



Exploring Student Outcomes from an International Experience as part of the Music Therapy Curriculum

Dena Register

University of Kansas

**Deanna Hanson-
Abromeit**

University of Missouri –
Kansas City

The Study Abroad Experience

Music Therapy in the World Forum

- World Congress of Music Therapy
 - 11th World Congress in Australia 2005
 - Occur every 3 years
 - Next World Congress is Buenos Aires in 2008
- Music Therapy Voices
 - www.voices.no

Music Therapy in Australia

Course Objectives

- Articulation of a definition of music therapy and music as a therapeutic medium
- History and current status of the music therapy profession
- Basic concepts of service delivery
- Awareness of professional ethics in Australia

Music Therapy in Australia

Course Objectives

- Basic modes of research in Australia
- Observation of clinical experiences in Australia
- Interact with professionals to gain insight into interventions
- Compare and contrast cultural perspectives of music therapy

Music Therapy in Australia

AMTA Competencies

- Clinical Foundations
 - Exceptionality
 - Principles of Therapy
 - The Therapeutic Relationship
- Music Therapy
 - Foundations and Principles
 - Client Assessment
 - Treatment Planning
 - Therapy Implementation
 - Therapy Evaluation
 - Documentation
 - Professional Role/Ethics
 - Interdisciplinary Collaboration
 - Research Methods

Music Therapy in Australia

The Group

- Group members
 - 13 students; 3 males; 10 females
 - Age range 20 – 36 years; mean age of 26 years
 - 1 professor; 1 graduate teaching assistant
 - 2 spouses
- Universities
 - University of Kansas
 - University of Missouri-Kansas City
 - State University of New York at New Paltz
 - Michigan State University
- Level of education
 - 5 Undergraduates
 - 7 Masters Equivalency
 - 1 Masters of Music in Education (MT-BC)

Music Therapy in Australia Itinerary

- Cultural Experiences
- Professional Development
- Socialization and Group Cohesion

Cultural Experiences

- Cultural experiences
 - Group tours and sight seeing
 - Sydney Harbor Cruise
 - City of Brisbane Tour
 - Koala Sanctuary
 - Independent time for personal sight seeing experiences
 - Sydney: Aquarium, Darling Harbor, Sydney Opera House, The Rocks, Circular Quay
 - Brisbane: The Sunshine Coast, The Gold Coast, Steve Irwin Zoo, Ferry Rides, Kiacking,
 - Extended visit
 - Cairns, Great Barrier Reef, New Zealand

Professional Development Experiences Written Assignments

- Pre-trip assignments
 - Cultural and personal values
 - Australian Journal of Music Therapy article review
 - Description of a culture the student is part of
- Journal
 - Directed writing
 - Reflective writing

Professional Development Experiences Site Visits

- Large Group Site Visits
 - The Golden Stave Music Therapy Centre, University of Western Sydney
 - The University of Queensland, Brisbane
 - Wynnum Nursing Center
- Small Group Site Visits
 - Ipswich Special School
 - Redland Special School
 - Sing and Grow
 - Teenage parent program
 - Underserved parents and their children

Professional Development Experiences Guest Speakers

- Felicity Baker and Toni Day
 - The University of Queensland
- Vicky Abad
 - Sing and Grow Programs, Play Group Queensland
- Helen Shoemark
 - Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne
- Suzanne Hanser
 - President of the World Federation of Music Therapy

Professional Development Experiences

11th World Congress of Music Therapy

- Opening Session
- Minimum of 6 concurrent sessions
- World Federation Business Meetings
- Closing Session

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Pre-communication Themes

- Online forum 1

- Introductions please...

“I cannot believe that I am actually going on this trip...”

“I want to climb the Sydney Harbor bridge while in Sydney...Would anyone like to join me?”

“I am very excited to learn from people from other universities and programs.”

“Does anyone have some good tips for preventing/ managing jet lag?”

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Pre-communication Themes
 - Online forum 2: Something new to think about...
 - Write about a challenge or problem that you might encounter while traveling abroad. What are you nervous or fearful about? Post your own concern and then respond to the concerns of others by identifying with the individual offering your own experience with that issue or a possible solution.

Online forum: Something new to think about...

- “I am very concerned about getting around in the cities...”
 - “...at first I had the same worries...I realized that I was independent and capable of getting around on my own.”
- My fear at the moment is having enough money and having access to it when I want it.
 - “I am planning on taking my debit card and one other credit card. I also plan to take a little in cash and traveler’s checks.”

Online forum: Something new to think about...

- “My concern...is about the safety of the group as Americans in light of anti-American sentiments.”
- “I am concerned with people negatively reacting to me abroad once they find out I’m from the United States.”
 - “I am prepared to let others know that I love my country but I do not wish to discuss its politics or its leaders.”

Online forum: Something new to think about...

- “I believe that I am going to have to limit my accessories because do I really need to bring 4 different pairs of black shoes and my whole jewelry collection?!”
- “These worries are not that big of a deal to me, because it’s going to be the type of experience that can’t possibly be planned out perfectly.”

Online forum: Something new to think about...

