

Interview Guide: Cultural Journey Adjustments - Voices of South American BYU-I Students

Introduction

Interviewer: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. My name is Camila Ogden, and I am conducting this study as part of my senior project in Communications at BYU-Idaho. The purpose of this study is to understand the experiences of South American students as they adjust to college life in the United States, particularly at BYU-Idaho.

This interview should take about 30 minutes. I will ask about your experiences with cultural differences, challenges you have faced, and any strategies or resources that have helped you adapt. There are no right or wrong answers—your honest thoughts and experiences are most valuable.

Before we begin, I want to remind you that your participation is **completely voluntary**. You may refuse to answer any question or stop the interview at any time without any consequences. Your responses will be kept confidential, and no personally identifying information will be included in the final project.

Additionally, with your consent, I would like to record this interview to ensure accuracy in my research. Do you consent to be recorded?

Interview Questions

Background Information

1. Can you tell me a little about yourself? (Your name, country of origin, major, and how long you've been studying at BYU-Idaho.)
2. What motivated you to study at BYU-Idaho instead of a university in your home country?

Cultural Adjustment Challenges

3. What cultural differences have been the biggest challenge for you at BYU-Idaho?
 - (Follow-up: Were these challenges more academic, social, or both?)

4. Can you share an example of a situation where a cultural difference made things difficult for you at BYU-Idaho?
 - (Follow-up: How did you feel at that moment, and how did you handle it?)
5. Have you experienced any misunderstandings due to cultural differences? If so, how did you resolve them?

Adapting to the Academic Environment

6. How does the academic environment at BYU-Idaho compare to what you were used to in your home country?
7. Have you had difficulties with the language barrier, classroom participation, or professor expectations?
 - (Follow-up: What strategies have helped you succeed academically despite these challenges?)

Social Life & Integration

8. How easy or difficult has it been for you to make friends at BYU-Idaho?
9. Have you faced any social challenges, such as differences in customs, communication styles, or forming relationships with students from different backgrounds?
 - (Follow-up: Can you give an example of a time when a cultural difference affected your social interactions?)
10. Do you feel that BYU-Idaho has an inclusive environment for international students? Why or why not?

Coping Strategies & Support

11. How do you usually handle situations where there's a cultural misunderstanding or miscommunication?
12. Have you found any campus resources (such as clubs, international student services, or faculty members) helpful in overcoming cultural challenges?
13. Have you developed personal strategies to adapt and feel more comfortable in this environment?

Reflections & Advice

14. Looking back, what do you wish you had known before coming to BYU-Idaho?
 15. What advice would you give to future South American students who are planning to study here?
 16. Is there anything else about your experience that you would like to share?
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Closing & Next Steps

Interviewer: Thank you so much for sharing your experiences with me today. Your insights will be incredibly valuable in helping me understand the challenges and adaptations of South American students at BYU-Idaho.

Would you like to receive a summary of the findings once the project is completed?
[If yes, collect preferred contact method]

If you have any questions or decide later that you want to withdraw your participation, feel free to reach out to me at ogdencaamila@gmail.com or through phone: 540-809-5279

Thank you again, and I appreciate your time!