CAPA
THE GLOBAL EDUCATION NETWORK

LEARNING ABROAD CENTER
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

# CAREER INTEGRATION

## REVIEWING THE IMPACT OF EXPERIENCE ABROAD ON EMPLOYMENT

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The editors wish to acknowledge the contribution of all of those who participated in the University of Minnesota's Learning Abroad Center and CAPA The Global Education Network conference, Minding the Gap: Career Integration Strategies for Educators and Employers on July 13–15, 2016, in Boston, MA.

International educators, career service and employer relations professionals, faculty, student service professionals, recruiters, and industry leaders discussed and contested best practices and innovations within the fields of education abroad and career services.

The spirit of those debates is reflected in the contributions in this volume.

The editors wish to give special thanks to staff at The University of Minnesota and to CAPA colleagues, Anthony Gristwood and Catherine Colon, for the invaluable assistance in editing text. Special thanks to Lorena Leonard and Jackie Cimino for the creative design and production of this journal.

# SECTION ONE
## *Opening: first voices*

# Editors' Notes

This volume and its predecessor, in conjunction with two connected conferences, attests to the fact that employability is no longer incidental or secondary to the agenda of study abroad.

These contributions do not offer a single or uniform point-of-view. They range from examples of ways in which practitioners integrate career preparedness in the curriculum of study abroad, to essays that question the degree to which the notion distorts the liberal arts emphasis. The relationship between liberal educational principles and career preparation imperatives is not a matter of consensus. It reaches directly into the purpose and function of higher education. Education clearly exists for the enrichment and empowerment of individuals. It also has an obligation to serve the needs of "the knowledge economy" and "the civil society" by developing educated citizens. That almost every one of these terms is problematic is a crucial factor in the contested discourses presented here.

Higher education is a global commodity, sold and bought in trans-national markets. It is also very expensive and not available to all individuals or nations. Some of us (nations and individuals) may be able to afford to shop in Harrods, Tiffany & Co. or Bergdorf Goodman. Others may struggle to afford the Dollar Store, yet alone Walgreens. As in any commodity market, there are a diverse set of stakeholders. Higher education is increasingly having to balance the views of an expanded number of competing voices. The cake has become larger and more are seeking a slice. Politicians have made increasingly strident interventions. The question of employability permeates the thoughts of those who pay the bills: tax payers, parents, politicians, and, of course, students. Education is no longer the exclusive responsibility of educators (was it ever so?)

Several essays here are written from national or regional perspectives other than those of the USA. They demonstrate the fact that the question of employability in higher education is not constrained by national boundaries. While the issues may be framed differently and pressures vary, similar underlying issues prevail. This area of discussion has implications that are educational, political, social, economic, and trans-national.

This second edition of "Career Integration: Reviewing the Impact of Experience Abroad on Employment" derives from a unique publishing partnership between a private international educational organization and a large comprehensive state university. This is indicative of the breadth of engagement with the theoretical and practical implications of career integration into the agenda of study abroad. Our joint commitment to the provision of a forum to discuss views and exchange recommendations is symptomatic of the significance of this topic to all of us involved in international education.

We hope that this journal is a valuable contribution to the debate.

Christine Anderson: The University of Minnesota
John Christian: CAPA The Global Education Network
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# Career Integration and Learning Abroad - an Ethical Imperative

John Christian, CAPA The Global Education Network

In a recent report on the value of study abroad, the Institute of International Education wrote: "Now, more than ever, international experience is one of the most important components of a 21st century education." (IIE, n.d.)

Studying abroad is one of the best ways to expand a student's immediate personal horizons and open up a wealth of long-term professional opportunities. It enables students to gain access to international experiences that enable them to put their global learning into practice. Learning how to interact with people from other countries will be essential for all careers, be they in business, manufacturing, engineering, journalism, law and so on.

Educators play a significant role in bringing the world into classrooms, often as early as pre-school. Teachers are critical channels to mindset, and they are powerful motivators when it comes to inspiring students to pursue any and all types of global study, be it through a classroom project in second grade or a study abroad program in college.

There are many ways in which career readiness and study abroad are important for our students. I will comment briefly on a few of these:

***Global engagement***

An understanding of global issues is one key outcome of study abroad, but instilling a sense of global engagement and commitment to solving global issues is another. This is vital to our future and should shape and inform our program models and content. Globalization has made us all understand how much more interconnected our world is, and demonstrates the importance

of working together to solve global problems. Religious, political, social, and economic distinctions are woven into the learning agenda of study abroad. Study abroad teaches students about global issues of importance that impact both their home and host countries; via new technology, students can also connect to students in other parts of the world to expand their global view even further.

At CAPA, our programs are all embedded in global cities. This brings significant purpose to our educational agenda; the world is predominately urban. Since Saskia Sassen first introduced the concept of the mega or global city in The Global City: New York, London, Tokyo (2001), the world has become more urban than ever. The World Health Organization reports that the global urban population is expected to grow approximately 1.84% per year between 2015 and 2020, 1.63% per year between 2020 and 2025, and 1.44% per year between 2025 and 2030.

Today, 54% of the world's population live in urban areas, a proportion that is expected to increase to 66% by 2050 (WHO, 2016). With this comes an opportunity to understand a labyrinth of complex social, economic, political, and environmental issues.

***Understanding of, and empathy with, people from other countries with different belief systems and behaviors***

The movement of people around the globe is impacting the makeup of populations in significant ways. As a result, once traditionally homogeneous nations and societies are becoming more diverse, sometimes fractured or fragmented. The diversity that exists outside of college campuses has the potential to disturb students' learned or inherited assumptions.

In short, there is an imperative for students to learn to engage with people who think, pray, act, and believe in ways that are different to their own experience. As study abroad students, they learn what it is like to be the "other" and adapt to the unfamiliar. This personal experience as a quasi-resident provides them with a greater awareness of the challenges and issues associated with their status, and allows them to develop empathy, understanding, and appreciation for these differences, while also identifying

the similarities that exist across nations. Humanizing global problems and developing the imaginative and creative skills to solve them are critical to the 21st century world.

***Personal skills***

Navigating a new environment develops personal skills such as confidence and independence, as well as competencies such as navigating public transportation in a foreign country. Getting lost, asking strangers for directions, journeying beyond one's comfort zone, and discovering routes back to the familiar may be significant learning experiences. These may seem like small achievements, but in the 21st century, jobs are increasingly moving to urban environments and require adaptability and resourcefulness that rely on successful communication in a whole new series of contexts.

Study abroad gives students the confidence, independence, and experience to make smart, independent decisions and to take the leap after they graduate to pursue the many opportunities that exist in cities in the 21st century.

***Future professional success and employability***

The 2016 Career Integration Conference closed with a panel of industry leaders discussing the employment landscape and signifying how post-graduates may successfully navigate this landscape to employment. They agreed, unanimously, that they are looking for employees who can think critically and communicate well, are adaptive to change, are creative problem solvers, and have a diverse educational experience. These are skills that students learn when they are exposed to a new environment abroad.

The National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) makes the following points:

> The career readiness of college graduates is an important issue in higher education, in the labor market, and in the public arena. Yet, up until now, "career readiness' has been undefined, making it difficult for leaders in higher education, workforce development, and public policy to work together effectively to ensure the career readiness of today's graduates (NACE, n.d.)

NACE published a list of career readiness competencies which are as follows:

- **Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:** Exercise sound reasoning to analyze issues, make decisions, and overcome problems. The individual is able to obtain, interpret, and use knowledge, facts, and data in this process, and may demonstrate originality and inventiveness.

- **Oral/Written Communications:** Articulate thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively in written and oral forms to persons inside and outside of the organization. The individual has public speaking skills; is able to express ideas to others; and can write/edit memos, letters, and complex technical reports clearly and effectively.

- **Teamwork/Collaboration:** Build collaborative relationships with colleagues and customers representing diverse cultures, races, ages, genders, religions, lifestyles, and viewpoints. The individual is able to work within a team structure and can negotiate and manage conflict.

- **Information Technology Application:** Select and use appropriate technology to accomplish a given task. The individual is also able to apply computing skills to solve problems.

- **Leadership:** Leverage the strengths of others to achieve common goals, and use interpersonal skills to coach and develop others. The individual is able to assess and manage his/her emotions and those of others; use empathetic skills to guide and motivate; and organize, prioritize, and delegate work.

