Furthering Student Success Through Inclusive Assessment of Engagement in Education Abroad Programs

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Introduction

Our Premise:
Education abroad practitioners have a responsibility to critically examine & correct policies to ensure they further JEDI values.

Through the lens of student development, this session explores how CEA CAPA dismantled & rebuilt its attendance policy to center engagement & success.

Presenters provide student and faculty data, and a university partner perspective supporting this new approach.

Attendees will be equipped with policy and rubrics for use in their own contexts.

Theoretical Framework

Applying JEDI lens to student development

- EA is a high-impact practice in higher education
- Our students are undergoing a period of rapid development
  - They are neither children nor fully formed adults
  - As practitioners we are responsible for creating conditions for them to grow and take responsibility
- Awareness of this shift can inform how we create structures and policies to support success – for ALL students.

Case:
Attendance Policy in Barcelona Program

- Context
- Assessment Objectives
- Design
- Results
- Experience from Partner - Syracuse University

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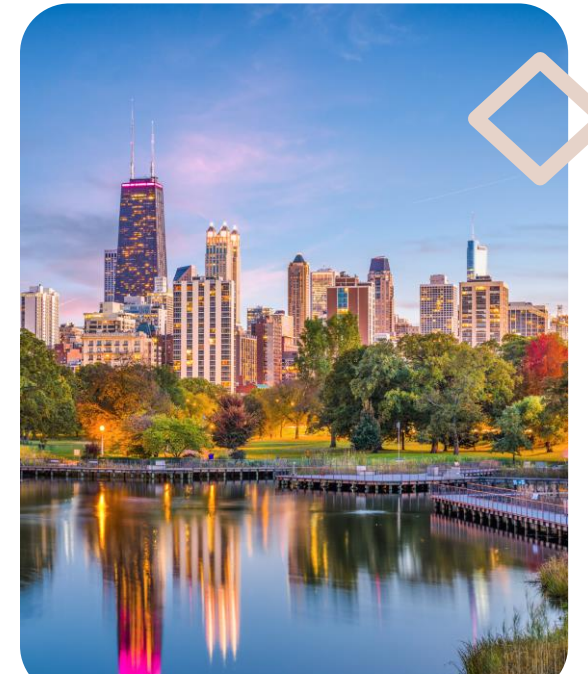
Assessment Objectives

- Analyze, contrast and compare a traditional attendance policy and an engagement-based approach, through two distinct pilot implementations in **Barcelona**, during the **Spring 2023** term.

Design

Engagement Policy A	Engagement Policy B
Engagement Grade counts as **15% of Final Grade**	Engagement Grade counts as **15% or 20% of Final Grade**
Published at mid-semester and at the end of the term	Assessed daily (participation points assigned in each class)
If absents, students inform instructors to keep up with course content	If absents, students can submit up to 2 Critical Essays
Students with excessive absences are contacted by Academic Staff	

