

Connect Global US- MENA Week 7 Report

Main Activities and Group Dynamics:

During the seventh week of the Program, participants were encouraged to lead thought-provoking conversations about issues they find important. Some groups discussed current events, conflict and global and social challenges while others talked about stereotypes and shared their experience with cultural misunderstanding. As they contributed in the discussions, participants were able to enhance their awareness of their peers' differences. Some facilitators reported that last week was one of the best sessions of the semester. Students were fully engaged, questioning each other and going deeper and deeper into understanding each other. While they shared their personal stories, some students spoke of their social involvement outside of the sessions and described what they gained from it.

In addition to the discussions, facilitators also encouraged participants to discuss their final projects in small groups. Others discussed the feedback survey and reflected on the key takeaways of their experience. Facilitators also reminded their students of the key deadlines for their Final Project Papers.

Most facilitators described last week's dynamics were "Good" or "Excellent". Some reported how shy participants were able to overcome their fear in small groups and felt more comfortable sharing thoughts about their final projects. Others reported how participants lead their own conversations and enriched them with critical questions.

Attendance and Technology:

Last week, over 80% of students successfully attended their last sessions. Although most students were able to attend their sessions, we are hoping to see an increase in the final week of the Program. In addition to the usual reminders we send each week, we still count on your support in reminding your students of the importance of attending their final session of the Program.

As for technology, a few groups from Tuesday's final slot had issues accessing their meeting rooms. The affected students were able to join their sessions within 20 minutes or less and facilitators were able to run their sessions as planned. Except for Tuesday's last slot, the remaining sessions were able to run smoothly, and students have been able to connect to their groups successfully. As usual, we keep encouraging participants to reach out to us for help before and during the session.

This Week

This week, students will attend their final sessions. Like every week, groups will start the sessions with icebreakers, and then they will engage in free-flowing conversations about the topic of their choice. Towards the end of the final session, participants will reflect on their overall experience and share thoughts on what they learned about themselves and from each other. Facilitators will also share information about how they can continue their cross-cultural engagement after the end of the program. Outside of the group sessions, students will be working on their Final Project Papers that are due on **Friday, December 4th**.