

Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- JOURNALISM EDUCATION:
Journalism Reporting Field Trips and Internationalisation of the Curriculum
- Public Right To Know Conference, Sydney, 24.11.07 Lee Duffield



What is it about?

- QUT Journalism students able to do practical work overseas for course credit since 2000
- Voluntary, user-pays program
- Small groups



What is it about?

- Intercultural learning
- Work as correspondents
- Campus media outlets
- Course credit



Internationalisation

- Internationalisation of the Journalism curriculum
- In the context of a global movement - internationalisation in Higher Education



Internationalisation

- Internationalisation in Higher Education is a response to intensification of global economic activity, movement of people and communications. Universities have moved to rationalise use of resources by enabling students to transfer in from overseas to partake of their specialised offerings including the opportunity for many to learn in English. They have declared an intention to prepare students for professional practice anywhere in the world. They have placed a high value on inter-cultural experience in students' preparation for life in a global economic setting. They have realised the economic advantages to themselves if they can become major providers of international services to students and will compete for student enrolments. Many universities accordingly have adapted their enrolments procedures and marketing to facilitate recruitment of international students. University degree programs have begun moving decisively towards more standardised structures, e.g. the "Bologna" process in Europe. (Duffield 2006)

Internationalisation

- De Wit (2002) defines it as a PROCESS of “integrating an international / intercultural dimension into the teaching, research and service functions of academic institutions...”
- Knight (2003) concurs, emphasising the process is driven by socio-economic globalisation ... “globalisation is a process impacting on internationalisation” ... and a “non-ideological” process

Internationalisation

- “Ideological” concepts do persist, e.g. involving intercultural learning, valued for providing skills of grace and human empathy; in more strictly pedagogical terms, study abroad is seen as offering vivid experience to reinforce learned principles.

Internationalisation

- The scale of internationalised education as business: WTO makes education part of the General Agreement of Trade in Services, in the stalled Doha Round; one estimate, by OECD, valued trade in educational services at US\$30-billion by 1999.

Internationalisation

- Who pays?
- User pays made a custom in the face of expanding educational demand, supported by economic rationalist arguments.
- Constraints on user pays: Study remains economical through continuing government support for institutions, and through scholarships; concern for equity and value-for-money; need to cultivate excellent students.

Responses – with caution

- Arguments to cultivate “deeper learning” in international.
- Industry valuing literacy, numeracy, skills, “also puts a premium on ... citizenship, sympathy, justice and humanity ...” (Aspin, 1993)
- Kelleher (1995) : “Merging critical thinking with international content ... does not require a completely new curriculum”



Responses

- RESPONSES OF GOVERNMENTS AND UNIVERSITIES have been to change core structures and functions of courses... 20% International Students in Australian courses becomes common; the AVCC following government policy declared (2006) internationalisation "crucial"; set a target of 20% of Australian students to be doing part of their course overseas, by 2020; many to be aided by new loans for study abroad.

Responses – universities' process of change

- Typical starts, to build on what exists: exchange programs, field experience abroad, increased language teaching.
- Developments into complex projects and partnership agreements, formation of large university consortia – co-operative research, and teaching.

Responses – new structures, new services

- Institutional changes, like curriculum mergers with partner universities, cultivation of off-shore programs
- Study Abroad, as a “product” marketed by universities, to accommodate big numbers wanting credit for their own courses through affordable, so short-term, well-targeted experience at university in another country.

Responses – Study Abroad

- “These study packages are meant to be simple and universal. Importantly students will study for credit which can be substituted for core parts of the degree at their own university. The possible extension to two semesters ... means the exercise can be central not peripatetic. Places are not limited. It is a practical system removing much administration.” LD-2006



Responses – Study Abroad

- “The Study Abroad program at one particular university ... was short-term, up to two semesters; had flexible choice of subjects; was relatively free of such constraints as prerequisite rules (subject to Faculties’ tolerance); the international office gave special assistance, e.g. in providing information in response to home universities’ requirements; places were unlimited, and the program was full fee-paying.” (See QUT Study Abroad)

Journalism Reporting Field Trips – QUT context

- “The Journalism Reporting Field Trips program is set in the context of a university typical for many institutions, declaring its graduates should be able to practice their professions anywhere in the world and be able to do that with due cultural awareness. The university’s main priorities and strategies are presented as a mix of achieving business through recruitment of international students and promotion of overseas research connections; together with systematically providing changes in the experience available to students. Objectives have been listed as continuing to foster internationally relevant attributes among graduates; developing market strategies for recruiting students from specified countries; undertaking more research projects with overseas partners, and boosting allied research and service activities to selected countries; establishing core international links through alumni and staff activities, as well as study abroad and other exchange programs.” (*Inside QUT*, #90, 18.5.99).

Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- Teaching principles through practice
- Field trips for third-year on, incl. grads
- It involves forced learning, bringing students' attention to bear on the story of the day; the need to be well backgrounded; keeping deadlines; considering cultural nuances when conducting interviews, and the need to function well when moving in unfamiliar surrounds ... Replicates the work of most heavily-taxed operators, correspondents.

Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- Pre-arranged briefings, interviews, viz Emily Lau HK - Geoff Meade - EC Brussels
- Costs \$1400 10 days
Jakarta; \$5000 20 days
EU; university \$250 per student



Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- The 52 from all courses, B. Jour., Mass Comm., Hons., double degrees, PG
- Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore, EU, HK and China, PNG



Outline of the Journalism Reporting Field Trips:

Year	Number of student expressions of interest in participating	Number of participants	Itinerary	Number of days away	If accompanied by staff	Notes
2000	8	5	Indonesia (Jakarta)	10		
2001	16	8	Singapore and Malaysia (Penang, Kuala Lumpur)	14		
2003	22	10	European Union (Frankfurt, Strasboiurg, Cologne, Maastricht, Brussels, Paris)	20	Yes	
2004	20	13	Hong Kong and China (Beijing)	14		
2004	8	5	Papua New Guinea (Port Moresby, Madang)	10		
2004	4	3	PNG (PM, Madang)	10	Yes	
2005	6	4	EU (Rome, Geneva, Bonn, Brussels, paris)	20		
2007	7	4	EU (Frankfurt, Bonn, Brussels, Paris)	20	Yes	
	91	52				

Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- Reports on current developments in news, news commentary, personalities, features
- Online outlets, QUT news on radio, print outlets



Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- REVIEW OF THE PROGRAM
- Initial focus group consultations of International and Australian students, strongly supportive of being able to do practical work outside Australia.
- Feed-back reports from field trips and questionnaire responses maintained student support for the concept

Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- Questionnaire 2003 example: There was general accord that focus on tasks was intensified when on the road; that self-sufficiency was called for, the importance of backgrounding on issues or cultural aspects well demonstrated. The need for constant attention to logistics had also been a wake-up call. As for grasping principles of communication underlying practical work, the students reported a heightened sense of striving to communicate with audiences in Australia who would lack full backgrounding. The students rated the value of the program to their individual scholarship and preparation for journalism at 6 or 7 of a seven-point scale.

Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- LESSONS AND OBSERVATIONS.
- Confirms appropriate for advanced level students
- Suits high-achievers especially for building CVs, though not exclusively
- Language issues a key interest; surviving with English but encountering its limits; 21 LOE speakers, LOE useful for doing journalism and for the group

Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- LESSONS AND OBSERVATIONS
- Pacing the program; three-day minimum stops, and rest days
- Protocols for liaising with home desk
- Best communication tools, e.g. MP3s
- The program can fit within study abroad, students basing themselves to do travel based units at host universities



Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- LESSONS AND OBSERVATIONS
- Risk assessment and avoidance
- Employment of locally-based mentors, viz university colleagues in Hong Kong, correspondents at Brussels, DWE Radio staff in Germany
- Outcomes rated well as GPA and later professional appointments

Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- CONCLUSIONS
- The Journalism Reporting Field trips program is an example of experimental and extemporised work, “craft” activity based in one university department, to find benefit for students in the “opening” of the world to more globalised professional practice, and preparatory learning for it. It does fit into the broad movement of institutional change, as it has proved a highly useful base for the development of knowledge of the learning and teaching process in new international settings. Through such projects it is possible to get a better understanding of how overseas learning and teaching can be best managed especially at Faculty level. It has been possible to see what can be achieved in terms of a cost-effective deployment of university resources especially staff time and direct expenses budgets for travel.

Journalism Reporting Field Trips

- Knowledge has been accumulated about successful implementation of programs, e.g. to determine a sustainable intensity of experience for students, workloads, the control of costs to students, and provision for their security and welfare. The program is well geared to integrate into "main frame", university wide internationalisation, expressly Study Abroad, it is flexible and concentrates on short durations.