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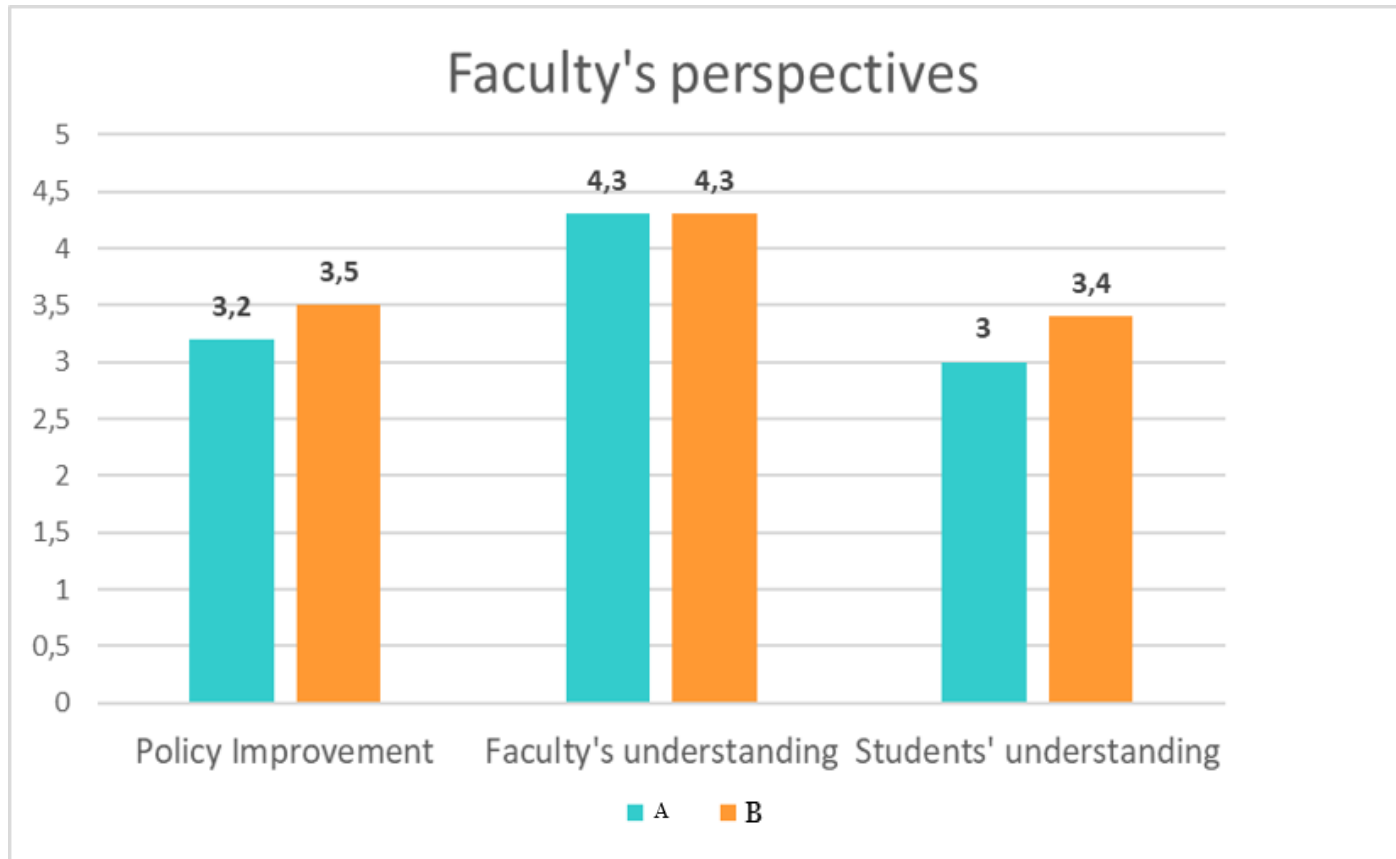
Design - Faculty and Student Survey

PROGRAM A

- **9-item survey completed by 48 instructors**
  - **90% of faculty**
  - 17 teaching at Program A & B

- **4-item survey completed by 297 students**
  - **61% of students**

PROGRAM B

- **9-item survey completed by 20 instructors**
  - **87% of faculty**
  - 16 teaching at Program A & B

- **4-item survey completed by 108 students**
  - **57% of students**

Results - Faculty's Perspective

Faculty's perspectives

- *Compared to the previous approach based on grade docks, to what extent do you consider the current approach an improvement?*

- *Please, indicate to what extent you understand the policy*

- *How much do you think students understand or are aware of the current policy?*

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Results - Faculty's Perspective

How often would you like to assess and grade participation and engagement throughout the semester?

Which are the essential components to assess participation and engagement? How do you know when a student is engaged in the course?

- *Interaction*
- *Homework*
- *In-Class Assignment and Group Work*
- *Attention & Attitude*
- *Attendance*

