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Interactive Cultural Activities in Virtual Study Abroad during the Pandemic and Beyond

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Some of the simplest affordances of study abroad became unavailable when students stayed stateside because of the pandemic-induced disruptions to international travel. These ranged from touring city and historical/cultural landmarks, having spontaneous and chance interactions with locals, participating in the performance of traditions and practices, visiting homes, engaging in *domestic* activities with host families and local peers, and developing a sense of community with other fellow students. This paper reports on three alternate, virtual cultural activities that were launched during the pandemic between a U.S. university and its study abroad partner institution in Morocco in order to help compensate for the health disruption. Survey responses, cultural products, and reflections from 118 participants were collected for this study over two Arabic summer intensive programs at the stateside university. The study explores the effectiveness of these activities in promoting intercultural competence and student engagement during this period and speculates on how they can be integrated into the regular programming post-pandemic in order to further enhance immersion.

INTRODUCTION

Studying languages abroad comes with the promise of linguistic and cultural immersion, an activity that is widely associated with developing competence in a target language and culture. The advent of the global COVID-19 pandemic abruptly disrupted international travel and brought study abroad programs to a halt. Most group programs pulled their students back home in the middle of spring in 2020. Hence, the simplest affordances associated with study abroad that distinguish studying language in class from learning it in its natural environment suddenly became unavailable. These immersive activities ranged from touring cities, historical and cultural landmarks, having spontaneous and chance interactions with locals, participating in the performance of local traditions and practices, sampling the local cuisine, visiting homes, engaging in domestic activities with host families and local peers, and developing a sense of community with fellow students.

With the continued risk associated with travel and the absence of clear plans on the resumption of study abroad programs, many universities simply shut down their summer intensive programs. Some shifted to virtual instruction online, facing the challenge of the elimination of a whole component of their programming and making a series of decisions on ways for handling this disruption to the normal program structure. While the shift to the virtual mode in the language-related content benefited from established research and best practices based on decades of online and distance learning, the interactive and experiential element pertaining to the cultural component associated with study abroad posed the greater challenge for these programs. Lack of access to in-country spaces where this learning typically would take

place constituted a problem because it threatened to affect not only the program intercultural learning outcomes, but also the student motivation that comes from experiencing the culture of the target language. This paper reports on the measures undertaken by an Arabic study abroad program that was affected by this disruption and describes the program outcomes both in the form of student work and student evaluations of these elements of the program.

Arabic Summer Intensive Program 2020, University of Arizona: Overview

The Arabic Summer Intensive Program that the University of Arizona (UA) offers in Morocco could not be carried out there due to the international travel ban during the summer of 2020. The program offers students from around the country federally-funded scholarships to learn Arabic language and culture. The UA also runs a domestic Summer Intensive Program, usually on the UA campus, also with federal funding. During the travel ban and serious health concerns regarding the spread of the virus stateside, the study abroad program could neither operate in Morocco or in person on campus. Consequently, the program shifted to remote instruction. It offered the students planning to study abroad the option of joining the other students participating in the domestic program, in both cases, remotely. A larger than usual cohort of students ended up joining the UA Arabic Summer Intensive Program combining these domestic students with study abroad students into one program. Because of this combination, the program incorporated elements into its structure that attempted to meet the needs of both groups while being entirely virtual. The new virtual model ended up combining elements from the domestic and overseas versions of the program that aimed to provide for all concerned a sense of immersion despite the remote mode of instruction.

The original structure of both the domestic and overseas programs shared a number of common elements. The programs were, respectively, 9.5 weeks' long (domestic) and 8.5 weeks' long (study abroad) and had the following elements in common:

- Four hours of group instruction each morning, five days a week
- Three afternoon sessions per week to provide personalized instruction through tutoring
- Three freely scheduled sessions with a *language partner*, a peer native speaker of the language
- Three guest lectures alternating with three film screenings

The main differences in the original structures of the programs consisted primarily in the semi-structured and unstructured portions intended to provide student-directed immersive learning and intercultural engagement. For instance, the study abroad program offered homestays with Moroccan families while the domestic program offered housing in the dorms with a *dorm mentor* who was a peer native speaker of Arabic. Another main difference is that the study abroad program also included day trips and weekend excursions in Morocco. The domestic program, on the other hand, organized cultural activities both on site and, occasionally, in the Arabic-speaking communities, which lasted one hour once a week and featured aspects of Arab culture, such as going to the store, learning about fashion, etc.

