

Critical Dialogue

November 10, 2020

“Education Abroad in Europe: All Voices at the Table”

Breakout Notepad - Synthesis of sessions

Session 1 Breakout Questions

List of stakeholders in your organization?

US Stakeholders:

- RD, Deans, Associate Deans, vice provost in global affairs
- SA Director, SA advisors
- Students, parents
- faculty (especially language)
- Financial office and CFO
- Partner institutions
- Recruitment officers
- Advisory / Consortium boards
- Equity and Diversity committee
- University health center
- Risk Management team and “special committees” (covid advisor, international safety...)

Intermediary players

- Visa broker governmental agencies (Campus France)
- Governments in Europe - decisions about COVID, travel, visas, etc.
- Outside evaluators

Onsite:

- Local authorities on COVID and health
- Local labor attorney

Who sits at your table and who makes the decisions?

- A 3-tiered system: Upper management (Provost, CFO, Dean...); Study Abroad Office with some say in decisions but mostly giving input, data, reports; RD who gives lots of data through reports but has less of a say

Other comments:

- Onsite director not involved in certain decisions. Onsite director seen as there to directly work with students.
- The pandemic has led for some to have more communication and input.
- Are we really to expect this transatlantic communication? Are we really to expect a seat at this larger table?

Where do you fit in? Are you listened to?

- At the bottom of totem poll for most decisions; ideas come from top down
- Some reported feeling listened to a little more than others, also more during the present crisis
- We “deliver the product” and are consulted when things go wrong but not when they go well
- Going forward, there are more and more policies which make it more challenging. For students and faculty.

Session 2 Breakout Questions

What are the main gaps in transatlantic alliances on a personal or program level?

- More equity when we went virtual last spring, able to participate in meetings; now, however, those at the table are no longer there
- Lack of interest in personal relationships with onsite staff - disconnect where they insist on remaining colleagues but nothing more. Shows in communication - lack of warmth, impersonal. General lack of empathy.
- Lack of understanding for each other’s daily reality; what are the work tasks for onsite staff & for US colleagues, conflicting calendars and times, pressures, etc.
- It depends so much on the program / campus and the people involved
- Important to get feedback from home campus(es) and this is often lacking
- A change of leadership on the home campus causes disruption to

the program

What strategies have been effective in developing transatlantic alliances on a program or personal level?

- Pick up the phone and call people, see how they're doing.
- For European and US colleagues to attend conferences together
- Having people come over; being involved in the board of your association / organization
- Local relationships that help you integrate in the host community
- Shared tasks, and even short-term tasks. Thinking outside the box.
- Transparent communication. When faculty collaborate with study abroad it shows.
- Real strategic purposeful ways, but some flexibility to allow faculty to strengthen alliances.
- For onsite faculty to teach remotely back on home campus

US Administrators, what can you do to ensure your On Site staff develop the needed alliances? On Site staff, what can you do to help your US administrators develop the needed alliances?

- Encourage RDs to develop more personal & professional relationships, both locally and especially on the home campus
- Participating in meetings when possible, webinars, etc.
- F2F is important and funds are necessary to bring people together

Session 3 Breakout Questions

What are the most effective ways for Resident Directors to have a greater voice in the field's organizations?

- More RD representation on The Forum, on committees, on conference panels
- Nothing replaces F2F, the networks get built in between sessions, over dinner, etc.
- More inclusion of onsite staff in committee work in the larger SA field. Going to your N+1 and asking to be placed in working groups. Seeing each other as allies.
- US campuses need to reach out through the national organizations or EUASA to get volunteers to take part on committees. The

Forum is starting to do that.

- RDs are forgotten when it comes to membership in the US SA organizations - they need to be added
- Get the EUASA RD Survey Study out to all; The Forum needs to address these issues (<http://www.eu-asa.org/resident-directors-in-europe/>)
- Getting more people involved in the national organizations; there was a lull before COVID but now there seems to be a renewed interest. More networking events like the EUASA community chats
- The Forum needs to look at what is done onsite instead of only focusing on updating the Standards, often from a US-centric perspective

How do we make inroads with associations that represent university administrators outside the direct sphere of international education?

- One hurdle is that some SA offices watch and limit who the RDs talk to, even cutting off communication between certain members
- Universities are so politicized, people afraid for their jobs, afraid to speak up, put themselves on the line
- Difficult for onsite for the same reasons
- Result: social contract is lost and everyone is fending for themselves; a lack of humanity

What venues or products (session panels, journal articles, etc.) are more influential at the sector level?

- The Forum's European Conferences; presenting at conferences and not just attending gives stronger voice
- LinkedIn - post articles, publications, webinar
- Karin Fischer at the Chronicle, also has a blog karin.fischer@chronicle.com
- As an outcome of this Critical Dialogue, let's write an article now on why SA will come back better than ever after COVID.
Volunteers: Lynn, Janine, Martin, Christine, Emily, MaryAnn, Carol
- Various articles and discussions: Inside Higher Ed, Frontiers Journal, blogs...
- Getting alumni to promote program and SA in general
- Exchanges are more important than ever and that the SA

programs abroad are actually capable of creating a good experience whereas some US institutions can no longer do it themselves

- Costs are a big issue, so now they can reduce costs.