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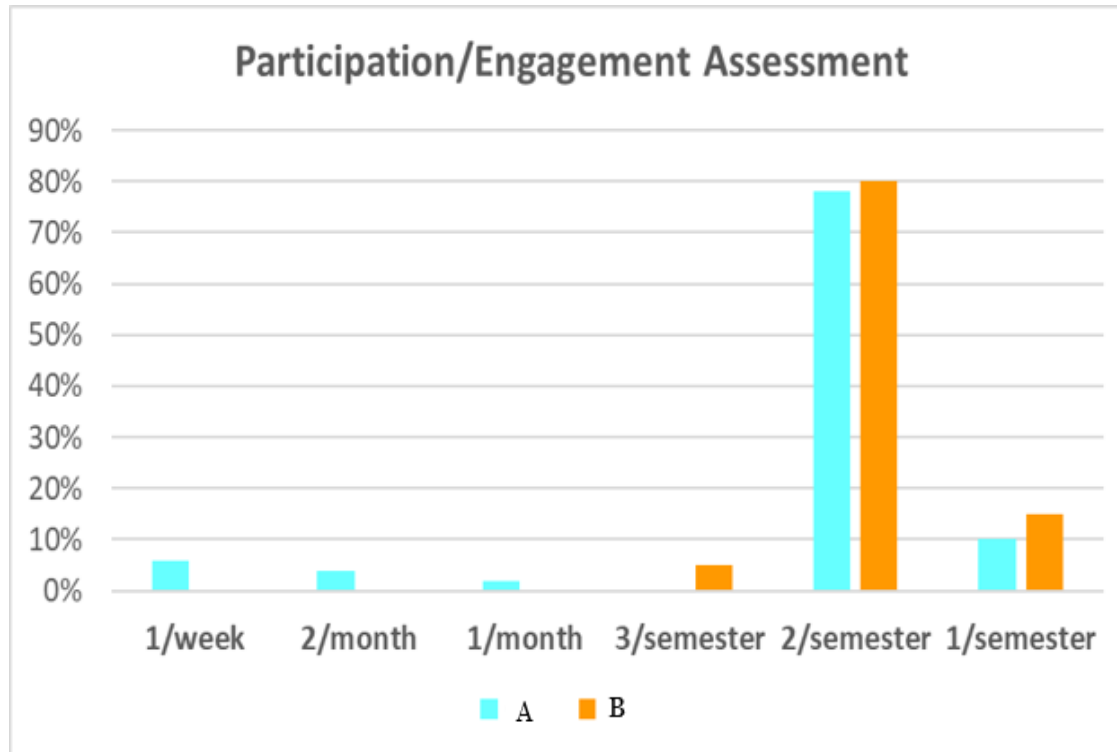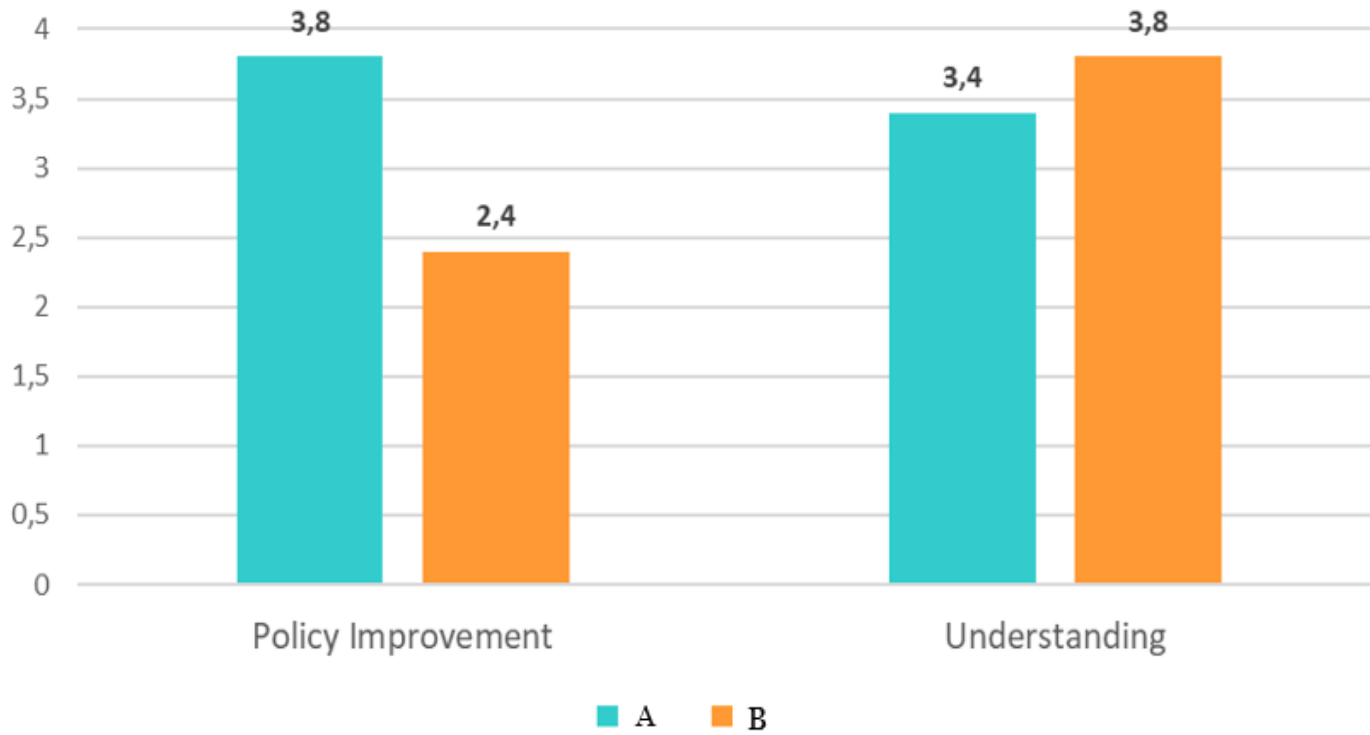# Results - Student Perspective

Students' Perspectives

- *Compared to the previous approach based on grade docks, to what extent do you consider the current approach an improvement?*

- *Please, indicate to what extent you understand the policy*

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Perspective from Partner University

Syracuse perspective pre-pandemic

- Familiarity and acceptance of attendance policy
- Awareness of student pushback/dissatisfaction with policy
- Focus on improving communication during pre-departure phase

Spring 2022

- Negative reaction to attendance policy intensified
- More escalated cases involving students and parents
- End of semester debrief: CEA proposed pilot engagement policy

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Perspective from Partner University

SPRING 2022

- Average number of absences per course per SYR student: **2 absences (does not include removed absences due to COVID or special cases)**
- 7 students were issued written warnings (five for attendance and two for disrespectful conduct).
- 3 students were placed on academic probation due to excessive absences and failing grades.

