

Connect Global US-MENA: Week Four Report

Main Activities and Group Dynamics:

This week, participants opened their sessions with warm up activities and icebreakers. Then, they engaged in discussions about the second set of required readings on Intercultural Communication. Based on the readings, some students volunteered to prepare questions that enabled their peers to share their opinions on the articles. Other groups were encouraged to discuss the writers' arguments on a deeper level and explore cultural differences from different angles.

In many groups, facilitators involved participants in conversations about stereotypes, cultural misunderstanding, and how media is promoting social and global challenges in different parts of the world.

After the discussions, 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.

Attendance & Technology:

Although the majority of participants were able to attend their sessions this week, we still count your support to remind your students to attend the remaining sessions. Full attendance and active participation are crucial to the dynamics of the program and its positive impact on participants.

No major technical issues were reported this week. To avoid any technical issues, we highly encourage students to login to their sessions a few minutes early and reach out to our technical team if needed.

Next 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. Before submitting the first set of interviews in week 3, we shared alternative options that will allow students to adapt to the social distancing restrictions. The second set of interviews is due on **Thursday, April 16th**.