

Transformative Design Pedagogy: A Place-based and Studio-based Exploration of Culture

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The discipline of interior design education is committed to providing diverse learning opportunities for examining the topic of culture while implementing design practices that respond to the “needs of *all* humans” (Hadjiyanni, 2013, p. v). In the Council for Interior Design Accreditation’s Future Vision results (Council for Interior Design Accreditation, 2014), it was stated that “tomorrow’s designer will need to be better equipped to become a “global citizen,” one who is socially responsible and respects cultural norms outside of their own experience” (p. 6). The topic of culture has consistently played an integral role in design education, with varied methods of instruction including education abroad experiences, culture-based design applications, and even virtual immersion opportunities (Asojo, 2001, 2015; Kucko & Prestwood, 1999). However, there has been little analysis of the transformation a student might undergo in attaining cultural competency and what learning environments best contribute to this.

The number of people living in a country in which they were not born has increased 51 percent worldwide since 1990 (Conner, Cohn, & Barrera, 2013), implying that design educators will need to navigate the complex subject of culture from an increasingly diversified perspective. This article identifies transformative learning as an important strategy for achieving cultural competency as students can become more self-aware, thus positioning them to better empathize and consider the diverse needs of various populations. With the understanding that cultural competency is achieved through a transformation of perspective, it is important to question what pedagogical methods best contribute to personal transformations, and the varied learning environments within which this can occur. Nemec (2012) states “transformative learning refers to a dramatic change, where the learner achieves a shift in perspective. This shift results from a critical examination of one’s own assumptions, values, and beliefs, and of the foundations and expectations of the system in which one operates” (p. 478).

With these concepts in mind, this article will demonstrate the use of a transformative learning model (Mezirow, 1978, 1990, 2000) and discuss its effectiveness in the achievement of cultural competency among design students in two varied learning environments. The execution of this concept was concurrently implemented in two interior design courses at the University of Kentucky. One scenario was a place-based education abroad experience held in Southeast Asia that tasked students with developing cross-cultural comparisons through various methods of observation and documentation, while the other was a studio-based cultural design project completed at the University of Kentucky’s College of Design. Both courses asked students to critically analyze cultural assumptions and engage in accompanying discourse regarding each pedagogical scenario. Student-learning outcomes from each course revealed a transformation of cultural perspective. However, it was found that several pedagogical methodologies were deemed more appropriate to the examination of culture when considering the various learning environments of the courses.

Review of Literature

Defining Cultural Competency

Cultural competency is defined as “the ability of an individual to understand and respect values, attitudes, beliefs, and mores that differ across cultures, and to consider and respond appropriately to these differences” (Gold & Miner, 2002, p. 5). It can be obtained by accepting difference with respect, paying careful attention to the dynamics of difference, and can ultimately lead to one’s transformation of perspective on others (Cross, Bazron, Dennis, & Isaacs, 1989). Cultural competency can also be described as the integration and transformation of knowledge about

individuals and groups of people (Davis, 1997). For designers, this requires not only a consideration of these attributes, but also an understanding of appropriate design responses. Taylor (1994) states that the attainment of cultural competency must first examine how an individual understands the mental, physical, and behavioral aspects of culture and identifies a list of attributes for achieving

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cultural competency that include the development of empathy for others, enhanced listening skills, and a tolerance for ambiguity. The article goes on to support the use of cultural transformation as a core component to the attainment of cultural competency.

Characteristics of Transformative Learning

It is important to emphasize the central role experience plays in transformative learning. According to Mezirow (1990), learning is understood as “the process of making a new or revised interpretation of the meaning of an experience, which guides subsequent understanding, appreciation, and action” (p. 1). He states that to give an experience meaning, one must make sense of that experience through interpretation. Ultimately, learning arrives from this process.

The model of a transformative learning experience follows a variation of 10 phases that include “a disorienting dilemma; self-examination with feelings of fear, anger, guilt, or shame; a critical assessment of assumptions; recognition that one’s discontent and the process of transformation are shared; exploration of options for new roles, relatives, and actions; planning a course of action; acquiring knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plan; provisional trying of

new roles; building competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and a reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective” (J. Mezirow, 2000, p. 22). These identified stages of perspective transformation align with, and have informed a number of other conceptual frameworks, including Taylor’s (1994) learning model for intercultural competency (See Figure 1).