- **Professionalism/Work Ethic:** Demonstrate personal accountability and effective work habits, e.g., punctuality, working productively with others, and time workload management, and understand the impact of non-verbal communication on professional work image. The individual demonstrates integrity and ethical behavior, acts responsibly with the interests of the larger community in mind, and is able to learn from his/her mistakes.

- **Career Management:** Identify and articulate one's skills, strengths, knowledge, and experiences relevant to the position desired and career goals, and identify areas necessary for professional growth. The individual is able to navigate and explore job options, understands and can take the steps necessary to pursue opportunities, and understands how to self-advocate for opportunities in the workplace (NACE, n.d.)

We know that the investment of time, and an increasingly significant amount of money, is required to participate in higher education and learning abroad. This means that many (maybe most) of our students will be in debt when they leave our campuses. Nick Clements, in "The Real Student Loan Crisis: Debt-Fueled Tuition Inflation," asked the question "How big of a problem is student loan debt in America?" (Clements, 2016). The answer is a worrying reminder of the importance of integrating career readiness into our work in both higher education and learning abroad.

Andy Josuweit, co-Founder & CEO of Student Loan Hero, reveals what a dose of this reality looks like:

- $1.26 trillion in total U.S. student loan debt
- 44.2 million Americans with student loan debt
- Student loan delinquency rate of 11.1%
- Average monthly student loan payment (for borrower aged 20 to 30 years): $351
- Median monthly student loan payment (for borrower aged 20 to 30 years): $203 (Josuweit, n.d.)

I believe that this creates an ethical imperative: to create meaningful connections between higher education, learning abroad and career opportunities in ways that represent 21st century employability.

Learning abroad offers us a unique opportunity. By teaching students within an international environment, far from the familiar, we create opportunities for students to gain a valuable understanding of concepts and perspectives different from their own that will help them to adapt in any working environment. They are regularly challenged to solve problems and gain independence as they navigate new environments, people, and places.

We are able to go beyond the traditional classroom and teach our students how to be more adaptable and flexible. We empower them to understand global complexities and acquire valuable relevant competencies that will prepare them for what is an increasingly inter-dependent and complex world and workforce landscape.

However, structure, intentionality, and strategy, informed and inspired by relevant learning outcomes with a strong emphasis on personal and professional development, are preconditions for enabling students to go beyond simply living in another county. The objective is to empower students to begin the process of interpretation and documentation. This, subsequently, will give them the ability to articulate the value of their experience, and the skills they have acquired, with confidence and specificity; and this ability will in turn prove a significant asset when they present themselves to potential employers or graduate schools.

In short, the importance of study abroad is manifest as intellectual enrichment, personal development, and employability.

The College Board argues that students need to,

> ...have the ability to adapt to ever-increasing rates of constant change, something that will characterize global markets for the foreseeable future. In order to achieve this goal, the U.S. must possess a citizenry who demonstrates sufficient levels of global competency – that is, they have the right skills, aptitudes, and dispositions necessary to navigate and excel in a highly fluid globalized, and increasingly competitive environment (Balistreri, Di Giacomo, Noisette & Ptak, 2012).

Martha Johnson set the stage for this year's conference with her opening statement:

> The Career Integration Conference is a unique opportunity to convene an array of stakeholders committed to developing a global workforce and society. The focus of the discussions and sessions allows participants to engage with the subject, connect with allies sharing different perspectives, and share best practices. Participants in the 2014 conference left feeling inspired, but also felt they had a few new practical tools and strategies to integrate into their own campus and organization culture, mission, and programs.

An attendance of almost 150 demonstrated the continuing relevance of the topic of real life strategies for career readiness in higher education and education abroad. I would argue that learning abroad is uniquely positioned to prepare students for a competitive and global career market if we align our programs with rich content, supported by methodologies that encourage and support the ability of students to interpret, document, and describe the global competencies they have acquired in a meaningful and critical way. Only then will our work begin to have an impact on their employability.

This collection of essays signifies the profound relevance of these issues in many contexts and diverse places. Ideas are interrogated, practices offered and practices contested, approaches described, examples offered and principles proposed, all with erudition, passion and urgency. What emerges is a complex field that may not be simple, but it is, in one way or another, simply necessary.

Once again, thank you to our colleagues at the University of Minnesota's Learning Abroad Center for partnering with us on the 2016 Career Integration Conference and this publication.

# Career Integration Conference: Perspectives

Maritheresa Frain, Council on International Educational Exchange

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The first iteration of this conference focused on the connection between education abroad and career development. While more questions were posed than answered, the dialogue continues concerning the value of international educational experiences, the support students need to articulate the impact of the experience on their future career options, and the universality of this right for all students.

I would like to share with you three overarching messages that may help frame the conversation as we challenge ourselves on how best to prepare students for an increasingly competitive workplace.

***Globalization is not going away***

Despite contested political rhetorics, the fundamental reality of the world in which we live, and the world that will be, is that we are creating even greater degrees of interdependence. As President Clinton eloquently noted: "Divorce is not an option." (Krieger, 2014). Set against this backdrop, it is imperative for us, as citizens of the 21st Century, to define the parameters of our relations with our neighbors down the street and around the world. Leaders in higher education are compelled, therefore, to ensure that curricula are designed to increase knowledge, experience, and curiosity about other countries, nations, and cultures -- both at home and abroad.

***Students who study abroad develop skills more attractive to employers***

Inextricably linked to this reality is the fact that students who study abroad gain diverse skills, knowledge, and talents that make them more employable than those who do not.

Many studies exist to support the claim that students who study abroad are more successful in completing their undergraduate degrees—they maintain higher GPAs and they graduate within four years (Redden, 2010; Rubin & Sutton, 2001; Sutton & Rubin, 2004, 2010; Indiana University, 2009; UC San Diego, 2009). But how does study abroad improve employability and increased global awareness? According to a recent survey by Booz Allen Hamilton of HR professionals, at nearly 400 large companies in nine countries, the most important skills in the 21st century, regardless of country or culture, are "demonstrating strong communication skills, speaking a foreign language and showing intercultural sensitivity" (British Council, 2013: 3).

Study abroad marks a transformational event in a student´s undergraduate career. This is true both in the U.S. and the European context. Students who study abroad increase their employability while developing important "soft skills" such as adaptability, intercultural competence, language proficiency, and communication skills (European Commission, 2014).

This means that all students -- regardless of major, socioeconomic class, or ethnic background -- must acquire these skills to be successful in today´s global economy. International educational experiences provide students with the opportunities to develop these important qualities, valued by employers around the world, in a more impactful way. Helping them articulate the value of their experiences is fundamental.

***All students should have the opportunity to study abroad***

Studies show that nearly 90% of high school students state that they planned to participate in international courses and almost 50% expressed an interest in studying abroad (American Council on Education, 2005). However, only 10% of undergraduates actually study abroad (Institute of International Education, 2016a). Why is that?

Campus leaders and faculty appreciate the value of their students studying abroad. Most of the strategic plans or mission statements of U.S. institutions are likely have the words "internationalization" or "globalization" included. While study abroad programs represent only one aspect of "comprehensive internationalization," they complement institutional goals on student

recruitment, retention, access, equity, and graduation rates. Yet how do we reach these goals if only 10% of our undergraduate student population studies abroad?

A recent study by The Economist revealed that students simply do not appreciate the value of an international educational experience until after graduation. A conclusion of this report notes the following: "More effort is required on the part of universities and colleges to raise awareness within their students on the value of international experience" (The Economist, 2016).

As leaders in international education, career counselors, professors, university presidents, whatever our role, we need to be faithful to our core and work to serve the other "90%" of students who do not study abroad. We need to close this gap and help students understand the value and importance of an international experience while their education is entrusted to us.

We also need to address seriously the disparity in the ethnic composition of students studying abroad. Statistics show that Caucasian students make up almost 75% of American students studying abroad even though they account for only 58% of U.S. undergraduate population. In contrast, Hispanic and African American are seriously underrepresented in study abroad. This racial inequality must change. We need to break down the barriers of cost, culture, and curriculum to ensure equal access to all.[1]

The world of higher education and the world of study abroad are changing. Universities around the world are critically rethinking and reimagining the core of their academic operations. We have a unique chance to influence and shape young lives as they pass through our institutions for a few short years – and then through international programs for a few months or even weeks. This a sacred trust, a moral compact; we must embrace and apply the very best practices to help all students develop the skills, knowledge, and competencies for living and contributing in a rapidly changing and interconnected world. Through events, such as the Career Integration Con-

[1] For innovative ways to increase diversity in study abroad, see the MSI Study Abroad Report from UPenn Center for Minority Serving Institutions / CIEE (2016).

ference, professionals are inspired by innovative ideas, creative solutions, and the discovery of possibilities to ensure the integration of learning at home and abroad into an even more robust undergraduate educational and career development model for all to emulate.

