



ASSESSING AND EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF EDUCATION ABROAD

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NEW HORIZONS
IN INTERNATIONAL
EDUCATION



NAFSA
2015

Annual
Conference
& Expo

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NAFSA
Association of
International Educators

SESSION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Gain up-to-date knowledge of different approaches to collecting, interpreting and using reliable assessment data
2. Acquire basic skills in using assessment surveys, data findings and evaluation techniques both for demonstrating to key stakeholders the positive impact of study abroad programs on participating students and for identifying ways of improving such programs
3. Develop more positive attitudes towards education abroad and develop a corresponding narrative of its value useful for winning over key stakeholders

SESSION OVERVIEW



- **Introduction :** *Scott*
 - Challenges and opportunities
- **Case Study:** *Diana*
 - Illustrative examples based on U.S. higher education
- **Research:** *Nannette*
 - International Student Barometer survey (EU)
- **Research:** *Dana*
 - Measuring Exchange Mobility Outcomes survey (EU)
- **Q&A:** *All of us!*

DIVERSE PRESSURES TO JUSTIFY STUDY ABROAD

As a an appropriate means to targeted learning and development

- Resources:
 - Energy, time, expense, opportunity cost
- Relevance:
 - To student: learning, graduating, employment, career, life
 - To institution: mission, strategy, rank, internationalization



BENEFITS OF STUDY ABROAD

As a an appropriate means to targeted learning and development

• Educational: Awareness plus Knowledge, Skills, Attitudes

- Cultural self-awareness
- Cultural knowledge
- Grasp of global issues & trends
- Sociolinguistic awareness
- Expanded world view
- Emotional confidence & resiliency
- Comparative & critical thinking
- Openness, curiosity & flexibility
- Respect for other cultures & peoples
- Listening & observation skills
- Foreign language skills
- Adaptability
- Empathy & ethno-relativism
- Intercultural communication skills

In short... Intercultural Competence!

• Practical:

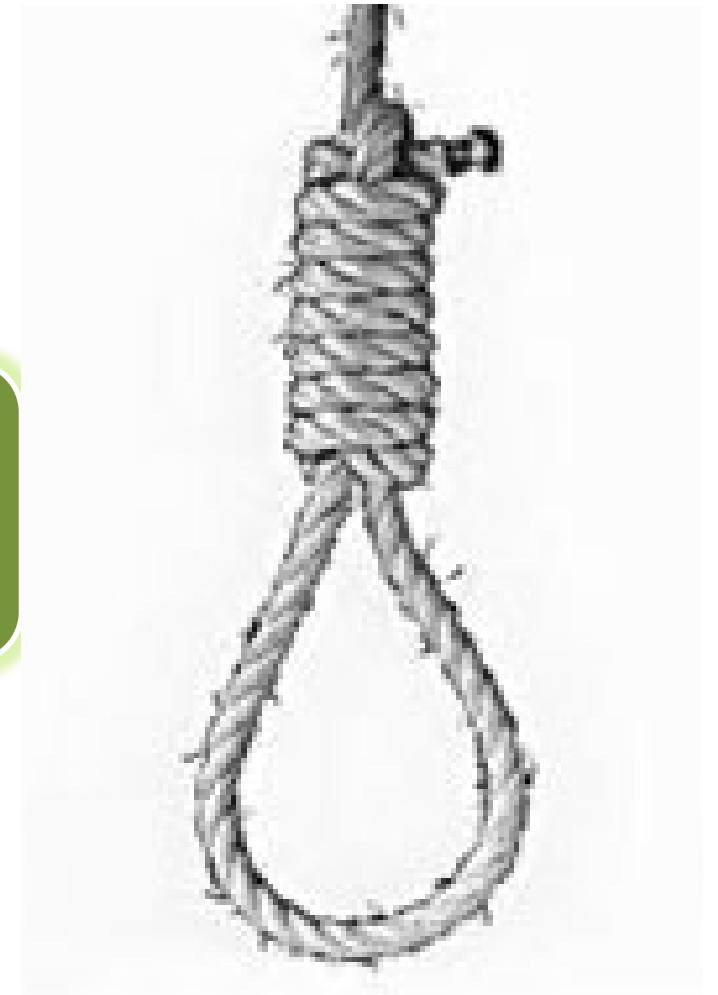
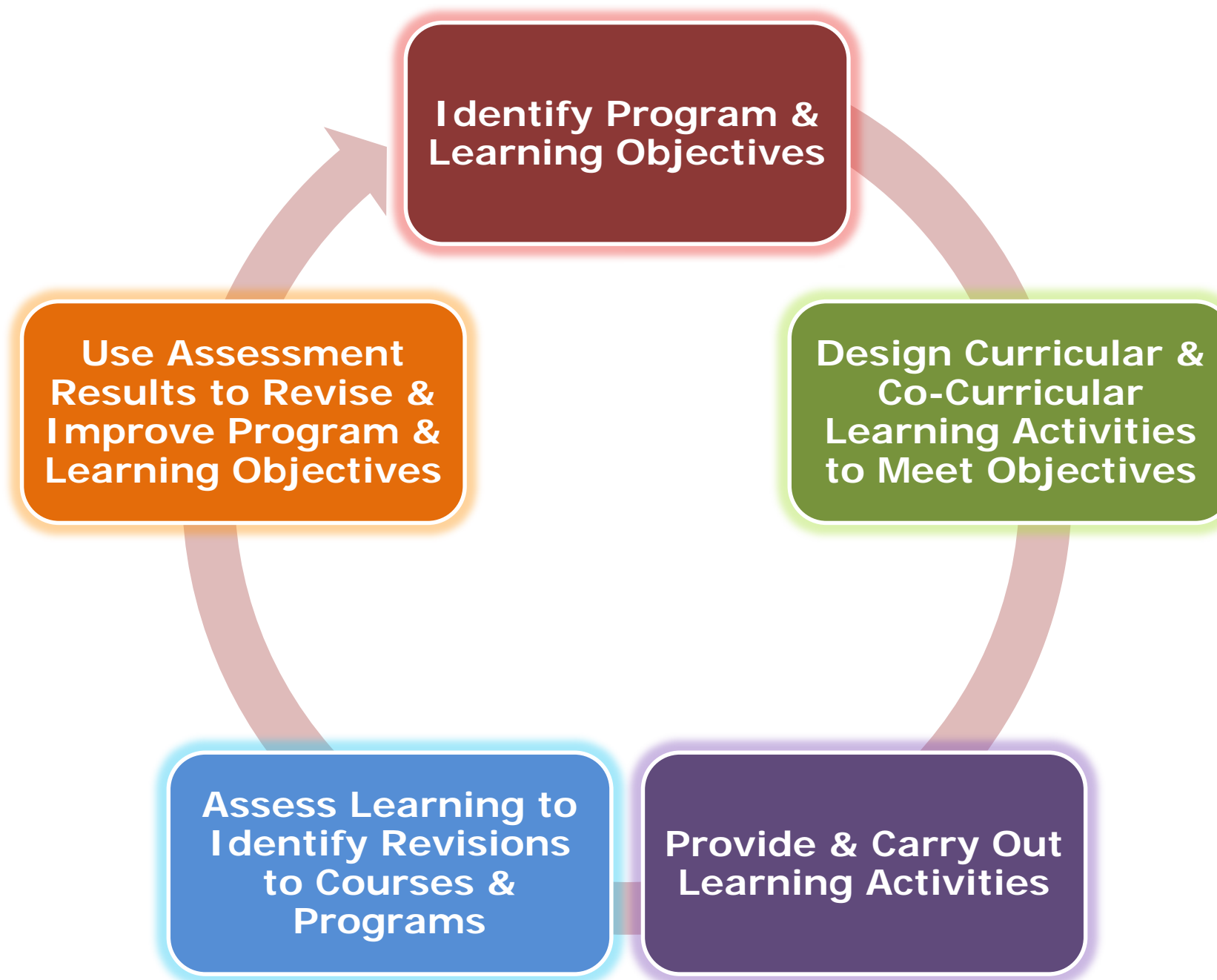
- Higher grades, student retention, graduation rates
- Career benefits: employability, compensation, mobility, advancement, etc.

CHALLENGES OF ACHIEVING DESIRED OUTCOMES

1. Complexity of articulating appropriate outcomes
2. Difficulty of aligning activities to outcomes
3. Diversity of student backgrounds and motivations
4. Constraint of ever-shorter program duration
5. Imponderables of onsite experience and context
6. Exertions of establishing that outcomes have been achieved



ASSESSMENT LOOP OR NOOSE?