The practice of imaginative problem solving and creativity should also be discussed when examining transformative learning within the context of design. Mezirow (2000) states that “imagination is central to understanding the unknown; it is the way we examine alternative interpretations of our experience by ‘trying on’ another’s point of view. The more reflective and open we are to the perspectives of others, the richer our imagination of alternative contexts for understanding will be” (Mezirow, 2000, p.20). This process takes practice as learners utilize their imagination and redefine problems based on newly developed perspectives. Likely, the imaginative problem solving process is a core component to design curriculum, but should be further understood through the lens of cultural design pedagogy.

Figure 1
A learning model for becoming interculturally competent. (Taylor, 1994, p. 398).

Dimensions	INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCY	PERSPECTIVE TRANSFORMATION
Precondition	Culture Shock	1. A disorienting dilemma
Process	Lower to higher levels of transformation: Alienation, Denial Testing new habits and assumptions Duality and interdependence Integration (Adler, 1975; Bennett, 1986; Mansell, 1981; Yoshikawa, 1987)	2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame 3. A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions 4. Recognition that one’s discontent and process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change 5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions 6. Planning of a course of action 7. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one’s plan 8. Provisional trying of new roles
Outcome	As the ‘old’ person breaks up, the intercultural knowledge, attitudes, and behavioral capacities construct a ‘new person’ at a higher level of integration	9. Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships and 10. A reintegration into one’s life on the basis of conditions dictated by one’s new perspective

Learning Environments for Cultural Design Pedagogy

When assessing the achievement of a design student's understanding of culture, it is important to identify what standards relative to culture and design pedagogy exist and to identify if the physical learning environment can aid in an enhanced understanding of culture. Several studies have demonstrated that learning space can either hinder or support creative thinking (Jankowska & Atlay, 2008). Within the field of interior design, the learning studio is the predominant learning environment and is unique when compared to the conventional classroom. Wanless (2016) defines a learning studio as "a space allowing faculty to be guided in their transition from passive teaching to engaged teaching, as well as, provide a space where students can develop their collaborative skills" (p. 61). Additional attributes of the studio environment include a setting where students practice exploratory learning with their peers, and thus develop close interpersonal relationships (Hill, 2007).

Certainly, a common approach for the instruction of culture within the field of design is education abroad experiences. It is well understood that when a person travels to another country or immerses oneself in a new culture, they often experience a transformation (Taylor, 1994). Such experiences require that the student, look at their own understanding of life from a different point of view. Mezirow (2000) supports this stating that "when an individual is open to others' perspectives with reflection and open-minded, the individual will understand alternative contexts of others." As the field of design continues to yield some of the highest percentages of students who chose to study abroad, an increasing number of approaches for facilitating these experiences are coming forth. Knight (2004) identifies a dual framework for international experiences which pairs a faculty-lead grassroots approach, wherein the curriculum and itinerary are developed within the home academic unit, with administrative policy and support occurring on local and national levels. Another common model is the consortium model, which provides formal agreements between institutions to allow students educational opportunities from more than one institution, with partners situated in a number of international locations (Oblinger, 1999).

The literature outlined here not only supports the experiential approach that has long been a part of design pedagogy, but also suggests much is changing in the way of design education relative to culture. Hadjiyanni (2013) states that faculty in interior design programs should be challenged "to move beyond teaching about 'other cultures' and toward facilitating student discoveries of what culture means within specific contexts and how such meanings come to be defined" (p. v). She emphasizes that cultural

competency can be achieved by studying not only the built environment, but also cultural practices such as eating, socializing, playing, and praying. The development of curriculum that utilizes design application or immersion to achieve cultural competency has clear benefits. However, with the boundaries of the classroom continuing to blur, design educators must consider various contexts and formats within both immersive or conventional classroom settings for instruction. What can be determined is that with either method, a student's ability to reflect and develop awareness of one's own self has great implications for their ability to understand new cultures. Additionally, design education relative to culture should continue to offer learning opportunities that create more personal connections and experiences for the diverse population we are designing for.

A Transformative Design Learning Model

For this article's comparative analysis, Taylor's (1994) learning model illustrated in the review of literature was implemented to examine the use of a transformative learning experience and its impact on achieving cultural competency in both the place-based education abroad course and the studio-based cultural design project. Through each experience it was found that several pedagogical methodologies were deemed more appropriate to the examination of culture when considering the various contexts of the courses. Thus, the transformative learning model was adapted to consider cultural context occurring in each scenario (See Figure 2).