# SECTION TWO
## *In practice: perspectives from home and abroad*

# Promoting Inclusive Excellence in Career Integration: Student Diversity in Education Abroad

Margaret S. McCullers, The Institute for Study Abroad, Butler University
Trixie Cordova, Diversity Abroad

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While the overall number of students studying abroad each year continues to increase, participation gaps persist among many underrepresented students. Although many institutions have employed a variety of strategies to promote equity in student participation, a closer look at how underrepresented students are supported throughout the education abroad continuum is merited. Creating inclusive practices to increase access to education abroad and to support the planning process may include mitigating financial barriers, considering the roles families play in students' lives, and diminishing academic risks of participation, among other strategies and challenges. Of equal importance is presenting program options with integrated pre-professional program design and empowering professional development opportunities to support student development abroad and beyond.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) has led the field of higher education in the discussion of creating inclusive practices, coining the term "Inclusive Excellence," and arguing for a "richer understanding of America's broad diversity" (Clayton-Pederson and Clayton-Pederson, 2008: 647). The AAC&U envisions an active process whereby "colleges and universities achieve excellence in learning, teaching, student development, institutional functioning, and engagement in local and global communities" (Association of American Colleges and Universities, 2016). The field of education abroad is beginning to embrace these tenets and embed them into programs and practices. As students pursue a broad range of professional

careers in today's interconnected world, institutions and study abroad providers have a responsibility to create an inclusive learning environment in which all students have an equal opportunity to thrive and succeed abroad while building skills for the future.

As an emerging body of research demonstrates that participating in education abroad positively benefits careers (Anderson, Christian et al., 2014), ensuring that students from all backgrounds have opportunities to participate has never been more critical. Articulating the value of investing in studying abroad, providing financial support, and integrating the curriculum to provide opportunities that do not delay graduation is a good start. Additionally, intentionally designing programs which both foster the development of critical perspectives and skills and embody the tenets of inclusive excellence represents a more holistic strategy that may attract more traditionally underrepresented students to education abroad programs.

***Diversifying education abroad***

During the 2013-2014 academic year, the Open Doors Report revealed that just over 300,000 students in the U.S., or 1.5% of current undergraduates, studied abroad. A closer look at this figure shows that racially and ethnically diverse students represented less than 25% of education abroad participants. For comparison, these students comprised approximately 40% percent of students attending college nationwide in 2014 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015).

For many non-white students enrolled in higher education, especially those who also identify as first-generation college students or have high-financial need, the determination to graduate and achieve career success is compounded by barriers they may be facing in their personal lives (Engle and Tinto, 2008). Financial hardship, family obligations, and other challenges may pressure students to graduate "on time" and quickly secure a full-time job. Beyond achieving individual success, these students are often seen as symbols of triumph in their families and communities, leaving little room for non-academic distractions, which unfortunately extends to education abroad. In the end, many underrepresented students come to the conclusion that "this opportunity is not for me."

Much has been done over the past decade to address disparities in education abroad participation. Diversity Abroad is an organization that provides targeted study abroad guidance and highlights peers who successfully studied abroad while retaining financial aid, making academic progress, and leveraging opportunities to support career goals. The organization has grown into a professional consortium of approximately 200 partners dedicated to addressing student diversity in education abroad, and an annual conference brings like-minded educators together to further promote diversity and inclusion in the field. Similar efforts are encouraging, such as the Institute of International Education's Generation Study Abroad, which aims to double the number of Americans going abroad over the next 10 years (Institute of International Education, 2016).

For the field of international education to begin seriously addressing education abroad participation gaps, stakeholders must first develop a deeper understanding of the barriers preventing diverse students from perceiving an opportunity abroad as worth their personal time and financial investment. When creating mechanisms to cultivate the development of transferrable skills abroad, careful consideration should be given to how students perceive their own employability and expertise as a result of participation. For example, educators regularly talk about how study abroad provides students with the opportunity to learn another language, problem-solve, or cross-culturally engage, but many diverse students already possess these skills and exercise them daily: Latino students who are bilingual or Asian students customarily navigate cultural differences between school and home. As perceived benefits may not resonate equally across the student body, more effort must be taken to address specific identity-related challenges that deter the participation of students from diverse backgrounds.

Initiatives designed to help education abroad participation mirror the diversity on college campuses are emerging in the construction of programs and support structures, and these efforts are beginning to address the types of challenges non-traditional participants face while abroad. The following programs and initiatives highlight the connection between global opportunities and skill development for future careers and are targeted to students who may have traditionally opted out of studying abroad.

***Inclusive excellence and professional growth abroad***

It is known anecdotally that education abroad alumni consistently attribute the experience with benefiting them professionally, but designing programs intentionally to cultivate long-term benefits is an evolving concept. Embedding pre-professional program design into the term abroad can create access to unique opportunities that foster academic and career benefits. The Engage programs from the Institute for Study Abroad, Butler University (IFSA-Butler) provide a holistic example because they are affordably priced, allow study at world-class institutions, provide pre-professional opportunities such as internships and laboratory-based research, and hone intercultural skills through a course designed to foster intercultural agility. Networking opportunities through pre-professional clubs and societies give students an opportunity to explore more deeply their intended career path and to connect with professionals in the field. Curriculum is streamlined for students in specific career tracks, and with access to full academic departments abroad, coursework allows students to remain on track to graduate. This is particularly important for vocation-driven disciplines, whose curriculum is often rigid and sequential; intentional program design maximizes the study abroad investment for the student.

In another example, IFSA-Butler's Work-to-Study program is a vehicle for cultivating professional skills while simultaneously providing financial assistance through innovative support structures. Financial aid packages for the term abroad do not usually take into account lost income from not working during the semester, which so many low-income students rely on to make ends meet.

While students who traditionally opt out of education abroad may not recognize how to compensate for lack of income from employment, the Work-to-Study program helps to close the gap: students build critical professional skills and contribute to the organization in exchange for a grant stipend and professional mentorship. Students receiving federal Work Study benefits are given preference in the grant selection process. Even though this is a scholarship program rather than an official job, students are learning how to meet the expectations of a project manager while going through a valuable exercise of articulating both soft and concrete skills through project management, meeting timelines and demonstrating a final product.

Work-to-Study projects range from marketing to research to health and safety support. Many participants are contributing to an online resource called *Unpacked: A Study Abroad Guide for Students Like Me* (IFSA-Butler, 2016) by designing website graphics and producing much of the content. This site sheds light on how studying abroad can be attainable to students of all majors and from all backgrounds, and it creates a compelling professional development opportunity for the students who contribute to it. The storytelling encourages peers to overcome barriers to studying abroad by covering everything from race and ethnicity to being a STEM major or a first-generation college student.

Many of the stories are future-focused, such as "The Top 5 Ways I Can Leverage My Study Abroad Experience as a Science Professional" (Slattery, 2016), underscoring the multi-faceted ways studying abroad can contribute to professional aspirations and skill development. Contributors are actively paying it forward by demonstrating unique perspectives of those often marginalized in education abroad participation. Best of all, they are getting professional feedback and their work is being published.

The Work-to-Study program melds financial support with critical skill development. Nearly all of the 40 students that have participated to date self-reported a gain in professional benefits. Joanne Suk indicated that she "learned how to work remotely and professionally." Another student felt his ability to respond to constructive feedback improved. After more than a dozen of Shristi Uprety's photographs were published in IFSA-Butler's professional marketing materials, she stated, "I've never had my pictures in print before, and seeing them was thrilling." She will be able to show her work in future job interviews and build upon her expertise throughout her career.

***Improving for the future***

The challenges and initiatives highlighted represent an assets-based mentality toward the inputs students bring to education abroad environments. Rather than developing programs that solely mitigate weaknesses, recognizing the unique strengths students bring is paramount. Consider, for example, how first-generation college students are adept at navigating multiple cultures.

They have already figured out how to be successful on their home college campuses and can put forward different approaches for others to consider.

***Holistic education abroad programs that promote inclusive excellence go beyond access.***

They also value a diversity of perspectives which enrich learning environments for all, recognizing that being exposed to different ways of thinking can help prepare all students for the rich diversity of people that comprise our workforce. By uncovering inequities in student success, educational practices can be altered appropriately and efforts to support students in overcoming their unique challenges abroad can be explored. Developing career-focused education abroad endeavors through an inclusive excellence framework can result in innovative approaches to supporting *all* students while abroad and into the future as they develop transferrable career skills and prepare to become tomorrow's leaders.

