Students’ Content Preferences Regarding On-Line Study Abroad Videos

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Abstract
The importance of having students participating in international programs is well documented. In most cases, students increase their problem solving skills, boost their confidence, and gain a global perspective in their lives. In an attempt to increase participation levels, colleges throughout the country promote international programs to their students. However, students in colleges of agricultural sciences are less likely to take advantages of study abroad programs. In 2006, less than two percent of all students in colleges of agricultural sciences have studied abroad (Open Doors, 2006). There is need to comprehend innovative ways to promote international programs to students in Colleges of Agricultural Sciences. The purpose of this poster paper is to share the aspects and content of on-line videos that students prefer when learning regarding study abroad programs.

In order to access students preferences after watching on-line videos, three on-line videos were developed between May 2006 and August 2006. The content of the three videos were based on existing study abroad programs offered by the College of Agricultural Sciences (CAS) at Penn State University.

Ninety-nine students participated in the study. Roughly 94% of the respondents were freshmen students. Regarding the videos, the most liked aspects mentioned by the students were: students’ testimonials (cited 47 times), portrait of fun and exciting activities (cited 34 times), scenery (cited 39 times), and music used in the background (cited 37 times). As time passes, on-line videos are becoming less expensive and easier to produce. On-line videos can be found in most college websites and in places such as YouTube, Facebook, and Ipods. If higher education wants to be successful in promoting educational programs it is necessary to understand how to use new technologies like on-line videos to convey ideas to this audience.

Key words: International programs, agricultural students, on-line, videos, content