- “...discovering a new place and a healthy mindset. I think if you allow your mind to dwell in negativity or sheer anxiety, it might auger badly for you. But a positive mind...who or what could beat that?! Besides, this is where group support can really benefit everyone. Encouragement and practical advice from the experienced group members can go a long way to making the trip positively enriching.

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Pre-communication Themes
 - On-line forum 3: Alike & Different
 - Based on what you know about music therapy, how do you anticipate that music therapy in Australia will be the same or differ from what we do here?

Online forum: Alike and Different

- I really don't anticipate Australian culture to be terribly different from our own, but I do think that the most notable differences might be manifested through attitudes about nationalism and global identity.”
- “...Australians tend to talk quieter than Americans in daily conversation.”
- “A friend told me that Veggie Mite is really gross.”

Online forum: Alike and Different

- “I noticed from my reading that many of the articles were qualitative in nature.”
- “I have found...work with the Nordoff-Robbins approach as interesting...I am excited to see this technique in action.”
- “I only found four universities that offer degrees in music therapy...two...that offer undergraduate degrees. The A(ustralian)MTA publishes the *Australian Journal of Music Therapy*.”

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Pre-communication Themes
 - Online forum 4: A culture of your own
 - Every group/situation/institution has a “culture” – elements, traditions, experiences that are unique to it. Choose a “culture” with which you are involved and describe it. What is your role in that culture? How would this “culture” be interpreted from an outsider’s perspective?

Online forum: A culture of your own

- “The Spiritual Food – Sushi” My friends like my food (I make famous fried rice!). However, when I say, ‘let’s go to a Japanese restaurant!’ all of my non-Asian friends say ‘Ah...I don’t like to eat Sushi. Isn’t that raw fish?’ I really feel sad to hear that”
- “My full-time summer job involves cleaning the dorms on the KU campus. Cleaning is a necessary and essential job as it keeps facilities in working order. I am glad to be a part of a custodial team that takes pride in their work.”

Online forum: A culture of your own

- “One culture that I feel very much a part of is the culture of being an only child.”
- “The question that people ask us the most is ‘Do you feel lonely?’ I will answer with a question, ‘Do you feel uncomfortable having siblings?’”
- In Michigan we drink Canadian beer and accept their coins in our pocket change...We have a hard time describing where cities are in other states because we are so used to showing on our hand.”

Socialization and Group Cohesion

- Online introductions
- Group travel
 - Air, bus, train, ferry

Socialization and Group Cohesion



- Group meetings
- Group dinners

Socialization and Group Cohesion



- Small group site visits
- Planned cultural events (group tours)

Socialization and Group Cohesion

- Free time
 - Shopping
 - Sight-seeing
 - Hotel lobby exchanges

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Insert circle diagram into presentation.
- Choose clips from journal entries and video to demonstrate each area

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Videotaped Interviews

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes: Course Evaluations

- Academic objectives
- Experience another culture
- To gain a different perspective of the U.S.
- Travel
- Career goals
- Personal reasons
- Other

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes: Course Evaluations

- Would you recommend this program to another student? 3.9
- “This program was extremely beneficial to me as a student and a clinician. The students and teacher are all very enthusiastic about our field and all basically had the same goals in mind prior to the trip. I believe everyone will walk away changed individuals.”
- “This program was amazing and a life changing experience.”

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes: Course Evaluations

- “I would recommend a course like this again. Meaning that the World Congress really finished or made the trip. Without the World Congress I’m not sure I would have enjoyed it the way I did. The Congress made the trip very special.”
- “Most types of travel will broaden one’s perspectives; this trip was very relevant in achieving that and especially that the opportunity was present to meet international people in a foreign country.”

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Follow-up questions
 - I know that I have changed as a result of my experience because...

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Follow-up questions
 - The one thing I know I have learned about myself is...
 - “I learned that I can be independent and travel on my own.”

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Follow-up questions
 - What new experiences did you have while in Australia that shocked or surprised you about the world?

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Follow up questions
 - How have you grown personally from your experiences?
 - How have you grown professionally from your experiences?

Music Therapy and Study Abroad Outcomes

- Follow up questions
 - What are some values, beliefs and behaviors you learned from Australia that you have maintained?
 - How are you finding support for these?

Discussion

- Student's Perspective
 - Levels of growth reflective of student's age, experience and attentiveness to the learning objectives
 - Emerging leadership qualities
 - Impact on future development

Discussion

- Educator Perspective
 - Increased understanding of student as a whole person
 - Modeling of:
 - relationship development
 - initiation
 - planning and execution of experiences
 - exposure to, acceptance of, multiple perspectives
 - complexity in the profession
 - critical thinking (e.g. problem solving)

Benefits to Faculty and Students

- Academic validation
- Intellectual growth
- Acculturation
- Academic administration
- Cognitive repositioning
- Gaining a global perspective
 - Substantive knowledge
 - Perceptual understanding
- Developing self and relationships
 - Personal growth
 - Interpersonal connections

The Future of Music Therapy and Study Abroad

- International internships
- Integration of international perspectives into current curriculum
- Future study abroad trips
 - United Kingdom and Ireland
- International collaborative course work