# Career Integration Onsite Workshops

Christine Anderson, Rebecca Dordel, Becky Hall,
Kimberly Hindbjorgen, Susan LeBlanc, Sara Newberg,
Jeannie Stumne: University of Minnesota.

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***Introduction***
***Kimberly Hindbjorgen, Assistant Director, Curriculum and Career Integration***

The University of Minnesota is acknowledged internationally as an innovator of a successful model of study abroad curriculum integration in which study abroad professionals, faculty, academic advisers, and career counselors collaborate to internationalize the undergraduate experience. After the grant phase of the Curriculum Integration initiative was completed and the Career Integration initiative was well underway, we circled back to our career colleagues on campus to determine how to further integrate the career development of our students.

It was essential to provide our onsite faculty and staff with an in depth familiarization of career services resources on campus to better support our students while abroad. The concept of "Onsite Workshops" emerged. By framing this as a professional development opportunity, our dialogue resulted in a vision of a shared responsibility amongst our campus colleagues and our onsite faculty and staff to further conceptualize and develop ways to support the career development of students before, during and after their experience abroad. With this in mind, we planned visits to our Italy and London partners and requested that the sponsoring units of participants contribute a significant amount of funding to help support this professional development opportunity.

All workshop participants collaborated in the planning and development of the workshop content and were asked to prepare a brief presentation

to the onsite faculty and staff. Upon return, all participants completed a report and shared their insights and experiences with sponsoring units, the U of M Career Development Network, and the Learning Abroad Center.

***Workshop takeaways -- Reciprocal learning: career services***
***Becky Hall, Director, Career Services Administration***

As much as the site visit was a cultural immersion experience for the practitioners, it was also about reciprocal learning. Two key focus areas addressed were giving a lens to U.S. employer expectations and to U.S. Career Services.

*Employer Expectations*

There are increasing demands - both real and perceived - on domestic students regarding career preparation imposed by parents and employers, and perpetuated by the media. These pressures are palpable for onsite program hosts and faculty when our domestic U.S. students arrive and throughout their stay. Part of the focus for our site visit was to engage in a data driven conversation to shed light on the career pressures our students face. The notion that to be marketable, U.S. employers expect students to have multiple - often, up to three - internships, co-ops, or other high-impact educational experiences (e.g. service learning) by the time they graduate (CERI, 2012) was somewhat met with surprise and led to rich discussion. Data from NACE's Job Outlook Survey highlighting the skills beyond basic content expertise which employers seek in candidates (NACE, 2014), helped to reinforce the importance of the reflective components built into onsite internship courses.

*Career Services (and Student Services) in the U.S.*
*and at the University of Minnesota*

The resources allocated to Student Services - specifically Career Services - are significantly different (often greater) in the U.S. as compared to many other countries. As our U.S. domestic students embark on study or internship abroad experiences, they show up with a different baseline level of expectations around Career Services - both in terms of availability and breadth of scope. To highlight this perspective, we shared information about

the Career Services operation at the University of Minnesota. Data on the volume and focus areas of staff were shared to give a sense of resources accessed and available to our students. The employer relations / business development side of Career Services' operations was relatively unfamiliar to onsite staff, whereas the counseling focus was more familiar. An overview of the broad scope of programming and services was also given. It was generally understood that job search coaching services are relatively commonplace. What was lesser known was the significant number of students in the U.S. who change their majors multiple times and the volume of services and programming including counseling and credit-bearing courses dedicated to helping students explore their career options.

***Quality internships***
***Sara Newberg, Director, Career & Internship Services***

Prior to the workshop, campus participants discussed what they expected to find during their internship site visits. It was anticipated that internships conducted through learning abroad programs would not match domestic experiences in terms of building relevant technical skills (i.e. those related to specific career needs), but would compensate by delivering personal and professional skill development (e.g. tolerating ambiguity, interpersonal communication). By all accounts this turned out to be wrong. Throughout visits to a variety of internship sites, career services staff were impressed with the substantial responsibilities afforded to interns. Students developed both technical and professional skills on a par or beyond those they might have experienced domestically.

Programming in support of internships integrated best practices for experiential learning, including: 1) Pre-departure assessment of students' career interests through application materials and later, a pre-arrival interview, 2) A persistent effort on the part of site staff to network with local contacts to locate relevant, high-quality experiences, 3) Support of learning through robust coursework to prompt reflection, and 4) careful monitoring of and relationship building with sites throughout the process.

Due to their direct observation of the internship sites, workshop participants return with full confidence in promoting internship participation through these learning abroad programs.

***Accessibility to internship opportunities***
***Rebecca Dordel, Career Coach, College of Biological Sciences***

While all students benefit from participating in experiential learning through jobs and internships, these experiences can have a significant positive impact on the future career opportunities for students with less impressive academic records. It is particularly challenging when a student recognizes the role that an internship could play in making them a more attractive job candidate, only to find that their academic performance is a barrier to securing one. For students in the biological sciences pursuing careers in industry, having familiarity with certain laboratory techniques and sophisticated research equipment can quickly move their resume to the top of an entry level position pool regardless of whether they possess a top grade point average.

The competition for undergraduate internship opportunities in the United States is high, and often grade point average is a quick way for employers to skim down their large applicant pools. With this knowledge, it is refreshing to learn that some internship programs abroad admit students with a 2.5-2.8 GPA and require them to submit both a resume and cover letter in addition to arranging an internship interview in one of the student's fields of interest. This additional support in the application process allows students the opportunity to share the skills, interests, and abilities that may not be reflected in an academic record alone.

***Exploratory experience for students***
***Susan LeBlanc, Associate Director,***
***Center for Academic Planning & Exploration***

While much of the focus of the site visit was on the internship component, it was also a good opportunity to see first-hand the impact of study abroad on students' self-awareness. While all students on the programs were clearly being impacted to different degrees, it was clear that the students who also

took advantage of doing an internship were learning about themselves and the world of work in a unique, and deeper way.

A key takeaway for staff was to shift the thinking of study abroad programs as being something that is only an option once students have chosen a major, to viewing these as opportunities for a deepening of self-awareness and exploration of interests. The Italy programs provided opportunities for students to intern in a variety of industries, and the staff are able to interview students prior to arrival to help determine the best fit for an internship. For students who are still uncertain in their choice of major, but have a sense of some careers they are interested in, this can be a unique opportunity to develop skills and try out a career for a semester. Career counselors should not be afraid to encourage undecided students to study abroad earlier in their academic careers, as it is a powerful way for students to develop a greater understanding of themselves, and how they view the world of work.

***Impacting work on campus***
***Jeannie Stumne, Director, College of Education and Human Development Career Services***

Being part of the site visit greatly impacted how we market internships to students. Visiting internship sites gave us a deeper understanding of the experiences our students can have abroad and how they can gain professional skills specifically related to their major and/or career. This has led to updating our marketing efforts to focus not only on the transferable and intercultural skills students can gain in a internship abroad, but also the career specific skills they need to be successful in their job search or graduate school applications.

Additionally, seeing the support and commitment of the internship supervisors and the on-site staff to our students' professional growth and career develop-ment has increased our confidence in encouraging students to engage in internship opportunities abroad. We now know first-hand they will have a rich and valuable experience and our excitement and commitment to sharing information on internships abroad with advisors and faculty has increased. We have begun conversations with advisors and faculty on how to eliminate barriers and make it easier for students to do an internship

abroad that meets academic requirements for their major/degree. The site visit and discussions informed and strengthened career services' ability to support students in securing internship experiences abroad that fit with their career goals.

A final takeaway is the vital need for career services to help students reflect on their international experiences in meaningful ways and connect these experiences to their career development. After meeting with on-site staff and students during the site visit, it became clear that there is a connection between intercultural learning and career development given that self-assessment and self-reflection are essential to both. A learning abroad experience creates a unique opportunity for students to engage in self-assessment and reflection and they can use what they have learned about themselves to clarify their values, strengths, interests, and skills. Both while students are abroad and when they return, career services has begun to provide additional support in reflecting on and connecting their experiences to career decision-making and the job search by encouraging students to schedule an appointment with a career counselor as part of the re-entry process, through workshops, and by integrating career development in courses students take while abroad.

