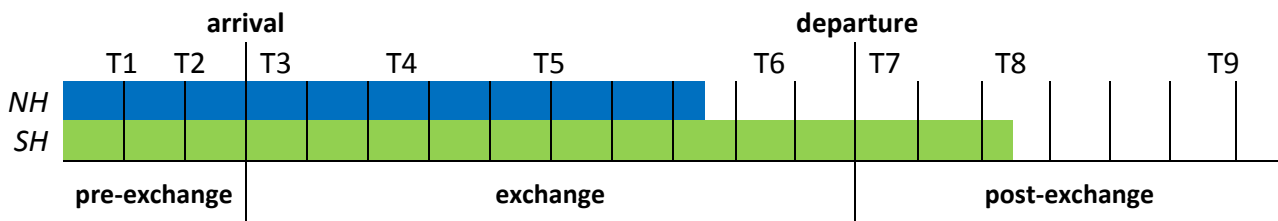


Project status: Timeline

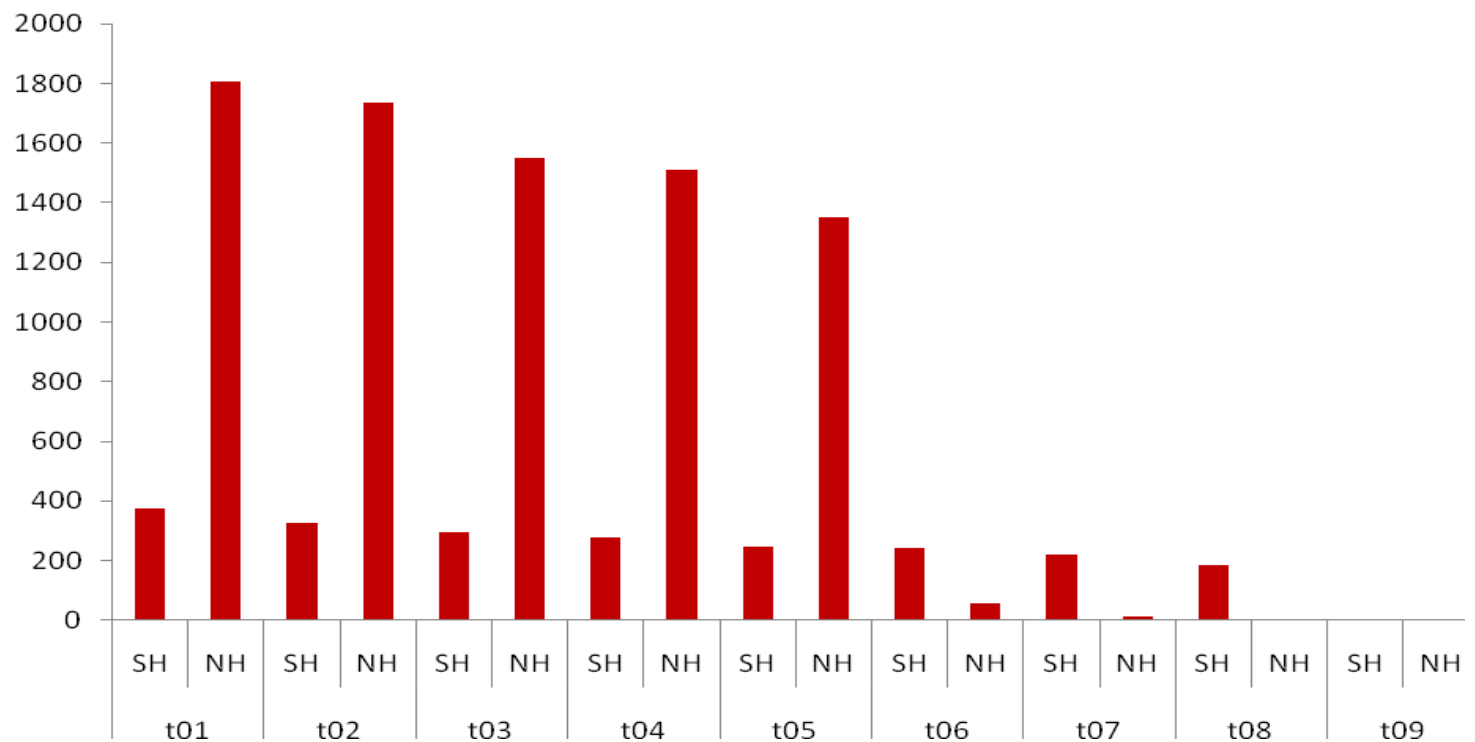
For over a year, AFS students have been participating in the Kaleidoscope project. With 9 surveys, spanning 18 months per person, participants have shown a great commitment to the project. So, where are participants along this 18 month timeline? Both Southern and Northern Hemisphere cycle participants were invited to join this project. The SH students had a head start, joining in October 2009, and are currently in the process of starting the 8th questionnaire (see diagram). NH participants, joining in July 2010 are now between the 5th and 6th surveys (see diagram).



