

Connect Global US-MENA: Week Four Report

Main Activities and Group Dynamics:

Like each week, participants opened their fourth sessions with icebreakers. Then, they engaged in discussions about the second set of required readings on Intercultural Communication. Based on the readings, some students commented the different stages of experiencing differences in a dialogue process while others shared thoughts about the role of effective communication in solving problems without resorting to force.

In some groups, facilitators involved participants in conversations about stereotypes cultural misunderstanding. Others discussed current events such as the presidential elections in the United States and how the results would impact the country and the world.

Towards the end of the session, many groups made time to work on their final projects. Students had the opportunity to discuss the first set of interviews they've conducted. Then, they broke out into smaller groups and worked in pairs to come up with the second interview questions they will use for their second set of interviews.

The majority of facilitators rated the groups as "Good" or "Excellent". Halfway through the program, participants were comfortable sharing their opinions, asking each other questions and taking ownership over the discussion. Many facilitators reported how breaking into smaller groups allowed participants to share their opinions more comfortably.

This Week:

In week five, participants will focus on their personal stories through the Life Stories activity. During the activity, they will discuss the 3 key influences or moments that have shaped their perspective, and engage each other on a more personal level. Students will also continue free-flowing discussions about global and social challenges. Outside of the sessions, students will conduct the final set of 90-second video interviews with the two community members they selected. The second set of interviews is due on **Thursday, November 12th**.