SPRING 2023

- Average number of absences per course per SYR student: **2.96 absences**
- No absences were ever removed from the system since automatic grade docks did not apply
- 5 students were issued written warnings due to excessive absences.

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CEA CAPA Engagement Policy

Active engagement in class is central to the study abroad experience at CEA CAPA, and of paramount importance to our sending institutions. Engagement can be demonstrated by students with a range of diverse learning styles, reflecting their contribution to all course components including: field trips and site visits, guest lectures, LMS-based discussion threads, and homework, projects, or other assignments listed in the syllabus.

Active engagement promotes and supports high-impact learning, creates a vibrant intellectual exchange within the student cohort, and shows respect for the faculty member and other students who show up to teach and learn.

As one aspect of engagement, and in compliance with accreditation and visa requirements, faculty record student attendance and take this into account when evaluating student engagement and overall course performance. Late arrivals or early departures from class are reflected in the student's participation score within the broader engagement rubric.

Additionally, as stated in course syllabi, assignments that are late, missing, or do not reflect mastery of course material will be graded accordingly.

As part of our commitment to student success, CEA CAPA staff will reach out to students who demonstrate a lack of academic engagement. CEA CAPA may warn, place on probation, or dismiss any student who fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress or full-time student status.

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CEA CAPA Engagement Assessment Rubric

Engagement Assessment Rubric

CRITERIA	A-Range: 90-100% (Points: 18-20/20)	B-Range: 80-89% (Points: 16-17.9/20)	C-Range: 70-79% (Points: 14-15.9/20)	D-Range: 60-69% (Points: 12-13.9/20)	F-Range: <60% (Points: <12/20)
Participation	Makes frequent substantive & original contributions. Asks and answers questions which demonstrate knowledge of course reading. Demonstrates strong critical engagement with course material including required reading. Consistently demonstrates active listening.	Participates voluntarily and makes useful contributions to class discussions. Asks and answers questions. Demonstrates critical engagement with course material including required reading. Mostly demonstrates active listening.	Participates in class discussion when prompted to do so and/or makes basic contributions to class discussions. Comments demonstrate limited critical engagement with course material including required reading. Limited demonstration of active listening in class.	Comments do not demonstrate critical engagement with course material including required reading. Does not appear to be actively listening and following class discussions.	Comments are irrelevant, tangential, and/or disruptive to class discussion. No demonstrated critical engagement with course material including required reading. Inattentive.
Homework & Preparation	Consistently comes prepared for class and with homework completed.	Mostly comes prepared for class and with the homework completed.	Sometimes comes prepared for class and with the homework completed.	Rarely comes prepared for class and with homework completed.	Consistently unprepared for class and do not complete the homework.
In-Class Activities & Group Work	Proactive and positive contributor to all class activities and group work. Consistently approaches class activities with diligence and enthusiasm.	Usually approaches class activities with diligence and enthusiasm.	Sometimes shows interest during class activities and group work.	Shows little interest during class activities and group work.	Doesn't complete in-class activities and does not collaborate in group work.
Respectful Behavior	Consistently pays attention when others talk, engages respectfully with instructor and fellow students, adheres to classroom policies, including appropriate use of technology as mandated by the instructor.	Mostly pays attention when others talk, engages respectfully with instructor and fellow students, adheres to classroom policies, including appropriate use of technology as mandated by the instructor.	Pays some attention when others talk, sometimes engages with instructor and fellow students, mostly adheres to classroom policies, including appropriate use of technology as mandated by the instructor.	Pays little attention when others talk, sometimes engages disrespectfully with instructor and/or other students, sometimes does not adhere to classroom policies, including appropriate use of classroom technology as mandated by the instructor.	Does not pay attention when others talk, engages disrespectfully with instructor and/or other students, does not adhere to classroom policies, including appropriate use of classroom technology as mandated by the instructor.
Attendance	No absences, or if absent, consistently demonstrates engagement with course material that was missed.	Very few absences, and/or mostly demonstrates engagement with course material that was missed.	Several absences, with limited or no engagement with course material that was missed.	A pattern of absences, and/or little interest in engaging with course material that was missed.	Excessive absences and/or no engagement with course material that was missed.

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Discussion and Application

Essential components of Engagement

- Participation
- Homework & Preparation
- In-Class Activities & Group Work
- Respectful Behavior
- Attendance

- How relevant is this in your institutional context?

- Examples for assessing/grading these components?

- What other components/considerations ought we include when revising this policy?

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Thank you!

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