UTILITY OF GENERATING COMPELLING DATA ON LEARNING OUTCOMES

For Teachers and Learners:

- ✓ Acknowledges student learning and development
- ✓ Validates student and faculty engagement
- ✓ Informs strategy for improving teaching and learning
- ✓ Initiates a culture of assessment **for** learning

For Administrators and Institutional Leaders:

- ✓ Provides visibility of program effectiveness
- ✓ Identifies good practice in program design
- ✓ Creates basis for allocating finite resources
- ✓ Informs the narrative of institutional success
- ✓ Constitutes professionalism in higher education



THE KEY QUESTIONS

1. What kind of world do we want to enable our students to create?

This is about learning goals, tied to mission, tied to vision.

2. What learning and development activities will we provide students so as to be able to create that world?

This is about teaching & learning, alignment, and commitment to that vision.

3. How will we know we and they are succeeding?

This is about outcomes assessment, accountability, and integrity.



ILLUSTRATIVE EXAMPLES BASED ON U.S.HIGHER EDUCATION

- Assessment Rationale
 - Study abroad program return on investment?
 - Going beyond student satisfaction
- What types of impact can be realistically measured
 - Short-term/immediate individual-level: value in self-reporting?
 - Long-term impacts: possible to measure?

EXAMPLE 1: PROGRAM-SPECIFIC ASSESSMENT: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

- Short-term instructor-led program (Global Seminar)
 - A mixed-methods study
 - Eight instructor-led programs
 - What is the influence of instructor-led study abroad on students' intercultural sensitivity?
 - Pre-and post IDI scores and interviews
 - Student engagement, interventions, reflection

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM ASSESSMENT AND EVALUATION: UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

- The importance of alignment
 - Define learning outcomes
 - Investment in the training of cultural mentors (MAXSA)
 - Consistent implementation of assessment
- Variety of tools to match assessment goals
 - Program evaluation
 - Program review
 - Short-term program assessment

EXAMPLE 2: UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE: “HOMEGROWN” ASSESSMENT

- Requires faculty directors to address in their program proposals how students will meet these goals.
- Pre- and post-program assessment instrument.
 - Incorporated into required online pre-departure orientation and a required post-program assessment
 - Includes a standard student satisfaction survey
 - Uses existing online course evaluation system
- Linked to University-wide Discovery Learning Experience required for graduation
 - Develop an international perspective in order to live and work effectively in an increasingly global society.

ASSESSING HEI-BASED STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS: SEVERAL CHALLENGES

- Internal/external data reporting: who needs to know for what kinds of decisions?
- limited resources
- concerns over quality and validity of data
- lack of agreement over the terms
- few longitudinal studies/comparative data/control groups
- focus on U.S. students only

ASSESSING HEI-BASED STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS: POSSIBILITIES

- Integrated assessment
 - Multi-method, multi-purpose approach (SAGE Handbook of Intercultural Competence)
- Manageable/actionable targets and timelines
 - Ensuring a particular program's components are effective in enhancing student learning
- Institutional information-sharing within and outside HEIs
 - Integration into the broader HEI assessment initiatives
 - Assessment and impact evaluation task force

I-GRADUATE & MEMO (CHE CONSULT) SURVEYS

- Two professional survey-based approaches to measuring the impact of study abroad experience.
- Collect data that underline the impact of a foreign study experience
- Both work with a set of carefully developed questions but show different approaches and results

Nannette Ripmeester
Director European Client Relations

NAFSA 2015

This block features a large, overlapping collage of numerous university logos and crests from various countries, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Australia, New Zealand, and others. The logos are arranged in a way that they partially obscure each other, creating a sense of a vast collection of global institutions. The colors of the logos vary widely, reflecting the branding of each university. This visual element serves as a backdrop for the text, emphasizing the theme of international exposure.

Why is evaluating international study outcomes important?

- 🌐 Effort, time, cost
 - 🌐 → **Consequences for HEI, Staff, Students**
- 🌐 Pertinence to future employment
 - 🌐 → **EMPLOYABILITY**
- 🌐 Contribution to internationalization
 - 🌐 → **International Classroom brings intercultural understanding**



How to prospective international students decide?

Please indicate how important each of the following is to you when choosing
INTERNATIONAL STUDY (% *important* / *very important*)

Values	All (2007)
Broadening my experience	95%
Quality of education	95%
Improving my career prospects	95%
Improving my language skills	93%
Cost of education (tuition fee)	74%
Particular course of study not offered in my country	66%
Family wants me to study in another country	54%
Unable to obtain a place at my university of choice in my home country	52%
Pressure to leave my home country (e.g. political reasons)	46%

Source: ©StudentPulse
2014, i-graduate

Assessment data provides basis upon which to allocate resources

Would you recommend the institution to others thinking of applying here?