In alignment with the phases of perspective transformation, this model identifies key stages experienced by students over the progression of each course. In both scenarios, personal reflection and reflective discourse were identified as substantially important components towards the attainment of a cultural transformation and were repeated consistently throughout each course. Each instructor began by asking students to critically analyze cultural assumptions and to engage in an accompanying discourse regarding the varied perspectives to achieve self-awareness. As illustrated, the pathway towards a personal perspective change relative to cultural competency differed in the place-based versus studio-based scenarios and can be further understood through the discussion that follows.

Implementations in Design Pedagogy

Place-based Cultural Immersion

Students that participated in the immersive aspect of this study utilized the practice of cross-cultural observation and documentation to examine the social, cultural, historical,

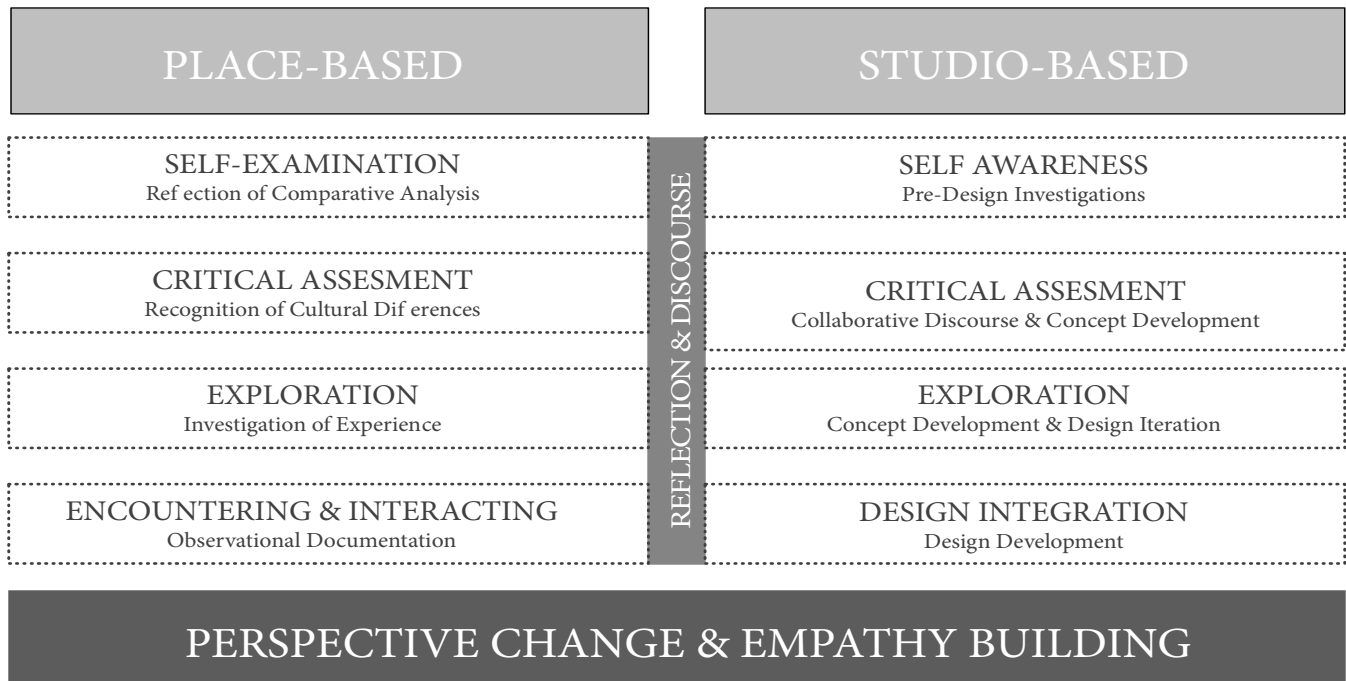
and political contexts of various regions of Thailand and Cambodia. The 19-day program was strongly grounded in immersion and thus architectural, cultural, and professional sites served as meeting locations. Instructor-led observations were held on site to demonstrate various observational methods and mediums for documenting observations. Students completed a variety of exercises independently, in teams of three, and as a class. Observational periods were followed by discussion where students reflected on pre-observational perceptions and post-observational inferences. Overall, the course allowed students to experience perspective transformation through steps of *self-examination, critical assessment, exploration, encountering, and interaction* within a new environment.