***Outcomes***
***Christine Anderson, Academic Director, Learning Abroad Center***

What stood out for me with the overseas career focused workshops was the level of reciprocity in regards to information sharing. While the U of M staff had the usual aha moments of new visitors to education abroad sites such as level of access through internships, academic rigor and reach of courses, and depth of student experience abroad, their visits also seemed to be enriched by disseminating their unique professional knowledge.

There was a great range of staff turn out in both Italy and London, from front desk student services, to faculty, and administrative staff. In addition to the mix of attendees elevating the discourse around career integration on site, it led to some direct outcomes. One site has added re-entry events that include career skill reflection with a focus on study abroad story telling that aligns with the STAR technique for interviews. This has been positively attended

and received by students. Another site made technological changes to their internship course after discussions on the content and possible course enhancements. Both sites reported a greater understanding of the U.S. student's perspective, and pressures, around professional skill development and job obtainment post college.

At the Learning Abroad Center we are continuing the conversation on how to enhance on site programming through career integration with online workshops partnering career professionals with staff and faculty overseas. Due to the success of the onsite workshops, we changed the format of our visits to centers abroad always to include reciprocity and information sharing. We realize that providing resources and information, as well as gaining it, invigorated the discussion and deepened the connections between our institutions.

***Conclusion***

By implementing the ideas that were lively exchanged and organically generated at our on-site workshops, we successfully achieved our goals: to further refine and enhance the program development and learning outcomes at all of our Learning Abroad Center sponsored sites, and in turn, to further enhance the work we do with students here on campus.

# The Journey v. Destination: Helping Liberal Arts Students Find Career Success from Study Abroad

Neal McKinney, Nick Minich, and Brittany Collins, DePauw University

Liberal arts education is often touted for its holistic and broad philosophy of "learning for learning's sake," which provides students the freedom to engage in educational exploration and development of valuable soft skills. In his article *Only Connec*t, William Cronon (1998) quantified ten "ideal qualities" students gain from a liberal arts education. They can:

- Listen and they hear
- Read and they understand
- Talk with anyone
- Write clearly and persuasively and movingly
- Solve a wide variety of puzzles and problems
- Respect rigor not so much for its own sake but as a way of seeking truth
- Practice humility, tolerance, and self-criticism
- Understand how to get things done in the world
- Nurture and empower the people around them
- Connect

The challenge at hand, however, is that many liberal arts students get so focused on learning that they are unaware that they have developed these qualities. Therefore, when it comes to articulating said qualities in the career search, they are challenged to readily identify and connect them to concrete experiences, such as study abroad.

This is particularly true at DePauw University, where our students who study abroad historically do not frame their experience from a career-focused mindset, and, even when they do, they are not able to readily identify relevant skills and competencies gained abroad. While this phenomenon is not entirely unique in our field across institution types, liberal arts students are not always motivated in the same respects to pursue career oriented pathways; instead they are motivated to focus on the journey and not the destination, thus our approach to career integration at DePauw has been informed and crafted to meet our students where they are.

***Background Profile***

DePauw University is a private, liberal arts college located in Greencastle, Indiana and enrolls roughly 2,300 students. As of 2015, we have the fourth highest undergraduate participation in study abroad of the top 40 baccalaureate colleges, and, on average, we send between 400-500 students off-campus, which includes faculty-led short term programs in January and May, as well as semester or year-long study abroad. We attribute our success historically to a number of factors including institutional support for allowing financial aid to travel with students, as well as the popular success of faculty-led programs since the 1970s. In the recent years, however, we define our success through the intentional creation of a collaborative experiential learning center in 2010 aimed to prepare students for life after DePauw, now known as the Hubbard Center for Student Engagement.

The Hubbard Center for Student Engagement houses Career Services and Off-Campus Study and works closely with auxiliary services such as pre-health, pre-law, and graduate school advisers. The mission of the Hubbard Center is driven by three main areas: Discover, Prepare, and Connect. We assist students in pursuing experiences that allow them to *discover* and refine their personal and professional interests and goals; we help students *prepare* to be successful by providing instruction on multiple topics; and we help students *connect* with others and scaffold their multiple experiences.

When we specifically work with liberal arts students who want to study abroad, we leverage our mission of discover, prepare, and connect by guiding them through an intentional reflective process which we outline in the

following sections. This intentional process leading up to and when they return from their study abroad experience is our specific career integration methodology, which results in helping DePauw students connect the core liberal arts tenants with the skills/competencies that employers wish to see.* (see Table 1).

**Table 1.**

| Skills focused curricular outcomes for every DePauw graduate: | NACE Competencies |
|---|---|
| Speak well | Critical Thinking/Problem Solving |
| Write well | Career Management |
| Think critically | Oral/ Written Communication |
| | Teamwork/Collaboration |
| | Information Technology Application |
| | Leadership |
| | Professionalism/Work Ethic |

*The skills/competencies are guided by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE). These competencies and skills are pivotal to advancement in a majority of industries and consistently in demand for college graduates.

***Discover/Prepare***

Our center has increased its efforts to help study abroad students *discover* their career potential through revamping our off-campus study application. Each year, we send approximately 130 students off campus for a semester or longer, and we now require every student to submit a goal-oriented personal

statement that identifies two academic goals and one professional goal linked to their specific program/location of interest. Doing so provides us the opportunity to engage them in meaningful reflection in the advising process on how their curricular interest might then connect to a potential career interest that can be explored while off campus. No matter what program type students choose (traditional study to full-time internship), this first step is an important catalyst to shift decisions towards programs that are meaningful to their professional future.

Once students are accepted through our internal application process. We then help them *prepare* by offering a stand-alone introduction to career integration workshop during pre-departure orientation. This workshop begins with an overview of the career benefits gained by study abroad alumni followed by an exercise asking them to identify skills/competencies they believe they possess and those that they wish to develop. Students are then asked to engage in cross-talk with a partner about why they picked those skills and how they believe they can further enhance and develop them in their host location. Lastly, they are asked to complete a learning contract, which asks them to list three objectives they wish to complete. While this workshop is relatively new, the hope is that this collaborative process will yield greater abilities for students to articulate skills and competencies upon their return.

***Connect***

When it comes to *connecting*, The Hubbard Center believes in the principles of Life Design (Nota and Rossier, 2014) and utilizing a contextualized approach to career advising. The integration of career services and off-campus study has allowed for an excellent opportunity to see life design in action. As part of the re-entry program, students sit down with advisers and unpack their experiences through reflection. Students are encouraged to recall, write down, and talk through some of their most memorable experiences and make note of the major takeaways from that experience. Then, students can see how those takeaways connect and correlate with experiences they have already had while at DePauw and at off-campus internships. These reflections and guided coaching allow students truly to make meaning of their time spent away and they are able to tell their story in an impactful way.

As the student works through and processes their experiences, our goal is to understand the takeaways which usually come out as skills and competencies. When a student understands that he/she has either acquired a new skill or enhanced a current skill, they feel a sense of empowerment and accomplishment which adds more value to their experience. Students typically have a general sense of what they want to learn before they leave, but it is when they realize their competencies and connect them in a broader sense that they see what this experience has provided them.

With this increased awareness, the advising shifts towards incorporating more experiential learning opportunities on and off-campus. Students are encouraged to connect with others who are familiar with their locations of study through student organizations or personal networks. The Hubbard Center also hosts several different types of programs that allow students to hear directly from alumni and employers about how study abroad has translated into successful careers within a variety of organizations.

***Conclusion***

In order to move liberal arts students beyond the focus of "learning for learning's sake" when they prepare to go/return from abroad, study abroad/career services professionals have to meet them where they are developmentally in order to reveal the connective thread of pearls (skills and competencies) gained. Our students are driven idealistically to find opportunities to "leave the world a better place" as global citizens. Thus, by shaping their discovery and preparation, we can then help them find meaningful connections between their academic and experiential learning, which leads to selecting meaningful programs abroad. The result then is that students are able to enjoy the journey such that they bring back stories that are crafted into a cohesive narrative that will help them find their destined career success.

# Curriculum and Career Integration: Clark University's LEEP Initiative (Liberal Education and Effective Practice)

Adriane van Gils-Pierce, Independent Consultant

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***Introduction***

With the pressure on higher education in recent years to provide a "return on investment" by creating employable graduates, many institutions and study abroad program providers have been building on the "employability" premise by focusing on opportunities for resume building. Increasingly, liberal arts institutions are creating integrative links between their Career Services Center and academic departments to ensure that students begin to connect the dots between their academic curriculum and future career aspirations, from the time they set foot on campus. In the field of education abroad specifically, we are seeing an increase in programs with a focus on internships, community service learning, and field research.