Uni X

8)

		Europe ISB (17827)	Global ISB (138327)
44%	I would actively encourage people to apply	42%	38%
46%	If asked, I would encourage people to apply	43%	45%
8%	I would neither encourage nor discourage people to apply	11%	13%
2%	If asked, I would discourage people from applying	3%	3%
1%	I would actively discourage people from applying	1%	1%

Source: ©International Student Barometer 2014, i-graduate

Allocating resources on the basis of what students want from an international study experience?

■ Top 3 drivers of importance in Learning

1. Quality lectures

2. Employability

3. Course organisation

Source: ©International Student Barometer 2014, i-graduate

Assessment data can be used for improved teaching & learning

Key word/ Question	Uni X	Global ISB %	Country ISB %	Europe ISB %	Spec Rivals %	Global ISB	Country ISB	Europe ISB	Spec Rivals
TEACHING									
Quality lectures	90.3%	88.4%	86.8%	85.3%	91.1%	71	3	9	5
Course organisation	84.6%	85.7%	83.7%	81.3%	88.8%	58	3	11	5
Employability	71.8%	78.5%	72.8%	70.9%	79.7%	141	4	14	6

For this Uni X careers advice coming from academic staff proved to be the main issue – closely related with employability.

Source: ©International Student Barometer 2014, i-graduate

What does iMPACT measure?

Reflecting on your study experiences, to what extent do you agree with the following: My study abroad experience...



Is study abroad transformative...?

"I had **the best time of my life**"
(Student from New Zealand)

"**It changed my life.**"
(Student from Hong Kong)

"It's **the experience of a lifetime** and adds an entire different dimension to your degree."
(Student from Australia)

"It is a **once in a life experience** that we could never have again in the future with little burden and consideration" (Student from Hong Kong)

"My time as an exchange student was the **best year of my life**, I learned **invaluable things and it has changed my outlook on life and science**. It helped me decide what I want to do with my life and how"
(Student from New Zealand)

"**Life-changing experience.** With the financial support from the home university, you can live and study in another country, to experience a different culture and know different people, this is awesome." (Student from China)

"Study abroad offers opportunities to **experience new activities**, including the possibility of overseas internships."
(Student from South Korea)

"**Experience of a lifetime.** So much to learn when you're living abroad."
(Student from Singapore)

"It was a **very valuable experience** in life apart from the studies." (Student from South Korea)

Food for thought

- What are students expecting from an international study experience?
- → From prospective international student to current international student to looking back at the study abroad experience: the step after graduation is key

