Student Evaluation of Fall 2010 Orientation

**Summary of Event:** Pre-departure orientation for all outgoing study abroad students was held on Friday, December 3, 2010 from 3:45 – 8:45 p.m. Orientation is designed to tie up loose ends and provide students with what they need to know before they go. The following topics were covered: travel documents, travel arrangements, packing, computers, communication, budgeting and money matters, academics, health and safety, solo travel, green travel, getting the most out of your experience, ambassadorship, cultural adjustment, journaling, and returning home.

Number of Respondents: 26/27 attendees (One student had to leave early)

1. **Was the orientation useful? Why or why not?**
   Every student answered yes that the orientation was useful.
   - 15 students added that it helped them realize the importance of planning and research.
   - Several students said it helped to tie up loose ends and answer final questions.
   - Two students said it was “eye-opening”
     - Answered questions they didn’t know they had.
     - Opened eyes to “cultural differences.”

2. **What did you like most about the orientation?**
   - “All of it!” (5 respondents)
   - Simeon (5 respondents)
   - The guided visualization (5 respondents)
   - Meeting other students going abroad (2 respondents)
   - CIE staff/presenters (3 respondents)
   - Talking about cultural differences (3 respondents)
   - Culture Shock Information (1 respondent)
   - Interactive aspects of orientation (1 respondent)
   - Input from past participants (1 respondent)
   - The journals (1 respondent)
   - Culture Grams (1 respondent)

3. **What did you like least about the orientation?**
   - Nothing (11 respondents)
   - Length (8 respondents)
   - Time (2 respondents)
   - Lack of information specific to my country/region of study (2 respondents)
   - How late it was in the semester (1 respondent)
   - Papers (?)

4. **What additional activities or topics would you like covered?**
   - Nothing (19 respondents)
   - More culture-specific info (2 respondents)
   - More info on visas (1 respondent)
   - More about cultural differences (1 respondent)
   - Working abroad (1 respondent)
   - Info about going out and entertainment (1 respondent)
• Public transportation (1 respondent)
• More “cultural informants” (1 respondent)
• Bring in more international students (1 respondent)

5. Do you feel anything should be deleted from the program?
• No (25 respondents)
• Some of the information that is in the handbook (1 respondent)
• Culture section was longer than necessary (1 respondent)

6. Was this day and time convenient for you? If not, what day and time do you think would work best for future study abroad students.
• 25 students said Yes.
• Orientation should be earlier in the semester (2 respondents)
• Sunday would be better (1 respondent)

7. Any additional comments you may have regarding the orientation.
• 6 students said “thanks” and “great job!”
• 5 students thanked us for the journals.
• 2 students said they’re “crazy excited!!!”

Comparison with Spring 2010 and Fall 2009 Orientations
• Overall, evaluation of the orientation session were very positive.
• 100 percent attendance!
  o Maybe because it was so late in the semester
• Everyone stayed for dinner (except for the student that had to leave early)
• Most students seemed to take away the need to do research and prepare.
• Group dynamics were much better than when we were in rows
• I think the Friday evening orientation worked well for this group.
• Orientation was an hour longer this year (from 3:45 to dinner at 7:45 p.m.)
  o Gave us time to cover some additional topics in greater depth
  o Allowed us to bring in Simeon
  o Importance of breaks (2) and bringing in guest speakers to break up presentation
• Panelists were not as talkative
• Felt a little less interactive than past orientations
• Enjoyed that outgoing students also had good advice for others.

Suggestions for future orientations

☐ Include more examples and personal anecdotes
☐ Bring in more culture-specific examples
☐ Provide panelists with talking points
☐ Make it more engaging; come up with more clever ways to present some of the information (games? skits? videos?)
☐ Order more food (see below)
  ☐ Always remember to ask for foil containers!
☐ Have students return to country-specific tables while they eat
  ☐ Icebreaker for when the past participants and exchange students join?
☐ Additional topics to cover/mention: housing, transportation, working abroad, health insurance
Edit checklist in handbook: provide students with timeline
Keep the new icebreaker (students introduce themselves based on the map)
Room layout: over break, re-arrange classrooms to see how many students we can cram into one space
Different orientation structure for future orientations/Spring orientation? (Especially if future groups are equally as large)
  Two different PowerPoints sections
  Or, option of two different dates?
Earlier in semester
More group activities by country
Example of Adderall ("illegal amphetamine" in Ireland)
Debbie wants a PowerPoint slide for the introduction?
Keep the visualization!
Talking points for Simeon
  Include more information on academic systems outside of Europe?
Other suggestions?

Notes on food order

Fall 2010 (estimated 46 guests) – Almost all students stayed for dinner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordered</th>
<th>Should have ordered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 pints hummus with pita</td>
<td>4 pints (or some baba ganoush)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 orders falafal</td>
<td>More!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 orders lula kebab dinners with rice</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 orders chicken kebab with salad</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spring 2010 (estimated 60 guests) – Several students skipped out before dinner

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordered</th>
<th>Should have ordered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3 pints hummus with pita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 orders falafal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 orders lula kebab dinners with rice</td>
<td>Less!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 orders chicken kebab with salad</td>
<td>Less!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fall 2009 (estimated 35 guests)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ordered</th>
<th>Should have ordered</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2 pints hummus with pita</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 orders falafal</td>
<td>More!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 orders lula kebab dinners with rice</td>
<td>Less!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 orders chicken kebab with salad</td>
<td>Less!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 orders beef shawarma with salad</td>
<td>Less!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>