Reflection as a Learning Tool in a Nature-Based Study Abroad Course

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The Program

Personal
The Program

Academic
The Program

Service
Conceptualizing Experiential Learning

Components
- Relevant Experience
- Critical Reflection
- Academic Material

Learning Goal Categories
- Academic Enhancement
- Personal Growth
- Civic Learning

Ash & Clayton (2009)
What is Critical Reflection?

Reflection is...”active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support if, and the further conclusions to which it tends.”

Dewey, *How We Think* (1910)

“We had the experience, but missed the meaning.”

T.S Eliot *Four Quartets* (1943)

Ash & Clayton (2009)
... Yet behind these obvious and immediate hopes and fears there lies a deeper meaning, known only to the mountain itself. Only the mountain has lived long enough to listen objectively to the howl of a wolf. *Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac, “Thinking Like a Mountain”*
Moving to Higher Level Learning

Learning Objectives per Bloom’s Taxonomy within each category of learning (AE, CL, PG)

- Identify
- Describe
- Analyze
- Apply
- Synthesize
- Evaluate

Ash & Clayton (2009)
Describe

Examine

Articulate Learning

**Personal growth:** Who you are, who you want to become, and how you might get there

**Civic learning:** How individuals and groups work together to produce systemic change in their various communities

**Academic enhancement:** Deeper understanding of your course content

Ash & Clayton (2009)
Describe

Examine

Thinking like a Mountain

Articulate Learning

Ash & Clayton (2009)
Integration of Critical Reflection

Year 1: 2 faculty-led reflection discussions

Year 2: 3 faculty-led reflection discussions
Reflective essay

Year 3: 3 faculty-led reflection discussions
3 Reflective essays
Incorporation: Thinking Like a Mountain
Prompts for Thinking like a Mountain

Personal: How might you live differently when you return home, if you began thinking like a mountain in regards to your everyday habits of life?

Academic: Consider the various GBRMP user groups. In what ways do (and could) each group think like a mountain?

Civic: Consider ways to think like a mountain in your major or desired profession.
In the words of our students...
In the words of our students...

I now think it is important to think like a mountain and look at the big picture and realize that every individual can really make a difference when it comes to being environmentally aware.
In the words of our students...

We have learned that recycling is important, buying energy-saving products and recyclable products is important, our impact on the environment and how to “Think like a mountain.”
The learning matters because as humans, we need to be conscience of how we are influencing nature. At our current rates the health of our environment is going to rapidly decline and future generations won’t even know what the Daintree even is.
Questions, Comments, Ideas?

Thank you for joining us!