EMPLOYABILITY

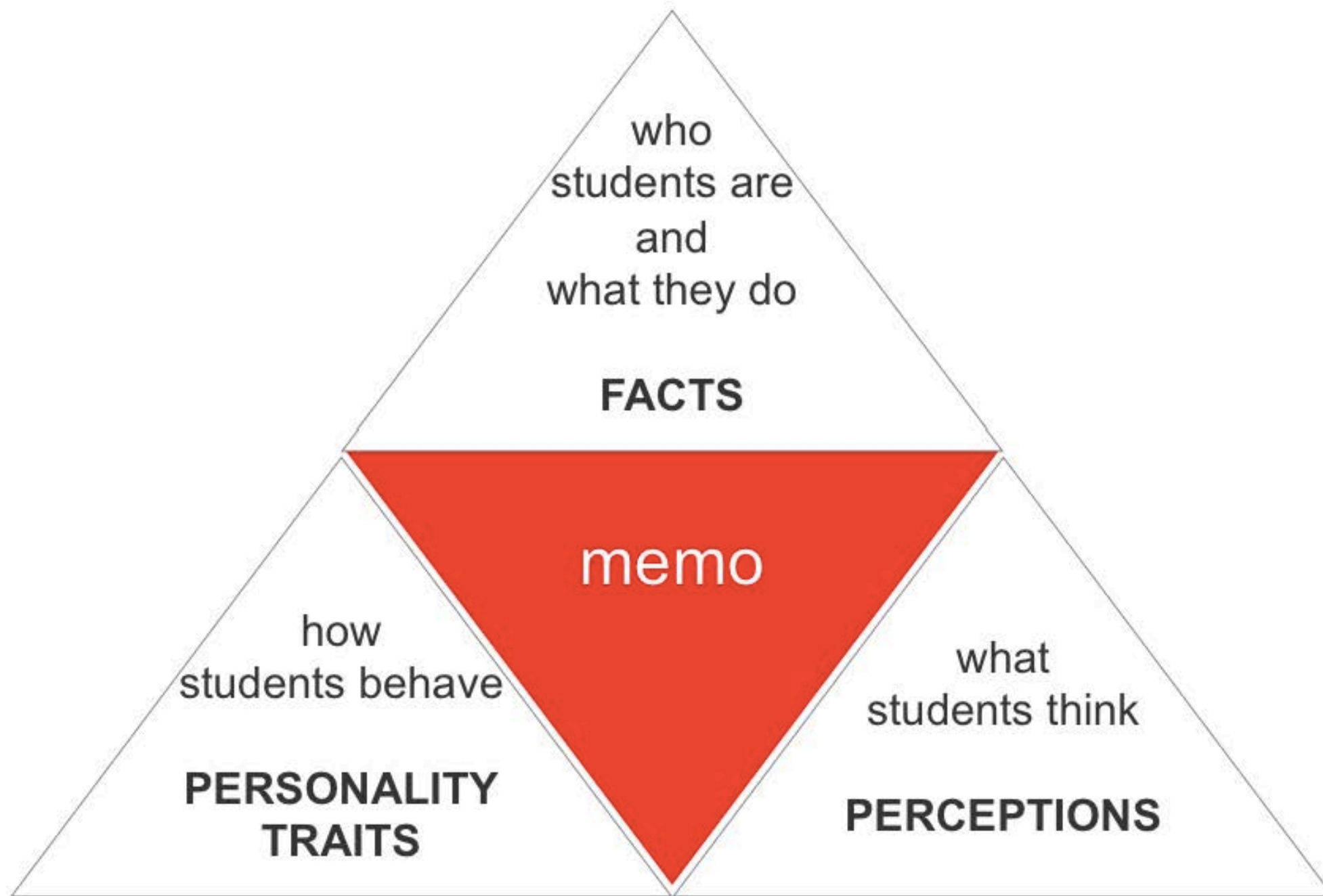
- What is the outside world expecting from an international experience? (job market, parents, society)
- → Better **EMPLOYABLE** students

Case in point: MEMO

Key features

- Goes beyond satisfaction surveys and self-perceptions of students
- Does not make assumptions from perceptions towards real outcomes
- Measures outcomes in the sense of **real** (not perceived) **effects**
- Focuses on pre-departure to post-return change to measure **added value of mobility**
- Uses data based on students assessment of their own behaviour (**psychometric analysis**)

