

## **Connect Express: Week 3 Report**

### **Main Activities and Group Dynamics**

This week, most groups started their sessions with a reflection activity during which they practiced critical thinking and self-awareness. Others practiced listening through the “What in the World” activity where they realized how active listening can affect their way of addressing differences. Then, groups engaged in thought-provoking discussions about topics of their choice. Among the discussed topics are media & social media, cultural misunderstanding and conflict.

While they explored the topics at a deeper level, participants had the chance to practice key communication tools such as active listening and asking good questions. Some facilitators reported how students shared thoughts on how to reduce conflict and engage with difference constructively. Throughout the session, participants were constantly encouraged students to use practical examples of the biases and stereotypes that affect their identities and cultural backgrounds.

Most facilitators rated the groups as “good” or “excellent”. Facilitators shared how participants created a friendly atmosphere that enabled them to learn about each other on a deeper, more personal level. Others noticed that some students took a little more time to think so they could frame their questions and responses in a constructive way. Most facilitators reported how participants shared their opinions frankly but remained respectful of each other’s differences.

### **Attendance & Technology**

This week, we noticed that the absence rates remained high. While we reach out to participants who were absent individually, we still need your help in ensuring your students attend the final session of the Program.

Except for a few students who missed their sessions due to internet speed, no major issues were reported by the facilitators on the technical front. Students are still welcome to contact our technical support team before and during the session if they face any issues.

### **Week Four**

Next week will be the fourth and final week of the semester. Facilitators will keep encouraging participants to reflect on what they learned through the dialogue process and concretely discuss constructive engagement.

Students will keep leading free-flowing conversations about the topics they picked during their sessions last week. Among the suggested topics, some students will pick immigration and integration while others will lead conversations about the impact of media on cultural misunderstanding. Facilitators will make sure their groups are maintaining their ownership over the discussions. Students will also be submitting their Reflection Papers by **Sunday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>**.