

# Experiential Through our Eyes: Our Experience as the CEIA Undergraduate Research Project Grant Recipient Students

Alex Wilson and Courtney Eckstein

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Four months ago, We, Alex Wilson and Courtney Eckstein, were presented with the opportunity to join a study that observes how Cultural Intelligence is impacted in college students that work and study abroad. The study is led by Willie Clark, Cheryl Cates Ph.D., and Emily Frazier, with May Hetzer as a mentor. During this experience, we learned many valuable skills that will be applicable in future careers and will help influence us in the correct direction of future research projects.

I, Courtney, will be a Senior at the University of Cincinnati. I am currently working toward my degree in Communications and Public health, as well as a minor in Biology. My future plans include graduating from UC in the next year and pursuing a Master's degree in Public Health. After that I will decide whether I would like to continue on to Medical School, PA school, or jump right into the healthcare setting. I would eventually like to be CEO of a hospital network.

And I, Alex, am a recent graduate of the University of Cincinnati. I graduated with a bachelor's degree in Biology. I will be travelling to Greece

this summer to work as a Marine Biologist and working on helping to whale population. At the end of the summer I will return home and look for a job that has my passion for saving marine animals.

We both received CITI training and were certified in ethical issues that arise when working with human subjects. This training also informed them of the current regulatory protocol in place for human research studies. We met with a representative from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to learn about what they could and could not do while conducting this study and the steps that we had to take to conduct a research study. We also learned what was to be kept confidential and how to take proper notes to turn into the IRB if necessary.

I, Courtney, was the people person of the study. I found the students to gather data from and made sure that the students submitted all our surveys in a timely manner. I also went to several workshops to learn how to present the data that was found in the best way possible. The first one was a workshop on how to gather re-

search and how to organize it. This became very useful when the project was first started, and we were learning what it was about, and well as later in the semester when the data was being compared to previous studies performed by other researchers. The second workshop was how to build a poster presentation. This came in extremely useful when putting the final presentation together. I learned the proper aesthetic when laying out a project and how to make sure all data and logistics were accounted for. I also worked alongside Alex and learned how to do the statistical analysis of the project.

I, Alex, on the other hand, performed more of the background work. The data analysis was the main focus of my job. The pre and post assessments were compared utilizing t-tests, which determined whether the changes demonstrated by the students were statistically significant. This job allowed me to deepen my knowledge of statistical analysis, as well as learn how to accurately and appropriately represent it in a readable format. I designed the graphs for the handouts utilized at the end of the semester presentation, and also formatted and wrote several other portions of the handout.

We would like to thank the CEIA for giving them the opportunity to take part in this study and allowing us to gain these skills that will help us in the future.

**Editor's Note:** *The CEIA project grant is intended to provide funding to an evaluation, information gathering and/or assessment project in regards to the field of work-integrated learning. The project funds are targeted toward the use of undergraduate students who will assist with the gathering of data (an ethics review would be necessary) or the assessment of a WIL program, and/or the pilot testing of a new WIL initiative. Up to \$4000 may be awarded bi-annually to an accredited post-secondary department or faculty with 65 – 75% of the project funds to be used to pay undergraduate student researchers, and 25 – 35% available for administrative costs including the purchase or use of required software to carry out the project. CEIA expects the grant recipients to publicly share the results of their project outcomes in relation to general practice within the field and CEIA reserves the right to use and disseminate the information through their networks and membership. CEIA must be acknowledged as a project funder on all disseminated documents.*

*For those who would like to hire undergraduate research students with this funding, a new award will be given out by CEIA in 2018. The deadline to apply is November 1, 2018 at*

**<http://www.ceiainc.org/knowledge-zone/research-grant/>**