With the shift to remote instruction, both programs lost the unstructured, in-person opportunities to develop intercultural competence and engage with the community. By taking advantage of technology as well as engaging our overseas partner institution in Morocco, the

summer virtual program forged a new model that implemented some hitherto untested activities intended to provide immersive engagement with the language and culture. Roughly 75 students each summer session (150 students) completed this program remotely. The virtual program consisted of the following:

- Two summer sessions totaling 9.5 weeks, delivered primarily over Zoom
- Re-vamped curriculum and materials based on online learning best practices
- Three Arabic levels (beginning through advanced)
- Daily synchronous morning classes (Arizona Time Zone)
- Afternoon personalized instructional activities
- Interactive cultural activities initiated by UA and jointly with the Morocco partner institution

Virtual Cultural Immersion Activities

In the absence of the opportunity to travel abroad, the 2020 Arizona Virtual Cultural Immersion Program aimed to deepen students' understanding of Arab culture through a series of live, interactive activities on Zoom. The choice of synchronous activities was intended to provide the students with a sense of authenticity and immediacy not provided when using recorded materials. Because of the opportunity for students to interact with the participants in the environment of the virtual activity, they were more likely to encounter unexpected situations and conversational twists that would make the interaction more compelling, as well as give them more control over how the overall exchange could be developed. This experiential component was particularly relevant for the activities coordinated with the overseas partner in Morocco. The activities were specifically designed to generate unexpected scenarios similar to what students would encounter walking on the streets or when visiting homes in Morocco, all with the intent of personalizing the learning experience, increasing motivation, and heightening the first-person perspective during exchanges with the Moroccan lead person. Since this portion was a central element of the program and because most of the activities were new, it was a calculated risk that banked on solid technical infrastructure at the global level, along with the adaptability of the faculty and staff in taking on these new roles in this technology-mediated environment.

The planned activities highlighted various cultural aspects of the Arabic-speaking world in general, with a particular focus on Morocco. The program was implemented using experts from the University of Arizona in collaboration with AALIM, the partner institution in Meknes, Morocco. For maximum integration with classroom activities, students wrote summaries that they would present and discuss subsequently in class in order to demonstrate what they learned from the virtual tours, movies or lectures on Mondays and the cultural clubs on Thursdays. The students also were asked to perform a final in-class reflection based on all of their interactive tours (What did you learn? What caught your attention? How does it compare with your home practices or with practices in other countries you know?).

The cultural program was divided into three main areas with the first two being more experiential in nature:

1. Virtual cultural clubs (one hour each over six Wednesdays)
2. Virtual interactive tours (one hour each over six Weekends)
3. Guest speakers alternating with film screenings (two hours each on Fridays)

All three components were mandatory for the federally funded students. For the rest of the students, the weekday components were mandatory while the weekend components were voluntary. Students signed up for these activities using a survey.

I. Cultural Clubs (Mandatory for all students):
Wednesday 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. AZ Time

Three cultural clubs were offered: Music/Singing, Calligraphy, and Moroccan Cooking. Each club contained six lessons, three in Summer Session I and three in Summer Session II. Students signed up for one of the three clubs and worked synchronously with a club leader for one hour on Wednesday for the duration of their enrollment. The Music and Cooking clubs were facilitated by club leaders residing in Meknes, Morocco, while the Calligraphy club was facilitated by an expert from Tucson. Students were informed that the purchase of some supplies might be needed.

In the *cooking club*, students were to take a closer look at the world-renowned Moroccan cuisine. Students learned the different types of food that Moroccans like to cook and how they differ from other culinary traditions around the world. Each Wednesday the club members made a new dish in a new home. While some cooking tutorials took place from the high-tech instructional kitchen at the partner school, others were conducted in the comfort of a Moroccan family's home. The activities took place live in an interactive setting through the Zoom platform. Students were asked to purchase and prepare their ingredients ahead of time and be ready to participate and interact with the instructors leading the activity, as well as the hosting family members. Ingredient lists were supplied in English and in Arabic ahead of time via an attractive flier featuring a photograph of the dish to be prepared. The dishes were selected so they could be completed within one hour and their ingredients were readily available in any local grocery store in the U.S. Students cooked the meal in their own home kitchen since they were all joining the program from their homes. They ate the meals they prepared with family members, off camera.