Michael Woolf, in his 2016 Boston Career Integration Conference proposal, speculated that "an emphasis on employability creates a set of imperatives that are too narrow; that fail to respond to the pace of change that shapes our experience; that fail to recognize the variability of aspiration within those who choose to participate in international studies."

I would add that a focus on career integration related to study abroad alone is also too narrow. Career integration must be a part of the *entire* academic curriculum in a 21st century education in order to be effective. At the same time, we must not lose the intrinsic value of a liberal education. Integrating career readiness with the academic curriculum brings with it the need for thoughtful balance, as well as re-organizational and operational challenges.

***The LEEP Initiative Phase One: Drivers of Change and Building of the LEEP Initiative***

*External:*

Higher education is traditionally responsible for teaching students how to live meaningful, purposeful, successful lives. Over recent years, that responsibility has expanded to include student employment. This represents a large shift within higher education research where, historically, the emphasis has been on increasing access rather than about student experience through and beyond their years of formal college study.

In 2009, the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) and Clark University jointly hosted The Conference on Liberal Education and Effective Practice. The focus was on the question: "How can undergraduate programs in the arts and sciences be enhanced to empower students to be not only sophisticated, well-informed thinkers but also effective doers?" The premise was that the great tradition of liberal education, as it has evolved in the modern era, has focused on a comparatively narrow range of intellectual qualities, which, while immensely important, are not sufficient to support successful action in professional and civic contexts. Thus, if we are truly to sustain the claim that one mission of liberal education is to prepare young people to be engaged citizens and effective professionals, we need to consider how our programs can be enriched to address these goals more directly. The 2009 conference explored ways in which this could be accomplished without diminishing the things that liberal education does extremely well.

*Internal:*

A major outcome was that Clark's 2009 Undergraduate Task Force Report stressed the importance of linking and integrating the curricular with the co-curricular. In 2011, this resulted in the creation of the LEEP Initiative (Liberal Education and Effective Practice) and LEEP Advising. This answered the question of how Clark University would equip students with the necessary capacities to pursue purposeful lives and successful careers within the context of 21st century liberal education.

LEEP amplifies the four essential outcomes of a liberal education as set forth by the AAC&U with an additional outcome unique to Clark: effective practice. Foundational Liberal Education Skills and Capacities are, according to AAC&U, as follows:

1. Knowledge of the Natural World and Human Cultures and Societies
2. Intellectual and Practical Skills
3. Personal and Social Responsibility
4. Ability to Integrate Knowledge and Skills

To this list Clark added a defining contribution:

5. Capacities of Effective Practice— including creativity and imagination, self-directedness, resilience and persistence, and the ability to collaborate with others across differences and to manage complexity and uncertainty. These will be demonstrated by *application of knowledge and skills* to issues of consequence and by emerging membership in larger communities of scholarship or practice.

LEEP integrates intellectual and academic resources at the university with the skills and capacities that are becoming increasingly essential in the 21st century. The Clark undergraduate experience in all its dimensions—from the classroom to the research laboratory, from the co-curricular experience to teams and clubs—intends to educate graduates not just for academic excellence, but also for resilience, persuasion, creativity, and the ability to demonstrate character when tested.

***The LEEP Initiative Phase Two: Developing LEEP Advising and the Learning Continuum***

In 2010-11, Clark's faculty approved the five LEEP Learning Outcomes and began "Beyond Classroom Learning" course redesign. The 2011 Academic and Financial Plan then specifically identified LEEP Advising and the LEEP Learning Continuum as critical components of this initiative.

LEEP Advising was designed to significantly enhance undergraduate advising by helping students to better construct pathways through their

undergraduate experience into careers or graduate and/or professional schools. The LEEP Learning Continuum is meant to provide students with a clear, highly integrated, personalized educational path that enables them to:

- ORIENT themselves through intensive introductory courses, known as First Year Intensives, and co-curricular activities.
- EXPLORE their talents and career options through academic study and authentic work and research experiences.
- ACT on their longer-term goals through projects that demonstrate applied knowledge and skills, and by emerging membership in communities of scholarship and practice.

***The LEEP Initiative Phase Three: Creating the LEEP Center***

In 2012-13, the LEEP Center was created by merging the academic support services on campus: Career Services, Study Abroad, Academic Advising, Community Engagement, Writing Center, and Innovation & Entrepreneurship. These were moved to one location, creating a new advising model with an emphasis on related learning outcomes. LEEP Center Advising was implemented with the incoming class summer 2013. A Director of the LEEP Center was hired; job descriptions were revised to reflect the LEEP Advising responsibilities added to existing departmental responsibilities; additional programming was created to "wrap around and round out" the new advising model.

The LEEP Center's mission is:

> To support students in their personal and professional development by facilitating meaningful exploration, intentional engagement, thoughtful preparation, integrative learning, and insightful reflection. Through the offices and programs, the LEEP Center offers holistic advising, a range of pre-professional and civic opportunities, and a variety of resources and services designed to foster capacities of effective practice in an effort to prepare students for life after Clark.

***Assessment, Benefits, and Challenges After the First Five Years***

*Assessment:*

LEEP Center Advising, like the entire initiative, was, and remains, a complex educational undertaking. The original advising model has undergone several transitions since 2013. A number of evaluation efforts are ongoing using both qualitative and quantitative measures (including student satisfaction, staff and faculty feedback); the goal of this evaluation is continuous improvement.

Assessment of LEEP Center success is complicated because LEEP Advising has not been a requirement for students. Quoting the old English proverb: "you can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it drink"; you can provide all the student support and opportunities you want, but if students do not take advantage of what is offered they will not benefit.

Assessment of student progress towards accomplishing the LEEP Learning Outcomes (curricular and co-curricular activities) is also not a simple matter. Since the first LEEP class is at the junior level currently, it will be several years before it will be possible to clearly to assess the impact of the learning outcomes. New requirements are being developed that will require students to present evidence of a high impact practice as a graduation requirement.

Post-graduation outcomes will continue to be tracked university-wide to evaluate student success (as defined by the Board of Trustees). Longitudinal analysis is also planned. (Clark takes seriously the research on emerging adults that asserts that graduates may not settle into a career until they are in their thirties.)

*Benefits:*

Engagement in LEEP has accelerated over the last two years. There is increasing collaboration with faculty; student traffic in the LEEP Center has increased dramatically, and students appear to value a "one-stop" shop for services they require.

Clark students—typically juniors—may apply for a summer stipend to participate in a LEEP Project: to take what they have learned at Clark and explore hands-on applications. Projects focus on working with external organizations and take many different forms, such as creating a product for a local business, assisting non-profits in a developing country, or engaging in a research project. A culminating experience, the LEEP Project enables students to demonstrate their mastery of the five LEEP Learning Outcomes and prepares them to make positive contributions to the world through their careers and personal lives. Upwards of 100 students each summer apply for these opportunities.

A collegial environment has developed in the LEEP Center and staff have become well-versed in the work of respective academic support offices. Consequently, opportunities to become thought leaders/experts in the world of career integration have emerged. Staff, administrators, and faculty present their work at scholarly and professional conferences; are invited to contribute chapters and articles; and asked to lead workshops on topics related to LEEP. These activities have increased national visibility as well as creating further resource development. This outreach is widely supported by the University, as national attention validates and enhances the University's internal sense of progress and success.

*Challenges:*

The most recent Academic Report by Clark's Provost summarizes some of the challenges:

> We did not fully appreciate the culture change that would be required if the concepts were taken to heart and the recommendations fully embraced. Five years later, we are still working to ensure that all constituencies have an understanding of LEEP that is broad and deep; that the underlying concepts and constituent elements are inclusive of different academic disciplines and responsive to diverse student needs; and that the resistance inherent in any significant culture change is constructive and engaging.

For the Education Abroad office in particular, the changes in reporting struc-

ture, location, added job responsibilities, and loss of resources have been very challenging over the last three years. Understaffed to begin with, finding ways to maintain the integrity of the office with all its responsibilities, while at the same time adding LEEP Center Advising and programming, will require a re-assessment of how study abroad and away programs are administered.