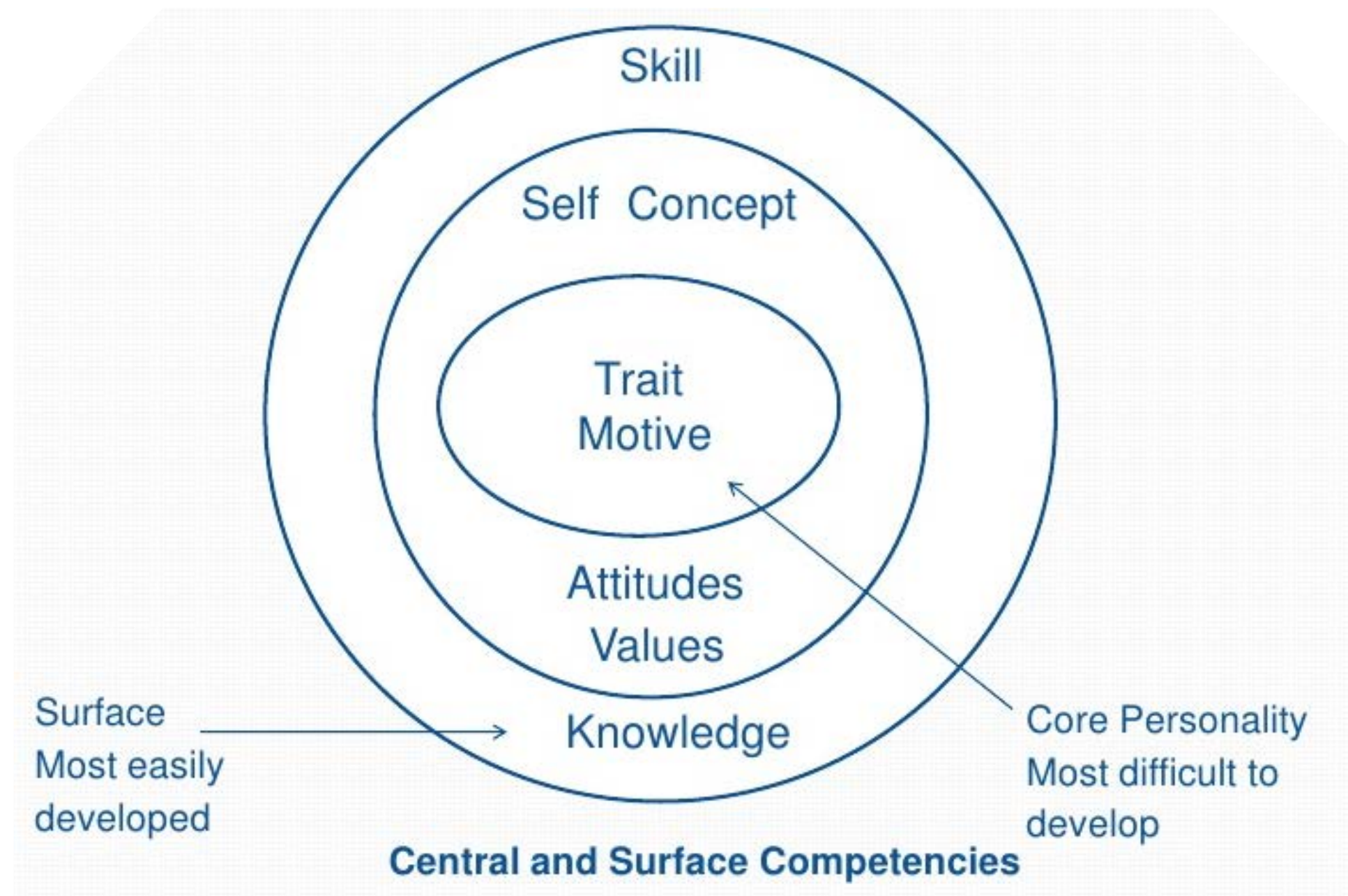
Case in point: MEMO Triangular approach



Case in point: MEMO

Focus on personal development

Measure what really matters!



Case in point: MEMO

Personality traits

- 10 memo factors describing the main **personality traits** of students
- comparison of pre-departure and post-return values are used to assess the direct outcomes of the mobility experience and show **real development** of students



Case in point: MEMO

Factors of Employability

Decisiveness



What employers want?

Problem-solving



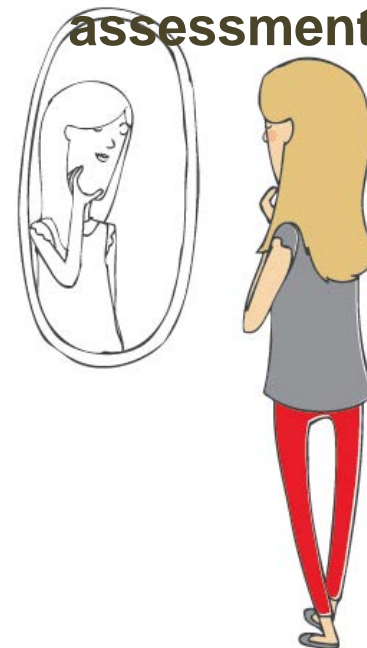
Tolerance



Curiosity



Self-assessment



Confidence



Case in point: MEMO

Diversity of aspects

FACTS

1

Gender

2

Academic family background

3

Participation in a preparatory course

4

Duration of the stay abroad

5

Exchange type

6

Exchange programme

Destination country

PERCEPTIONS

**PERSONALITY
TRAITS**

Case in point: MEMO and Erasmus Impact Study

- Students tend to overestimate their learning outcomes – **81%** of students **perceived an improvement** in their personality traits while only **52% really achieved** higher memo factors values
- **92% of employers** consider memo factors as important for recruitment, on top of knowledge in the field (91%) and relevant work experience (78%)
- More than 85% of Erasmus students decide to go abroad in order to **increase their employability**
- Erasmus students have better predispositions for employability even before going abroad, and increase their advantage by 42% after return
- Not every student gains – check and act accordingly...

THANK YOU!

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