created good rapport with students the past year but in the middle of the current program cycle, when students were given an opportunity to check-in and debrief some of their experiences thus far, many of the black student participants felt that they were consistently being singled out for their skin color and as a result, had difficulty assimilating in Spain. One example that was shared was that they would often be called “negrita” when walking down the street, or by their host mother. Although they learned that this was a term of endearment in Spain, it still offended them and made them feel uncomfortable. When these students shared their discomfort with their peers during the debrief, their concerns were written off to cultural differences and were told “that is just the way it is here.” These black students did not feel supported by the other peers and as a result, began to form a subgroup along racial lines. This divide within the group created some tensions which were felt by everyone, but nothing was ever done to address the issue.

INSTRUCTIONS
Discuss the above scenario and using the Matrix as a resource, create an action plan which addresses the following questions:

• How would you design overarching goals for the pre-departure orientation session to foster brave spaces and build allyship amongst the next cohort of students?
• How do you address these types of potential concerns without alienating or putting undue burden on a sub-group of students in the course?
• What resources could help you facilitate this orientation (e.g., program alumni, campus resources)?
• What types of activities can you incorporate to help students model courageous behavior?
• What role would you encourage the Program Director to take during the pre-departure orientation to create a more inclusive environment?
C. Program Director Workshop

LENGTH
One-time, 90-minute session required for all new and returning Program Directors

DESCRIPTION
The Education Abroad Office facilitates a workshop for Program Directors leading groups abroad on a semesterly basis. This work is mandatory for all new and returning leaders. The workshops commonly cover topics such as:

- Program Director Responsibilities
- Campus International Travel Policies
- Crisis Prevention and Response
- Student Conduct Management
- Student Cultural Adjustment and Well-Being
- Pre-Departure Preparation

A new strategic priority of the university is to incorporate Diversity and Inclusion initiatives throughout campus. The Provost’s office has recently enacted an Inclusive Excellence campaign requesting that the leaders of each academic and co-curricular unit report how they plan to incorporate Inclusive Excellence into their programming efforts. One way the Education Abroad Office aims to address this new initiative is through their faculty-led study abroad programming by revamping their 90-minute Program Director Workshop to align with the university’s commitment to Diversity and Inclusion so as to better prepare Program Directors for leading diverse student groups abroad. There is much to cover in this 90-minute workshop and it’s not possible to add another workshop requirement, so the Education Abroad Office must reorganize their workshop content to include new topics that address Inclusive Excellence.

INSTRUCTIONS
Discuss the above scenario and using the Matrix as a resource, create an action plan which addresses the following questions:

- Given the many essential topics that must be covered during a Program Director Workshop (risk management, etc.), how would you reorganize the content to ensure that diversity, inclusion, and equity are addressed?
- How do you, as the workshop facilitator, bravely acknowledge the need for Program Directors to support students exploring their social identities while abroad?
- What resources could help you develop and also lead this new section of the workshop?
- What would success look like during the workshop and how would you measure it?
D. Program Renewal Meeting

**LENGTH**
60-minute meeting

**DESCRIPTION**
A well-respected, male veteran Program Director has arrived to meet with the Assistant Director of Education Abroad to discuss his long-standing program “Community Engagement, Poverty, and Health”, a 4-week, immersive, action-oriented program in rural Chile. The most recent student evaluations suggest that the Program Director may have been insensitive to female students’ concerns regarding community leaders’ treatment of women (i.e., students reported that the community leaders would routinely invite male students on the program to join them for dinner, leaving the female students behind; male students on the program are often placed in leadership roles during community action projects, leading to intergroup conflict among students on the program; male students’ suggestions on poverty reduction are often affirmed by community leaders while female students’ ideas are more often dismissed). The Program Director is passionate about the program, is open to feedback about the program, and cares about making his program inclusive for all students. After this initial meeting, the Program Director will have a follow-up meeting with the Assistant Director of Education Abroad to discuss their action plan.

**INSTRUCTIONS**
Discuss the above scenario and using the Matrix as a resource, create an action plan which addresses the following questions:

- How would you bravely address these concerns reported in the program evaluations with the Program Director to encourage their self-reflection?
- What would you encourage the Program Director to do differently next year (i.e., during pre-departure orientations, and on-site if similar issues arise)?
- In what ways can you support the Program Director to discuss these issues with the community leaders in Chile?
- What follow-up would you conduct after this initial meeting (e.g., with the Program Director, your Director of Education Abroad)?
- How would you communicate your expectations to the Program Director and what would be the criteria for ensuring that this program is inclusive in the future?
**SCHOLARLY ARTICLES/BOOKS**


ORGANIZATION-SPECIFIC RESOURCES

Diversity Abroad


NAFSA Association of International Educators


Forum on Education Abroad


Compiled by April Stroud
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Pamela Roy is Founder of the Consultancy for Global Higher Education, offering project management and strategic leadership in the areas of youth education, diversity and equity, faculty development, and capacity building between North American and African higher education. Dr. Roy’s research expertise includes the global professoriate, gender and economic empowerment, access and inclusion in education abroad, and the ethics of north-south mobility programs. She has led programs abroad to South Africa, Rwanda, and New Zealand. Her professional activities and publications can be accessed at pamelaroy.net.