The course had three primary phases. The first consisted of a pre-departure class meeting to brief students on the culture, history, and environmental landscapes of the countries to be visited. The assignment that accompanied this meeting required students to develop a comparative table of documented views of Americans and researched views of the Thai culture based on religion, ethnicity, gender, class, environment, age, formality, and family. The goal of these exercises was for students to conduct a *self-*

examination and critical assessment that would, in turn, build empathy for the people of the culture they would soon be visiting, while also gaining a greater understanding of their own cultural practices. Each exercise required students to reflect on how this process helped to reveal what they might encounter while abroad and also to identify what, if anything, was surprising from their comparison.

The second and major phase of the course was the immersive period in which observational exercises were conducted abroad. Upon arrival, students first conducted an *exploration* of their surroundings through an exercise of mental mapping. The assignment asked students to draw an annotated plan of their new residence, from memory, and identify what they perceived to be the most important elements of the space. The reflective response was to address what spaces were most detailed in their memory and why, in addition to how this process aided in better understanding their newly immersed surroundings. In response to this exercise, one student stated, "In the USA I would normally draw a map based on street names and area names, but being unfamiliar with the area, I had to rely on landmarks." Another student noted "I think that it is the cultural aspects that are so different than ours that are the

Figure 2
A Transformative Design Learning Model



ones I remember most. The vagueness of my memory lies within the common areas or areas that resemble life back in the US.”

Additional observations required students to *encounter and interact* with their surroundings by completing activity analyses, behavioral mapping, and personal narratives to more systematically investigate each observational site. Through activity analyses, students identified a specific ritual of their choice, for instance the celebration of the New Year holiday, and documented distinct emotions, actions, or objects that served to shape the experience. The exercise helped students to more intimately understand the experience within the new context. The outcomes were documented through a series of annotated drawings and reflections. One student reflection noted that, “This entire experience has really made me gain a true respect for other cultures. I find it very interesting that we can all celebrate the same holiday differently. For the Thai culture, this holiday was heavily tied to religion and worship.” The exercise of behavioral mapping was completed over the course of one hour, and students were asked to put themselves in the shoes of three different user groups. Each student began by drawing and noting parameters and key landmarks of the observational area and then tracked the positions, movements, and interactions of various people within the defined space. The drawings were analyzed as a team to compare and discuss observed cultural practices and the implications of these on students’ own actions and interactions while abroad. One reflection of this assignment noted that, “Doing this assignment helped me better understand how people in the very same environment can act so differently based on who they are.”

The third and final phase of the place-based experience employed methods of reflective reporting. This began with the development of a diagrammatic and annotated timeline that was to creatively express the students’ time abroad. This exercise further emphasized conscious reflection as an important aspect of documentation, ensuring students illustrated not only what was observed and experienced, but also what emotions were experienced when doing so. The timeline served as an expressive way of documenting commonalities or consistencies of feelings, responses, or practices relative to a diverse range of places. The responses to this overarching reflective exercise most clearly demonstrated student *perspective changes* and newly gained *empathy* for the culture and place-based experience. Upon return, outcomes from the experience abroad were shared through a video with other design students.

Studio-based Cultural Design Project

By contrast, students that participated in the remote studio-based cultural design project utilized research and design application as a means to gain cultural sensitivity.

The goals of this first-year interior design studio project were to investigate cultural heritage through the examination of design precedents and tasked students with the development of a cultural-based design concept. Based on this developed concept, students were to design a 3-dimensional decorative arts piece that would reflect the core value of an assigned country, which included Korea, India, Scotland, Poland, and Jamaica. The participating students were asked to move through multiple design iterations and engage in critical assessment of their designs as well as reflective discourse. The overall project allowed students to experience perspective transformation through steps of *self-awareness, critical assessment, exploration, and integration* through the design process.

First, pairs of students collaboratively conducted pre-design investigations by examining the geographical location, climate, housing, music, dress, and traditional culinary preferences of each assigned culture. Outcomes from this analysis were presented in a visual research poster and presented to their peers through small group discussion and reviews. This process promoted students’ *self-awareness* of their own culture and living styles and allowed them to recognize respective differences or similarities between each culture. Ultimately, becoming aware of such differences or similarities triggered students’ perspective changes as they began to understand and accept new values through this user-centered approach.