A potential danger is that an emphasis on career preparation may reduce focus on the imperatives of academic rigor. We caution against this for several reasons:

- Many, if not most, students will struggle in the first year or two to adjust to a college environment and decide what they want to study. They may be looking for a summer job or internship, but have not developed an interest in the job search process.
- Many, if not most, students will not even begin to think about life after graduation until they are required to select a major. Many students begin to explore careers at the time they are declaring their major and subsequently discover what they need academically to succeed professionally.
- Many students will take time after receiving their undergraduate degree to decide the relevance of their degree to potential employers, and may decide to go on to graduate or professional schools that require a strong academic foundation.
- Faculty are often resistant to anything that smacks of "work-related/work-readiness," unless it is research that is connected to their own discipline. It remains important, therefore, to provide a challenging and comprehensive academic curriculum in *tandem* with co-curricular, out-of-classroom opportunities that can be integrated into the studies.

The intended result of LEEP is that, when effective practice opportunities are systematically integrated into the curriculum, students also develop the ability to integrate skills with knowledge, and to solve complex problems through creative thinking, collaboration and persistence: life skills they will be able to use when they are ready to enter the job arena.

*nb. Excerpts taken from the Academic Report and from LEEP Initiative web pages are used with permission of Clark University Marketing and Communication.*

# Learning to Talk the Talk: Articulating the Study Abroad Experience

Craig Kench, CAPA The Global Education Network

***Introduction: competitive environments***

For university graduates entering today's fiercely competitive workforce environment, promoting themselves effectively has become an imperative. The ability to articulate and promote their skills, knowledge, and abilities, intentionally and with purpose, is required to set themselves apart from the crowd.

The transition from education to employment is intensely competitive. A recent Forbes article revealed that "There are on average 118 applicants for any single job vacancy in the USA" (Smith, 2013). The picture may be bleaker in specific industries and fields. Amid an early morning commute to work on the underground in central London, I read an article in the Daily Telegraph. Through an entanglement of bodies and outstretched arms, I read in horror about the sheer size and scale of the challenge graduates face when entering the job market. It stated that in the U.K., "Consumer goods firms report receiving 186.3 applications for every job vacancy, while for oil and energy companies it was 97.8 and media 86.6. Banking and finance employers, along with high street retailers, also received at least 50 applications for each position available" (Daily Telegraph, 2014).

Employers continue to state that there is a significant void in the ability of graduates to communicate effectively. As invested members in the higher education industry, we have a responsibility to help bridge this communications gap and to educate, enable, and empower our students to leverage personal and professional experiences that will stand them in good stead when trying to meet the needs of employers.

How do we address this challenge? A solid starting point is to understand what employers are expecting from graduates and identify where students are falling short. With this comprehensive understanding, we can create vehicles to afford students opportunities to develop required abilities. Furthermore, we can look to ensure that students can translate relevant experiences into points of distinction that will be highly attractive for potential employers.

***Common Errors: Where are students falling short?***

In my interactions with students studying abroad, I have identified some common communication errors that have negative impacts upon engagement with potential employers. One of the most consistent observations is that students have limited career vision and do not fully understand the value of transferrable skills. Many students become overly fixated on a single job role or employment position and what they discern as the absolute skills and knowledge that they must acquire to land this "dream job." As such, anything that is not within their immediate vision and in direct correlation with their desired pathway is perceived as redundant, even counterproductive and a source of tension while studying abroad.

What students fail to recognize is that many of the skills that will allow them to excel, and enable them to move into lateral positions or senior roles across their career, can be formed and shaped by activities outside of a narrowly focused track. Further, the likelihood of an individual remaining employed in one particular job and industry throughout their careers is minimal. Gone are the days when graduates left University and secured a "job for life." For example, research by Guy Berger, a LinkedIn economist, analyzed the career trajectories of 3 million college graduates. (Browne, 2016). Results showed that "Gen X" students, who graduated between 1986 and 1990, held on average two different jobs within the first 10 years of graduation. The same report shows that, in contrast, "Young Millennials" (those who graduated from 2006 to 2010) are on track to surpass four job changes by the time they are 32. Berger states "The best advice I can give anyone is to think about acquiring skills and knowledge that can easily be transferred from one place to another."

Study abroad programs can have a significant impact on the development of those skills. Students can broaden their understanding and accelerate their personal and professional growth by engaging with others from diverse and differing backgrounds, and by exploring different social, political, and cultural landscapes. Key skills and knowledge include, but are not limited to:

*Organization, Time Management and Prioritization Skills:* In a foreign environment, students have to manage an increased number of competing priorities related to in-country opportunities in tension with study obligations. If they are to achieve all of their goals and obligations, they must rely upon, or quickly develop, an ability to use their time, energy, and resources in an effective and productive manner.

*Problem Solving:* Students will undoubtedly face difficult situations whilst studying abroad. Whether it is navigating foreign language and environments or encountering unfamiliar tasks and duties within internships, the ability to find solutions to difficult or complex issues, and to manage moments of uncertainty or ambiguity, will highlight to employers their ability to apply this same skill set in a work environment.

*Adaptability:* Relocating for a period to another country can push individuals outside of their comfort zone. Effectively handling such situations can show the ability to readily adjust to different conditions and environments.

*Global Perspective:* Much of today's workforce has some form of globalized engagement. Study abroad can help to develop skills required to live and work in an interdependent world through forming an understanding of connections between one's own life and those of people across the globe.

*Cultural Awareness:* Consequently, we must develop self-awareness and an understanding of diverse and complex perspectives, values, and beliefs. Study abroad can be a wonderful platform to enhance such awareness and, if articulated through effective storytelling, can be a point of distinction when interviewing.

*Networking:* Students repeatedly say that they love to meet new people and forge new relationships. Studying abroad can be a great forum to hone networking skills, to connect and interact with others to develop professional and social relationships that will positively shape future opportunities.

*Remote Collaboration:* Study abroad programs that are part of a structured academic pathway have clear connections with home universities. Modern technologies ensure that individuals and groups can connect virtually with others and achieve collective goals and objectives and, in so doing, learn trans-national teamwork. Additionally, students may participate in an internship whilst abroad and they may potentially be positioned in an environment that relies upon regional, national, and global virtual connections.

In addition to not understanding the value of transferrable skills, many students fail to recognize how other study abroad components can be articulated to future employers. For example, an individual may reside within a homestay. Living with others in a foreign environment, where the hosts may have different beliefs, values, and traditions, can develop the ability to forge relationships. Sharing living space can be intensely challenging. Personal boundaries and differences in perspectives can be tested. The ability to occupy such space in cohesion and harmony, whilst celebrating differences, can relate to aptitudes required to operate effectively in workplace dynamics.

I have noted the fiercely competitive employment environment. I have also described how study abroad programs can create points of distinction. However, articulating the benefits of study abroad to a potential employer may not be enough, especially if they are not familiar with study abroad. Students need to implement a mindset of evidence management. The notion of developing a portfolio to demonstrate skills and abilities was previously thought of within the context of creative arts. This is no longer the case. Students from all majors and disciplines would benefit from developing a portfolio of work that highlights the outcomes of their efforts and the associated skills that were required to bring about such results. In addition, students sometimes miss basic opportunities to generate references from internships or from faculty abroad, both of which would clearly enhance applications for jobs or graduate school.

I have also consistently observed poor listening skills. I do not think this flaw is only associated with students, I do fear that the issue can significantly impact the ability of students to shape their opportunities. Julian Treasure, author of Sound Business and chair of *Sound Agency*, an organization that advises worldwide businesses on how to communicate, stated in his recent Ted Talk (Treasure, 2011) that, "We are losing our listening. We spend roughly 60% of our communication time listening, but we are not very good at it, we retain just 25% of what we hear." Treasure describes the dangers associated with the disappearance of conscious listening and how this directly impacts one's ability to understand others and engage effectively in conversation. Treasure refers to the inability to pay attention to subtle and understated messages within conversations. For graduates seeking employment in contested times, the ability to distinguish such profound nuances can be invaluable when responding to interview questions.

Failings in the art of listening and communicating in general are not just associated with those seeking employment. The communications gap is indeed a two way divide and many employees feel that their employers have faults that lead to ongoing communication issues.

In 2014, Weber Shandwick, in partnership with KRC Research (Weber Shandwick, 2014), conducted a global online survey of 2,300 employees (aged 18-65) across 15 markets throughout Europe, North America, Latin America, and Asia. Those contacted were employed by an organization with over 500 employees. The results showed that only 26% of employees agreed that "my employer listens and responds well to me." To compound this issue, in the same report only 17% of employees highly rate communications from their company's leadership.