Project timeline: progress of NH (blue bar) and SH (green bar) participants.

Project status: Participation

In terms of participation, the graph below shows how many participants have completed each survey so far. There are two bars per survey, one showing SH participation and the other showing NH participation. Starting numbers for the SH cycle are approaching 400 and for the NH cycle around 1800. There is of course some attrition over time, but considering the duration of this study, drop out is not steep and we are still maintaining good numbers.



Participation per timewave by hemisphere (SH/NH cycles)



Prize winners

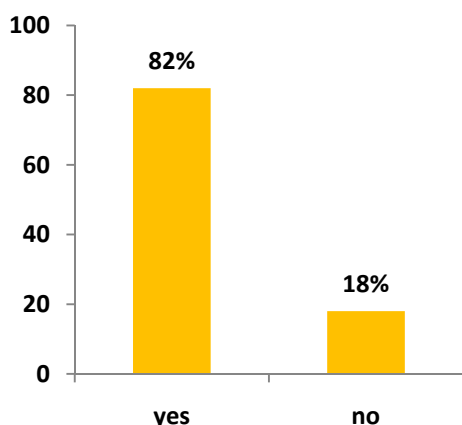
So far in the year 2011, 6 participants have won a prize in our bi-monthly prize draws. In the Jan-Feb draw, Rodrigo (AFS CHI-USA) won an ipod shuffle and Zsófia (Peer from HUN) won a digital camera. For the Mar-Apr draw, Isabel (AFS NOR-JPN) won a digital camera and Alex (Peer from ITA) a digital photo frame. In the most recent draw, the May-Jun draw, Shantanu (AFS IND-USA) won a digital photo frame and Lena (Peer from GER) won an ipod shuffle!

Some preliminary findings!

Given that we now have data for surveys 1 through to 5 for both SH and NH participants, now is a good time for us to start conducting some early analyses. Survey 5 is an important stage to reach in the project, as it is during this timewave that we measure again a number of important variables that were recorded initially in the pre-arrival surveys. This gives us the ability to look into the 'impact' of exchange, to see whether participants have changed from how they were before their exchange to during. A few initial findings from the study are presented on this page, however it is important to note that these are only basic and preliminary findings and will not be considered final until the 'end of project' report is released.

Findings: Pre-arrival

Before participants left for their exchange we asked them about their previous cultural experience. Specifically, participants were asked whether they had ever travelled to another country before. If they had, they were also asked to state where it was they travelled, for how long they stayed and for what reason. The graph here shows the proportion of participants answering either yes or no to the question "Have you ever travelled to another country?" Interestingly, nearly a fifth of participants (18%) had never visited another country before starting their exchange.

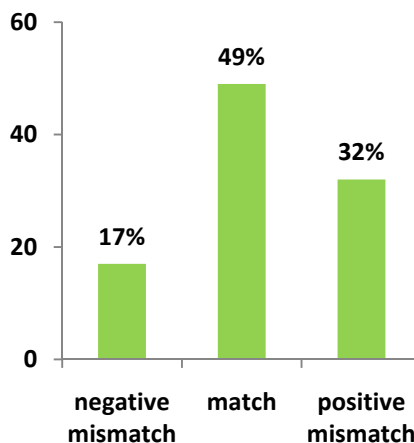


Further on in the data analysis, it will be interesting to examine whether previous cultural experience is predictive of adaptation to the host country. For example, someone with more prior experience of different cultures may suffer less from culture shock in the host society.

individuals of different cultural backgrounds.

In the present study, participants intergroup anxiety is recorded pre-exchange (t1), again mid-exchange (t5) and a final time post-exchange (t9). In the graph to the right, participants levels of intergroup anxiety before and during the exchange are presented and are shown for both the AFS and Peer groups. Peers and AFS-ers do not differ pre-exchange, but over time there is a clear and significant drop in intergroup anxiety in the AFS group, whilst Peers remain stable. This analysis provides strong support for the role of intercultural exchange in reducing intergroup anxiety.

Findings: Expectations



Expectations can be defined as internal attitudes or cognitive states that guide effective behaviour. Importantly, our expectations are often a product of our cultural upbringing. Expectations held about people and the environment may lead to effective behaviour in one cultural setting, but in another, this may not be the case. This is clearly an important issue for exchange students, who may discover that their host culture

operates in a very different way from their home culture.

In the Kaleidoscope study we measure expectations about adaptation pre-arrival and then record actual experience of adaptation during the exchange. In the graph above, the percentage of participants whose expectations were confirmed or disconfirmed is shown. A **match** occurs when an experience is as expected. A **negative mismatch** occurs when an experience is more negative than expected and a **positive mismatch** occurs when an experience is more positive than originally expected. The most common situation shown here is a match (49%), suggesting that many participants held quite accurate expectations about how they would adapt to the host country.

Findings: Intergroup anxiety

Intergroup anxiety is characterised by feelings of discomfort and uncertainty in cross-cultural interactions. This taps into one of the key objectives of intercultural exchange, that is to foster positive relations between

