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Spring 2019, Opening Minds Through a Global Leadership Experience

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UNH Global

Opening Minds Through a Global Leadership Experience

Tuesday, March 26, 2019

An open mind = an open world emerged as the catchphrase for students who attended the first Global Leadership Experience (GLE). This Global Education Center program, led by two OISS advisors and program staff at the Essex Wood Meeting and Retreat Center, brought together 22 international and domestic UNH students for two days of leadership and intercultural skill-building. These students were selected from a group of students nominated by faculty or staff mentors for their leadership potential.



Participants and program staff of GLE workshop

Over the weekend, the undergraduate and graduate students participated in open and enthusiastic conversations and experiential learning on leadership styles and skills, team-building, and intercultural interactions. Through activities such as an intercultural simulation, students examined their cultural identity and how it shapes their narrative and actions. In doing so, they worked on recognizing the dimensions of cultural competencies; a healthy multifaceted sense of self-identity and a capacity to challenge one's assumptions, values, and beliefs to engage in respectful, reciprocal relationships across cultures. The experiential learning extended to students being partnered as

roommates with a student of a different culture. The pairs explored cultural assumptions and stereotypes. Mealtimes allowed for more authentic immersion experiences with the sharing of culturally distinctive foods.



Students carrying out a team-building activity

In preparation, the students had completed a strengths assessment prior to the retreat, designed to identify individual leadership characteristics, as well as watching Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's TedTalk:

([https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en)

[language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en)) *The Danger of a Single Story*

(https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_adichie_the_danger_of_a_single_story?language=en).

These activities served as the beginning of their leadership development and self-reflection work for the weekend.

An overarching premise of the workshop was that all of the students in attendance felt they had an equal voice in this multilingual group and that their voice could and would be heard. The goals of the program were to equip students with the knowledge and skills to enhance their academic engagement and intercultural connections, as well as increase the number of international students in leadership roles within the classroom and student organizations.

In the final task before returning to campus, the students developed SMART leadership goals for the next academic year. In Fall 2019, OISS and GLE peers will work on coaching and student collaboration to achieve these SMART goals. As opportunities arise, OISS will reach out to the students to use their skills in leadership roles, such as mentors to new students, OISS



orientation leaders, or organizing events for Some happy workshop participants International Education Week. There will be ongoing evaluation of the program, however, it is envisaged that GLE will become part of the comprehensive programming for student success that is offered by the Global Education Center.

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Calendar of Events (<http://calendar.unh.edu>)

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