Music is an excellent way to learn and practice a new language and Arabic is no exception. Arabic music is diverse and comes from many corners of the globe. The *music club* highlighted this musical richness by exploring songs from Morocco to Egypt and, then, all the way to the Levant. Students received song lyrics ahead of time and then came together on Wednesdays to listen and learn about the music, its composers, and the singers. The overseas instructors led these live sessions on Zoom, allowing students to hear the music, learn the meanings of the lyrics, and even practice singing the songs. Guest musicians were invited to three of the sessions to interact with students and instructors, as illustrated below.



Musician demonstrating different “maqaams;” sample line from lyrics in Arabic/English.

The *calligraphy club* explored how the Arabic script has evolved over the centuries into an art form in its own right. Arabic calligraphy has adorned buildings, books and paintings in a vast expanse of the old and modern world. The club explored a variety of styles of calligraphy used in different parts of the Arab and Islamic world. Students practiced different types of calligraphy under the guidance of an expert calligrapher from the UA faculty and worked on producing an art piece of their choice. Students purchased certain supplies in advance for this club. The calligraphy club was the most popular (see student enrollment numbers in the next section).

II. Virtual Interactive Tours (Mandatory for funded students; Optional/Sign up for all others):

The program included tours with small groups of students offered on Saturday and Sunday from 9:00-10:00 a.m. AZ Time for Group A and 10:00-11:00 a.m. for Group B to account for the time difference in Morocco and the rest of the U.S. The interactive tours were conducted live and were facilitated by cultural mentors based in Meknes, Morocco. This portion of the program was the most complicated in terms of technology because it required multiple individuals to run it and had to depend on the city's technical infrastructure, which varied in quality as the tour moved around town. The potential for unexpected interactions with the locals on the streets was one of its most interesting aspects. Where appropriate, the local stores or venues to be visited were informed in advance and permissions to use the spaces were obtained. They were also briefed on the nature of the activity and the presence of the American students on the other side of the camera.

Students signed up for six tours out of a total of eight options. Grouped by Arabic level and time zone, students teamed up with cultural mentors who facilitated the tours and interacted with locals in parallel sessions. Approximately 42 students took each interactive tour. Students prepared questions in advance to ask in order to interact with Moroccans they might meet along the way. The mentor facilitated the interactive cultural tour that the group had chosen and helped them interact with the locals who interacted with the students. Students at beginning levels of Arabic were allowed to use English initially. The list of the weekend interactive cultural activities along with their description in Arabic and English was provided. The visited locations included the following:

- Traditional clothing store and bazaar in the old city
- Andalusian culture in Meknes ranging from architecture and decor to music and cuisine
- Women in the indigenous Amazigh culture
- Herbal shops and traditional remedies
- The famous Lahdim Square and Bab Mansour [Mansour Gate]
- Moroccan family life: a visit with Moroccan families
- Moroccan weddings: traditions and rituals demonstrated by four local women
- Traditional guest houses (riads): craftsmanship, architecture and décor



Mansour Gate at Lahdim Square, Meknes, Morocco

III. Lectures/Film Screenings (Mandatory for all students): Friday 3:00-5:00 p.m. AZ Time

This component consisted of six events: three in Session I and three in Session II. Guest lectures and film screenings took place in an alternating manner. The students were asked to read up about the guest speakers in advance and get ready to ask them questions about their research after the live presentation. The guest speakers were experts from different disciplines affiliated with UA. Films were streamed and students were encouraged to watch them simultaneously with their classmates. Where that was not possible, the program arranged access to the films over the weekend in preparation for class discussions.

EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERACTIVE VIRTUAL CULTURAL PROGRAM

The various activities of the interactive virtual cultural program were selected to provide students the chance to sample and engage with the target culture and language in an experiential manner, using their senses as well as their intellect. The interactive tours were conducted in groups of three to four to emulate a typical outing with friends on the streets of the host country. The cultural mentor leading the activity from Morocco played the role of the friend/mentor, mediating the experience for the students and running into locals in those specific places so that students could speak with them live on video. In the organized clubs, the students performed their selected artistic or culinary activities synchronously with others following the guidance of the club leaders, asking questions and making comments in real time, as appropriate. The cooking club took place in a real kitchen with the expectation that edible products would be produced for the students and their families to sample. The lectures and film screenings emulated settings where these activities would typically take place such as a large auditorium or a conference hall with all students in the program in attendance.