This step informed *critical assessments* of their pre-design research findings and ultimately allowed each student to identify key design elements and principles associated with each unique location. Based on the assessments, groups of students were to develop a design concept, including a descriptive word and visual interpretation of design elements that represented the core value of the cultures both abstractly and symbolically. The students also integrated the symbolism of color and materials in creating visual representation of the assigned culture. These exercises allowed the students to create a design concept that more appropriately related to their examined culture and could reformulate assumptions based on culture.

In the schematic design phase, students generated *explorations* for optimal combinations of key design elements and principles and developed several iterations of hand sketches and three-dimensional sketch models for the decorative arts piece. Allowing time for several design iterations challenged each group to transform their design concepts and ultimately arrive at a more culturally sensitive design solution. The students *integrated* the design ideas from the transformed concepts and completed the final deliverables including the three-dimensional arts piece, a pre-design research board, design process boards, and individual reflection papers regarding cultural awareness

and teamwork dynamics. Oral presentations accompanied the deliverables and tasked students with discussing their take-aways relative to culture and design application.

Outcomes

This analysis employed several methods to determine if the students enrolled in both the place-based and studio-based scenarios achieved a transformation relative to cultural perspective and further identified if the learning spaces associated with these experiences contributed in any way. Content analysis was utilized to systematically document the impact of the reflective assignments. Mezirow's (1995) framework for transforming individual meaning schemes and meaning perspectives was utilized to analyze student reflection exercises. The reflections were evaluated by four levels of transformation including the depth of the response in reporting what happened, considering actions relative to related factors, considering the impact of actions within a broader context, and an added category that documented the students' ability to consider the impact of actions on design applications (Table 1). The stage within which the cultural reflection was mentioned was also indicated to better understand what, if any, exercises contributed to a perspective change.

In comparing the outcomes of the content analysis, it was determined that the majority of students reflected on their experiences as related factors or as a process reflection. This means that they not only reported what they were seeing, but could successfully link actions that explained why things were occurring or experienced. The outcomes suggest that the studio-based scenario had a greater impact on the students' ability to consider cultural implications for conceptual design development and ideation, while the place-based immersive experience more strongly impacted student's understanding of global and cultural context, although not necessarily linked to design.

To further understand the impact of courses on cultural competency, students participated in a follow-up survey one year after the completion of each course. Two surveys were developed for both courses, each utilizing a 5-point Likert scale (1-strongly disagree; 5-strongly agree; 3-neutral value) for responses. The purpose of the surveys was to find out in what ways the students' initial understanding of culture transformed and what pedagogical methods best contributed to this. Each survey asked parallel questions pertaining to the overall impact of the courses on learning, the impact of the courses on cultural awareness, and the impact of the courses on the study of interior design. Of the place-based survey respondents (N=11), the majority (N=5; 45%) were third-year students and four respondents (36%) had previous international experience. A total of 17 out of 28 first-year studio-based students completed the survey and

ten respondents (59%) had previous international experience.

The place-based survey outcomes reported a mean of 4.55 out of 5 when asked if the study abroad experience helped them to better understand themselves as well as people of other ethnic backgrounds. Ninety-one percent (N=10) of the students agreed that the program allowed them to acquire an understanding of cultural practices and reported an average point of 4.55. Of importance to this study was the fact that 91% of the students reported an average point of 4.45 when asked if they viewed critical reflection and collaborative discourse as key aspects of learning. The same mean was reported when asked if the experience abroad allowed them to acquire an understanding of globalization and gain an appreciation of their own culture. When asked if the experience abroad has stimulated creativity, a mean score of 4.56 was reported. Seventy-eight percent reported a mean of 4.75 when asked if they believed their experience abroad allowed them to think holistically about the people they design for and has helped to consider cultural practices different from their own.

The course outcomes overwhelmingly reveal that those students participating in the place-based course perceived to have experienced a cultural perspective change. This was validated by open-ended comments from the students. One student stated: "Going into the program, I had never traveled abroad, so I was excited, yet nervous for the adventure. My experience in another culture made me appreciate other ways of life and the various aspects of that culture. Seeing and actively participating in cultural practices opened my eyes to the world around me. I have a greater respect for other people and other cultures from this program." When examining the impact of the experience on design application, it can be concluded that the experience largely impacted the students' ability to think both creatively and holistically. According to another student, "As a designer, I value other cultures for inspiration. Since returning from abroad, I have used my experiences as a reflection to gather ideas. There is so much inspiration in other cultures, and experiencing these first hand is so important." Another said, "This program improved my ability to understand the complexity of the people and activities I am designing for."

