

Connecting to Student Learners Through Undergraduate and Faculty Teaching Partnerships

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Undergraduate Faculty Teaching Partnerships (UFTPs) occur when undergraduate students are given teaching responsibilities within a course. The goal of UFTPs is to create communities of learners among faculty and undergraduates that support learner-centered approaches to teaching. The creation of UFTPs has been indicated in the literature as a way to reorient teaching to a more learner-centered model. UFTPs are discussed more fully in *Student-assisted Teaching: A Guide to Faculty-student Teamwork* by Miller, Groccia & Miller (2001).

The Study Abroad Colloquium was developed in the Animal Sciences Department at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign as a mechanism to internationalize the undergraduate program by encouraging more students to study abroad and to explore ways that students might use those experiences more fully once they have returned to campus. UFTPs were used in this class to prepare student panel presentations on study abroad opportunities. Panel presentations were given in two other classes and students in those classes were surveyed to determine their response.

Reflective exercises included a series of journaling activities, pictorial exercises, and other writing assignments all oriented to solicit contemplation of the benefits of the students' study abroad experiences.

Course assignments utilized **guided learning** and faculty coaching techniques. The course instructor guided student reflection through questions that focused reflective exercises and framed contemplation of students' personal experiences.

The premise of the teaching philosophy used in this course was that each student would have an intensely personal study abroad experience. **Self-examination** meant that students would explore the meaning of that experience.

Although each student would establish an individual and highly personal understanding of the impact of their study abroad experience, collectively students could discover many commonalities in that experience through **information sharing** activities such as extemporaneous speaking and class discussions.

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