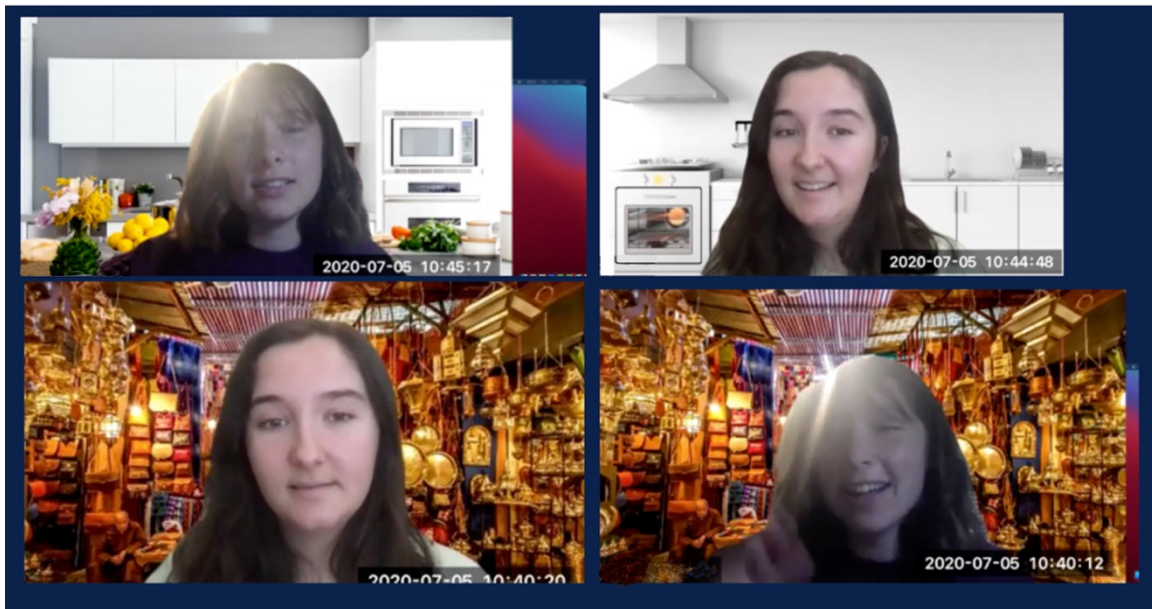
Virtual Study Abroad Cultural Program Effectiveness

The activities were further integrated in the program through inclusion in the classroom parts of the program via reflective discussions, oral presentations, and e-portfolios and public performances delivered at the end of the program. To gauge the effectiveness of this virtual cultural program, we examined the products that students generated and administered a survey to collect their evaluations of the program. In the following section, an overview of the findings is presented.

Students' Products and Creative Harnessing of Technology: Oral Presentations

The cultural component of the program becomes most noticeable in the student oral presentations. These are regular skits or presentations that students performed in pairs or groups of three creatively using the language they had recently practiced. Since all students were joining the program remotely, another layer of complication was added in the creation of such products. Interestingly enough, the student presentations contained elements that appeared to transcend the physical isolation caused by them learning at home.

Below is an example of a presentation from beginning-level students on the topic of shopping and food. The students can be seen attempting to (1) transcend isolation and promote the illusion of togetherness and sense of community, and (2) simulate immersion in the target cultural environment. The strategies they used can be described as follows. First, they used Zoom functions in their skits to create the illusion of being in authentic spaces. They added screen backgrounds with images similar to the ones they experienced in their cultural clubs or virtual tours. Second, they shared identical screen backgrounds while performing their skits or presentations to suggest physical togetherness, even though they were located all over the U.S. In the screenshot below, the two students played different roles pertaining to the theme of shopping and cooking to demonstrate their linguistic and cultural proficiency, using the same Zoom background screens to pretend to be in the same physical environment.



Student Creations and Cultural Products: End of Program Projects and Exhibition

Throughout the duration of the program, students were instructed to assemble e-portfolios to represent the cultural products they generated in their cultural clubs. They used photos of cooked dishes, recordings of song performances and instrument playing, as well as calligraphy creations. The program organized a final event—attended by all participants, faculty, and staff in the program—that could best be described as an e-exhibition to celebrate their accomplishments. The following photos are samples of the various traditional Moroccan dishes the students made. They represent meloui flat bread, couscous, chicken tagine, and dates with roasted almonds and mint tea.