The studio-based survey outcomes reported a mean of 4.47 out of 5 when asked if the cultural design project helped them to better understand themselves as well as people of other ethnic backgrounds. Ninety-four percent of respondents (N=16) agreed that the project allowed them to acquire an understanding of cultural practices and reported an average point of 4.47. Also relevant to this analysis was the fact that 13 out of 17 (76%) students strongly agreed that critical reflection and collaborative discourse are key aspects

of learning. When asked if the cultural design project stimulated their creativity as a designer, all respondents agreed or strongly agreed with a mean score of 4.44. Ninety-four percent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project allowed them to consider the practice of design from a global perspective with a mean point of 4.44. Overall, the scores of the studio-based survey suggest that the cultural design project helped the students further develop their critical thinking skills and understanding of other cultures.

These outcomes were validated by responses to open-ended feedback regarding the studio-based learning experience and revealed that those students who completed the cultural design project expressed that they experienced a transformation of perspective. All respondents offered testimonial comments on their perspective transformations. One student described their take-aways on the importance of a human-centered design approach by saying, "The project taught me the importance of understanding a client's culture and whom you're designing for to create an environment that suits them best". Another student revealed a new understanding of culture stating, "I learned pre-conceived ideas were not always telling of what a society or culture was actually about" while another indicated their curiosity for further examining this topic by saying, "I know a lot more about Irish culture after this project. I am also more aware of how different things can be in other cultures and I want to learn more about different cultures". Lastly, it was revealed that "The research of the project helped me appreciate their culture while still gaining the fundamentals of the design process".

Conclusion

The comparison of the place-based and studio-based scenarios certainly suggests that transformative learning has significant implications for the practice of cultural design pedagogy and that learning spaces can impact this. The exercises in both the place-based and studio-based experiences offered opportunities for the students to gain a greater understanding of themselves by engaging in both independent reflections and collaborative discourse. For those students studying abroad, documentation strongly correlated to the attainment of cultural competence and was achieved through inter-cultural experiences including observations, personal reflection, and comparative analyses. By contrast, those students in the design studio expanded their cultural knowledge through remote research as a means of cultural investigation, and application of this through the design process, implementing collaborative thinking and imaginative problem solving. This reveals that the act of perspective transformation cannot solely occur from reflection and discourse, but rather in conjunction with

exercises of observation or application, implying that students should be encouraged to navigate new environments, ask questions, and experiment with what it means to design for all humans.

It is also critical to discuss the wide variations in perspective transformation and what factors might contribute to a greater transformation. For this comparison, design students in the studio-based scenario were first-year students and thus may have been simultaneously moving through a transformation in their understanding of culture and design in general. Educators will need to aid students through this process, asking them to critically reflect, validate, and act on their existing beliefs and newfound understanding of culture.

In our increasingly global world, we must challenge our students to better understand themselves and their position within our diverse network. A strong relationship clearly exists between the learning environment and the level of attainment of cultural competency. Ultimately, the comparison revealed that cultural and environmental contexts should be considered to examine the attainment of cultural competency, and supported the adaptation of the transformative learning model.