The writing samples below represent the calligraphy work the students produced using different materials. From left to right, the writings contain the following: the Arabic word *steadfastness* (a word inspired by the pandemic period), transcribed names of students, the sentence “I have a lot of dreams,” and the idiomatic expression “Wishing you success, O my beloved.”



CULTURAL SURVEY AND STUDENT EVALUATIONS

A survey to evaluate the various parts of the cultural program was administered to students at the end of the first session and the second session of the program (Appendix A). It contained four sections. The first collected information about language levels and program enrollments. The second asked them about their experience with the virtual tours; and the third concentrated on the cultural clubs. The fourth section focused on the guest lectures. The survey was designed to gauge how these programmatic elements affected student engagement with the content: their enjoyment, motivation, perception of the effectiveness of learning of the content, connection with the activity leaders and other students, and the effectiveness of the technology infrastructure. Responses were on a five-point scale with options ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. An optional open-ended question was also offered at the end of each section.

Participants

Of the 150 students who completed the intensive summer program, a total of 136 replied to the survey. Since only the students on scholarships were mandated to attend the interactive tours, the respondent numbers for this part averaged 44. The respondents from the cultural clubs are listed below in Table 1.

Table 1

Demographics and Student Participation: Virtual Club Enrollment		
Demographics & Student Participation:	Total number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
Breakdown of Virtual Club Enrollment		
Calligraphy	57	43
Cooking	53	38
Music	26	19
Total	136	100%

The beginning group represented 48% of the total respondents while the intermediate represented 24% and the advanced 28%. The students receiving scholarships through the federal grants at UA constituted 68% of the total number of respondents.

Results

The survey results reflected favorably with respect to the adoption of this cultural program (see tables 2-6 below). At 94% and 88% perceived effectiveness, the cooking club and the interactive tours seemed to be the most popular among students. The music club trailed at 43%, in great part due to the inability to synchronize the music because of the difficult levels of technical readiness among the participants, both the individual students and the overseas partners. Nevertheless, most students still appear to believe that the online format was not as effective as the in-person format. But interestingly enough, 73% and 79% of the respondents from the cultural clubs and the interactive tours, respectively, indicated that they shared what they learned in that component with others (family members, friends, etc.). In this category, the cooking club was again the most successful with 94% of the respondents saying they shared their learning with others. With respect to effectiveness, around 80% of the respondents found the clubs enjoyable and relaxing and believed these activities helped them to feel motivated to learn the language and culture. The level of enjoyment and motivation was even higher in the interactive tours: 89% for both categories. In terms of feeling connected to fellow students, activity leaders and the place, the interactive tours were the most effective, followed by the cooking club.

Table 2

Quantitative Data: Overview of Cultural Clubs			
Statement	% Students who agree or strongly agree	% Students who disagree or strongly disagree	% Students who are neutral
Cultural Clubs, 136 student responses (Q4 – 6)			

1. The cultural club was effective.	76%	7%	17%
2. Learning from this cultural club was enjoyable and relaxing.	80%	12%	8%
3. Because of this cultural club, I feel motivated to learn more about the subject.	80%	7%	13%
4. The online format of the cultural club is as effective as the in-person format.	24%	49%	27%
5. I felt connected to the activity leaders.	53%	16%	33%
6. I felt connected to the other students in the club.	32%	32%	36%
7. Participating in the cultural club gives me a sense of accomplishment	65%	13%	22%
8. I have learned a lot from this cultural club.	71%	7%	22%
9. I have shared with others (family members, friends, etc.) what I have been learning in this club.	73%	16%	12%
10. The WiFi connection was adequate.	70%	12%	19%

Table 3

Quantitative Data: Calligraphy Cultural Club			
Statement	% Students who agree or strongly agree	% Students who disagree or strongly disagree	% Students who are neutral
Calligraphy Cultural Club, 57 student responses			
1. The cultural club was effective.	72%	7.5%	20.5%
2. Learning from this cultural club was enjoyable and relaxing.	79%	7%	14%
3. Because of this cultural club, I feel motivated to learn more about the subject.	79%	9%	12%
4. The online format of the cultural club is as effective as the in-person format.	16%	49.5%	34.5%
5. I felt connected to the activity leaders.	46.5%	21%	32.5%
6. I felt connected to the other students in the club.	22%	42%	36%

7. Participating in the cultural club gives me a sense of accomplishment	55.5%	14%	30.5%
8. I have learned a lot from this cultural club.	63.5%	9%	27.5%
9. I have shared with others (family members, friends, etc.) what I have been learning in this club.	63.5%	10.5%	26%
10. The WiFi connection was adequate.	73.5%	5.5%	21%

Table 4

Quantitative Data: Music Cultural Club			
Statement	% Students who agree or strongly agree	% Students who disagree or strongly disagree	% Students who are neutral
Music Cultural Club, 26 student responses			
1. The cultural club was effective.	43%	19%	38%
2. Learning from this cultural club was enjoyable and relaxing.	50%	19.5%	30.5%
3. Because of this cultural club, I feel motivated to learn more about the subject.	69%	7.5%	23.5%
4. The online format of the cultural club is as effective as the in-person format.	7%	50%	43%
5. I felt connected to the activity leaders.	42%	19%	39%
6. I felt connected to the other students in the club.	34.5%	19.5%	46%
7. Participating in the cultural club gives me a sense of accomplishment	50%	15.5%	43.5%
8. I have learned a lot from this cultural club.	46%	7.5%	46.5%
9. I have shared with others (family members, friends, etc.) what I have been learning in this club.	42%	15%	43%
10. The WiFi connection was adequate.	58%	4%	38%

Table 5

Quantitative Data: Cooking Cultural Club			
Statement	% Students who agree or strongly agree	% Students who disagree or strongly disagree	% Students who are neutral
Cooking Cultural Club, 53 student responses			
1. The cultural club was effective.	94%	2%	4%
2. Learning from this cultural club was enjoyable and relaxing.	87%	4%	9%
3. Because of this cultural club, I feel motivated to learn more about the subject.	85%	4%	11%
4. The online format of the cultural club is as effective as the in-person format.	25%	45%	30%
5. I felt connected to the activity leaders.	65%	9%	26%
6. I felt connected to the other students in the club.	41%	16%	43%
7. Participating in the cultural club gives me a sense of accomplishment	81%	11%	8%
8. I have learned a lot from this cultural club.	91%	4%	5%
9. I have shared with others (family members, friends, etc.) what I have been learning in this club.	94%	4%	2%
10. The WiFi connection was adequate.	68%	22.5%	9.5%

Table 6

Quantitative Data: Virtual Tours			
Statement	% Students who agree or strongly agree	% Students who disagree or strongly disagree	% Students who are neutral
Virtual Tours, average 40 student responses per tour (Q8-9)			
1. The tours were informative and enjoyable.	88%	5%	6.5%
2. I learned a lot about the local culture from participating in the tours.	89%	3%	8%

3. Because of the tours, I feel motivated to learn more about Moroccan and Arab culture.	89%	4%	7%
4. The online format of the tour was effective.	61.5%	18.5%	20%
5. I felt connected to the activity leaders and the participating locals.	67%	14%	19.5%
6. I felt connected to the other students in the tours.	56.5%	22%	21.5%
7. I felt connected to the place after participating in the tours.	67%	14.5%	13.5%
8. Participating in the tours is more beneficial than watching a video or listening to a lecture about the place.	72.5%	14.5%	8%
9. I have shared with others (family members, friends, etc.) what I have been learning in the tours.	79%	11.5%	10%
10. The WiFi connection was adequate.	52.5%	26%	21.5%
11. Classroom discussions about the various cultural activities (lectures, tours, clubs, films) were beneficial.	76%	8%	16.5%

The qualitative data was overwhelmingly positive. Examples of representative responses are listed below.

- I felt that all activities gave good exposure to language and culture.
- The Moroccan Cooking Club was so much fun and educational. After we learned how to make Tagine on Wednesday I had to make it again on Friday night! The recipes were delicious and I learned so many Arabic words in the process. Thank you Ustadha 7asana and team!
- ... I also LOVED cooking club, I never really cooked before, but now I am interested in learning to cook more food. I even cooked the vegetable couscous I learned from the club for my family for dinner and they loved it.
- I really enjoyed the weekend tours and felt that they were interesting and a great way to practice and improve my Arabic. ... I enjoyed the cultural clubs as a way to support my language learning and understanding of the cultures in the Middle East and North Africa.
- I really enjoyed the cooking club and I thought it was really well done considering the circumstances.
- I still make some of the recipes I learned from the cooking club and it has made me much more interested in Arabic cooking.