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Appendix

Table 1: Content Analysis of Student Reflections

		Content Reflection	Process Reflection	Premise Reflection	Design Impact
		Descriptive reporting of what was seen	Considering actions' origins and related factors of what was experienced	Considering the impact of actions within a broader context	Considering the impact of actions on design applications
Place-based	Student 1	I learned that the temple was very intentionally designed to reflect various elements of ocean, earth, mountains. The serenity of the water contrasted nicely with the vibrant energy of the temple. The element of earth, or stone, gave the temple a real sense of importance, permanence and displayed the dedication, effort the people who crafted it.	A polite, peaceful culture the Thai's have as opposed to our more casual culture. This tied in very directly to our focus on balance and how elements are manipulated to achieve balance....stone symbolizes permanence of the temple. Angkor Wat is obviously a source of national pride for Cambodians and it was interesting to catch a glimpse of that pride effort in action. It was interesting to see how these elements were successfully used to create a very unique and striking experience.	The entire experience has really made me gain true respect for other cultures. It is very interesting that we can all celebrate the same holiday differently. From going abroad, I have realized a lot more about American life than I thought.	
	Student 2	The scale of Angkor Wat is huge, and it's hard to believe people of that time were able to construct a structure of its complexity. The intricate details of Thai temples, scale and sense of space were captured through the visits. The amount of craftsmanship and detail within the design is impressive. It is amazing that the White Temple is one of nine temples to be built in the complex, and so far it is the only one finished after 17 years of construction. I noticed younger people formed areas around other younger people and the same for families. It's interesting to notice patterns within different groups of different people.	There were many categories of people to observe and analyze, and when doing so you see many similarities and differences between age, race, ethnicity, etc. Comparing the two groups' observations we found patterns in behaviors one was the location of where our groups were at. I noticed younger people formed areas around other younger people, & the same for families. It's interesting to notice patterns within different groups of different people.	This research opened my eyes to the Thai culture and gave me a better understanding of the people. It's truly inspiring to see the design process and viewing it is another field because it still related to interior design. After visiting Angkor Wat, my appreciation for its architectural design has increased tremendously.	Experiencing the village has inspired me to want to start an organization to help and provide the village people with better living conditions even if it were just shoes for the children. Hopefully I will get the opportunity to visit in the future.
	Student 3	The way street signs/traffic lights are used here significantly surprised me. I also found it very intriguing to hike/ride through the country side because I was able to compare and contrast rural Kentucky to rural Chiang Mai. It is impressive to be here and see the commitment the people have to their religion. I did not realize to the full extent how comfortable Americans live. I was very overwhelmed by the crowds of people. Funerary temple in honor of king SuryaVarman II is oriented to the west to symbolize the seating sun and death. Water symbolizes an outer ocean just beyond the mountain range-imperative part of the universe philosophy.	Because we were able to identify the different zones of the elements and to systematically understand how people used the space and what they valued. For example it was evident that the king valued the strength of symmetry and representing the universe within his residence. The layout of the temple was also interacting, as I felt a sense of freedom to wonder about & the various passage ways.	This observation reinforced in me that all cultures are truly different & unique. Even though Thai & Americans are celebrating the same thing, we do it in many different ways.	Recognizing the feng shui elements here opened my eyes to the space planning of this environment.
Studio-based	Student 1	Throughout our research, we discovered that the Polish people are quite spiritual, and their traditions play a large part in their everyday lives. Poland has endured many hardships, including war, the Holocaust, Communism, economic difficulty, and gaining its independence. Poland's own nationalism was strengthened on the country's long history of deprivation and want for a better quality of life. The Polish people are a strong and determined group, and with the help of the Industrial Revolution and economic stability, they were able to achieve this greater quality of life.	Our research led us to decide on the concept word "Rebirth". Poland had to rebuild after the wars, gain its independence, modernize, and prove itself in a competitive Europe. We wanted to also represent Poland's depth of culture, especially with their optimism and spirituality, and how it ties into modern life today.	Analyzing a culture helped us learn to prioritize the most important things and portray them effectively.	We created our own lanterns out of toilet paper rolls and colorful tissue paper with Polish color schemes. We then represented the hardships Poland endured through the jagged, gradient red lines, which also portray Poland's colors. The other spire is painted a gradient metal finish to represent Poland's growth as an industrial and modern nation. The two spires weave together to show how these two aspects of Poland work together to help Poland branch out and grow further.
	Student 2	Scotland and its people as a whole are deeply devoted to their practiced traditions and rooted in their history. I learned that Scotland is an extremely proud country that continues to embrace their traditions, but also makes it known that they welcome other cultures as well as new traditions. Scotland is known for its beautiful landscape, especially that of the Highlands. Icons include the bagpipe, the tartan, the kilt, the Celtic knot, and castles. I was especially intrigued by Scotland's architecture, which is best described as a historical timeline.	We started to develop concept words that we believed best encapsulate Scotland. We created a 3D object of which was derived and built upon some of our concept words such as: majestic, rich, strength, rooted, and organic. Due to Scotland's rich music, culture, and vast landscapes, we had created boards in which showcased the Scottish flag, the folkloric music and popular musical instruments, as well as the architecture, arts, and majestic highlands.	We believed that the modern version of this crown would represent Scotland's accepting nature of other cultures.	We wanted to take an abstract approach to our three dimensional object to signify the ever evolving culture and way of thinking that is progressing within the country of Scotland. The shape of our object is indicative upon the organic lineage of the Highlands Mountains. We left both opposing ends of the object open which provides the objects with airy and light feel. This is indicative upon the "openness" and acceptance of the Scottish people of other cultures and traditions beyond their own. We designed a 3D object to embody Scotland's heritage and strength as well as its majestic and organic lines of the Scotland Highlands. Blue was chosen because it is the color of the St. Andrews flag.
	Student 3	As I began the research process, I kept a sharp lookout for prominent motifs, adjectives, colors, and other such features that truly got at the heart of what India means as a nation and a culture.	We selected the words 'intricate' and 'vibrant' as our concept words for our 3D Indian project. These words really showcase the attitude that India has as a nation filled with several major religions, millions of people in all different levels of society, unique food and clothing, and various climate patterns. As we strove to bring the word 'intricate' to life, we decided to use a contrasting black henna design that would create depth and interest as well as bringing more of an Indian feel to the object.	This was a good learning experience for me to visualize a country in a three-dimensional way.	We decided on intersecting planes in the rough form of a teardrop or paisley, which is a common motif in Indian clothing. We narrowed our colors down to saturated, warm colors, pink and orange, believing that these encompass the spiciness of the food, the warmth in temperature, and the busyness of the prominent cities. The edges of the intersecting planes are scalloped, which is reminiscent of many of the domed temples and monuments (such as the Taj Mahal) found throughout the region. We incorporated the vibrant side of our concept through our use of bold colors. The black frame also symbolizes the modernity that India is beginning to embrace as it mixes old and new.