- I enjoyed the calligraphy club and learned a lot. Professor X was always available if I had a question or needed to talk with him. He is very knowledgeable and I enjoyed his class.
- It was great and interesting, but I couldn't quite always hear what the person doing the tour was saying because it sounded muffled. Other than that, I really enjoyed it and learned a lot about culture.
- At the end of the cultural club, I was able to complete my own calligraphy project that I gifted to my parents.
- The music club was very informative and a great addition to the program. While it is difficult to sing at the same time since there is a delay with Zoom, I really enjoyed singing Zina and Layla layali with everyone and learning lyrics. I would suggest not making individual people sing by themselves if they don't want to- maybe more singing as a group. Really awesome club, chokran bzaf for your efforts!
- The music club was highly energetic and engaging. I am grateful to have been a party to such an interactive cultural experience.
- Great experience with some great people. Really enjoyed myself and learned a lot.

CONCLUSION

While not the same as actually being present in the host country of Morocco, offering program elements that attempt to bring a taste of study abroad to students who are not able to travel was both feasible and academically productive. The experiment described above indicates that with some improvement to the technology and to the planning of the interactive virtual cultural activities, students can have an enjoyable, satisfying and effective learning experience that develops their intercultural competence and supports their motivation. Another pedagogical and programming takeaway from this experience is that these program elements can be integrated into a regular domestic immersive program so as to become a regular component of its structure. Because not all students have a chance to participate in study abroad, such interactive virtual programming components can provide a greater language and cultural learning experience for all, especially those limited to at-home programs. This can also serve as a great cultural preparation for students heading overseas to study abroad. In other words, while these elements were developed and implemented under duress during the pandemic, this model gives proof of concept for integrating cultural experiences into the regular domestic programs to promote L2 language and culture learning.

APPENDIX

Section I
<p>Section I includes 3 demographic questions covering Arabic class enrollment, program enrollment, and cultural club participation. <i>No statements in this section.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Q2 -Which Arabic class were you attending during Summer Session I? • Q3 -Which program were you enrolled in during Session I? • Q4- Which cultural club did you participate in?

Section II

Section II includes 2 questions regarding students' cultural club experience.

- Q5 - Please select the statement that best describes your experience with the virtual cultural club you attended from the statements below:
 - The cultural club was effective.
 - Learning from this cultural club was enjoyable and relaxing.
 - Because of this cultural club, I feel motivated to learn more about the subject.
 - The online format of the cultural club is as effective as the in-person format.
 - I felt connected to the activity leaders.
 - I felt connected to the other students in the club.
 - Participating in the cultural club gives me a sense of accomplishment.
 - I have learned a lot from this cultural club.
 - I have shared with others (family members, friends, etc.) what I have been learning in this club.
 - The WiFi connection was adequate.
- Q6 - Please add comments here to elaborate on your responses about the Cultural Clubs

Section III

Section III includes 3 questions regarding interactive/virtual tours.

- Q7 - Which Interactive tours did you participate in? (click all that applies)
- Q8 - Please rate the following statements (from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) to describe your experience with the virtual tours that you have attended so far:
 - The tours were informative and enjoyable.
 - I learned a lot about the local culture from participating in the tours.
 - Because of the tours, I feel motivated to learn more about Moroccan and Arab culture.
 - The online format of the tour was effective.
 - I felt connected to the activity leaders and the participating locals.
 - I felt connected to the other students in the tours.
 - I felt connected to the place after participating in the tours.
 - Participating in the tours is more beneficial than watching a video or listening to a lecture about the place.
 - I have shared with others (family members, friends, etc.) what I have been learning in the tours.
 - The WiFi connection was adequate.
 - Classroom discussions about the various cultural activities (lectures, tours, clubs, films) were beneficial.
- Q9 - Please add comments here to elaborate on your responses about the Virtual Tours

Section IV

Section IV includes 2 questions regarding guest lectures.

- Q10 - Please rate the following statements (from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree) to describe your experience with the virtual lectures that you have attended so far:
 - The lectures were informative and engaging.
 - I learned a lot about the subject.
 - I have shared with others (family members, friends, etc.) what I have learned in the lectures.
 - The WiFi connection was adequate.
- Q11 - Please add comments here to elaborate on your responses about the Lectures