Appendix

<p>Student 4 We researched Korea's traditional music, art, architecture, food, clothing, holidays and religious information. Traditional arts were influenced by yin/yang, religion and the 5 elements (wood, fire, earth, water and metal). Arts and architecture were designed in harmony with nature and according to their beliefs of the world and universe. They designed to reflect beauty, serenity, simplicity, open order and humility. They designed with an intimate and human scale; very few buildings are grandiose. Typical of traditional Korean motifs or patterns are the use of geometric shapes, nature, plants, and animal forms.</p>	<p>To begin our 3D museum piece project, we began to talk about what stood out in our minds about the traditional Korean culture. We both were inspired by their intense colors demonstrated through their traditional clothing, food, and art. We worked with the shape of trees and roots and wood, and embellished them with the 5 elements. We wanted to show how the roots of ancient Korean culture, using natural resources, developed into the modern society of steel, glass and high-rise buildings that we see today.</p>	<p>The project taught me how to work 3-dimensionally, and how to transform the information about a country into something abstract and visually appealing.</p>	<p>A piece of natural wood is used as the base to represent the "old" Korea. Placing a piece of glass on top of the wood mixes old traditions with modernized ideas. Together we designed a traditional geometric Korean motif, which I painted onto the glass using a dark forest green. This small design was inspired by the yin yang and their flag.</p>
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Appendix

Please reflect on the overall learning outcomes regarding the cultural design project or the program	Place-based Mean	Studio-based Mean
The program/the project has helped me to think critically and analytically.	4.55	4.35
The program/the project has impacted my ability to work effectively with others.	4.36	4.41
The program/the project has helped me to better understand myself.	4.55	3.59
The program/the project has helped me to better understand people of other racial and ethnic backgrounds.	4.55	4.47
The program/the project has helped me to develop a personal code of values and ethics.	4.64	4.12
The program/the project helped me to understand that critical reflection is a key aspect of learning.	4.45	4.76
The program/the project has helped me to understand that collaborative discourse is a key aspect of learning.	4.45	4.71
Please reflect on the overall impact of the project/the program on your understanding of CULTURE.	Place-based Mean	Studio-based Mean
The program has allowed me to acquire an understanding of cultural practices. i.e. eating, religion, language.	4.55	4.47
The program has allowed me to acquire an understanding of globalization.	4.36	4.41
The program has increased my appreciation of other cultures.	4.64	4.65
The program has increased my appreciation of my own culture.	4.36	4.06
Please reflect on the impact of the project/program on your studies of interior design	Place-based Mean	Studio-based Mean
My experience with the cultural design project/the program has allowed me to consider the practice of design from a global perspective.	4.44	4.44
My experience with the cultural design project/the program has helped me to consider cultural practices different from my own when designing.	4.56	4.75
My experience with the cultural design project/the program has helped me to understand the impact of culture on the built environment.	4.56	4.44
My experience with the cultural design project/the program has stimulated my creativity as a designer.	4.56	4.44
My experience with the cultural design project has/the program allowed me to think more holistically about the people I design for.	4.44	4.44
Since completing the cultural design project, I have utilized the learned methods of research and analysis to understand the built environment.	4.33	4.31