***What do employers want?***

Shortly I will discuss a series of studies undertaken by educational associations that focus on what employers are looking for from graduates. However, my first thought is that employers are often looking for immediate and maximum impacts from new hires. This was illustrated recently when I read a job advertisment in a local newspaper. The job posting outlined an opening for a popcorn machine operator with a cinema company. As a

footnote, the advertisement stated that applicants must have prior popcorn machine operating experience. Although some readers may feel that this is a sensible request, let us analyze this prerequisite a little further. Without being disrespectful to the popcorn machine operators of this world, I would assume that the operational skills required to perform this role would be somewhat basic and that under supervision and guidance, an individual would be able to pick up these tasks with relative ease. So, what compelled this organization to add such a caveat? My view is that this is indicative of the limitations of time and training resources available in the workplace, something many graduates encounter when transitioning to full-time employment. The world of work today is becoming conditioned by the immediate results-driven society in which we live and this in turn can shape employers' approach to recruitment. This also imposes upon new recruits the need for improvization and adaptability skills. They will be entering an environment that will not necessarily offer the support systems that they have become used to in higher education. It is imperative that we share these realities with our students and ensure that graduates are prepared. Another implication is that students need to identify whether or not the core values of an organization are in alignment with their own.

Employers also place a great emphasis on graduates having transferrable skills. These benefit organizations as well as enhance individual development opportunities. Whilst highly specialized skills can be essential in performing core components of a job, transferrable skills ensure that staff do not become professionally stagnant and obsolete. In the 2015 Job Outlook Survey undertaken by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE), employers identified the qualities they want in new graduate hires. Results showed that leadership was the most desired attribute, followed by the ability to work in a team, and good written communications skills. Effective verbal communications were also identified. By having access to such information, we have an opportunity to guide students in the way they undertake activities, reflect upon them, and, most importantly, articulate the outcomes in a manner that will resonate with employers.

However, the notion of career preparedness can be very subjective, depending on who you are asking. This may be a consequence of a lack of awareness from both sides. A report conducted by The Association of

American Colleges and Universities (Gray and Koncz, 2014) asked groups of employers (400 responses) and college students (613 responses) a series of similar questions about career preparation. Interestingly, 62% of graduates rated themselves, on a scale of 1-10, as 8 or above in their preparedness in oral communications. Employers, in contrast, thought that only 28% of graduates were in the 8-10 range. Similar disparities were seen in responses to written communication, with statistics of 65% from students and 27% from employers based on the same rating scales.

This raises the need to review issues through multiple lenses. For example, students and employers often maintain conflicting assumptions and practices in regards to communication in the recruitment context. A Glassdoor survey (Glassdoor, n.d.) conducted in 2014 showed that "89% of job seekers believe a mobile device is an important tool for job searching." In the same report, "48% think mobile devices will be the most common way to search for jobs in two years or less," and "45% of job seekers say they use their mobile device specifically to search for jobs at least once a day." However, according to another report from ERE Media, 95% of the Fortune 500 company career sites do not support a mobile application solution (Newman, 2014).

These statistics again demonstrate that there is a gap between graduates and employers in regards to this specific are of career preparedness. If employers are not cognizant of the way in which younger generations are seeking information, or decide to ignore the forums job seekers use, it is not unreasonable to assume that these attitudes may transfer to the workplace. If this is true, surely it must also be the responsibility of employers to prepare accordingly for a world that is rapidly changing its communication practices.

The good news for students is that many employers are becoming more mindful of this issue and the part they can, and must, play in finding a resolution. Across the globe, we are seeing a greater commitment by organizations towards active involvement in preparing students for the workplace. There is a growing desire from businesses to develop partnerships with education at all levels, from primary through to higher education. These partnerships may have the biggest impact in bridging the communications gap to the benefit of both the world of education and the world of work.

# Financial Aid and Study Abroad Advising: Making Sense of the Dollars

Cathy Schuster, University of Minnesota

Academic and study abroad advisers stress the academic and professional advantages gained during an international experience. Students learn how it can make them more marketable later in life, and that classes taken abroad fulfill graduation requirements. What those advisers are unable to speak to arises at the most stressful point in study abroad preparation: finances. The complexities of student financial aid awards are areas outside of most advisers' expertise. While many advisers (faculty and staff) can attest to study abroad as a great educational investment and personal growth experience, the processes of funding are better left to the experts.

### *Institutional Support and Financial Literacy*

"I want to study abroad but have no idea how we'll make the money part work." As a financial aid adviser who counsels students interested in participating in study abroad programs, I hear these words, or some variation, from most of my students. A financial aid adviser, well versed in off-campus study, is a vital resource for students if financial aid is essential to participation. Plenty of students are able to go abroad without the concern of finances, but is your college or university striving to support those students who need extra assistance? Does your institution include financial aid advising when encouraging students to study abroad? The University of Minnesota - Twin Cities Learning Abroad Center (LAC) and Office of Student Finance (OSF) offices have successfully collaborated in this arena for many years, tremendously benefiting students. In short, financial awareness and literacy are key components in off-campus study advising.

### *Financial Aid Packaging*

Financial aid packages are based on a student's cost of attendance (COA), which is determined by the school, and expected family contribution (EFC), derived from the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA determines eligibility for Pell Grants, Work Study, and Federal Direct Loan eligibility. It is also used for awarding state and institutional gift aid. In simple terms, the aid package a student receives on campus generally applies when they study abroad. Most grants, scholarships, and loans apply to a semester abroad as they would if a student remained on campus, assuming comparable enrollment levels or credits per term. Exceptions generally include tuition waivers, work-study, or any awards where the donor has designated specific use.

### *The Financial Aid Preview Meeting*

At the University of Minnesota (U of M), students are encouraged to schedule a Financial Aid Preview Meeting (FAPM) with a counselor specializing in funding learning abroad early in their planning and before paying a non-refundable program confirmation fee. The purpose of this meeting is to walk students through program cost and financial options by providing tools to help them make informed decisions. These scheduled appointments also make it easier for parents to participate and have their questions answered.

During a FAPM, the full cost of participation is reviewed. Financial aid eligible expenses include:

- Tuition/educational costs
- Insurance
- Housing/meals
- Airplane ticket
- Passport/visa
- Books
- In-country living expenses

Some of these expenses are billed to the student account, following the financial aid disbursement timeline. Other costs need to be covered by the students directly: meals not covered by the program fee and in-country living expenses while abroad. Also important to note are expenses a student will incur prior to going abroad, such as purchasing a passport, reserving plane tickets, application or program deposits, and personal expenses for programs that start prior to our semester date. Financial aid awards are not disbursed in advance, so students must understand what costs they are responsible for before any financial aid is released.

Once costs are established, specific financial aid awards are reviewed. This can be a complicated discussion depending on timing. If it is fall semester 2016, for example, and the student plans to go abroad the next semester, spring 2017, awards are usually in place, making conversations simple. Summer 2017 award packages depend on aid already used for fall and spring. No matter the case, financial aid advisers are able to review current awards, compare them to the program budget estimate, and identify the "gap" in funding. Identifying this gap is the main purpose of the preview meetings. While study abroad scholarships are discussed, most recipients are not announced until well after confirmation of participation. Students are encouraged to apply for scholarships but not to depend on these awards when considering their finances. Loans, specifically alternative/private or Parent PLUS loans, dependent on credit checks, co-signers, or willingness of others to borrow loan funds for the student, are the remaining option to offset any contributions by the student or family.

If the discussion involves a term based on next year's FAFSA, the conversations are not as precise, but still extremely beneficial. For example, the meeting in fall semester 2016, for a student planning to study abroad during fall semester 2017, students are provided with an estimate, based on projections of this year's awards, but include a caveat: actual funding is dependent on the EFC from next year's FAFSA. High-need students, and those obviously uncomfortable with how they will fund their "gap," are asked to contact the advising team via email or phone after filing their FAFSA, yet prior to confirming, to do a second walk through awards based on their actual EFC.

Conversations about funding can be complex. Each award is reviewed for eligibility and implications based on timing, as well as the number of credits a student plans take as that may impact awards, are discussed. It is also important to know that when using financial aid, there are overarching limits and other considerations to be taken into account. The Federal Pell Grant uses Lifetime Eligibility Units (LEUs), the Minnesota State Grant Program uses a different measurement for duration, and the institutional UPromise Grant has a third set of rules for eligibility and use. Federal Direct Loans have both an annual and aggregate maximum. The student must also be meeting Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) requirements for credit completion, time frames, and grades. While students are provided these fine print details in promissory notes and award notices, the system is complex and the experts should be consulted when questions arise.

Occasionally the result of a meeting is that a program is not a good fit financially and the student is not able to go abroad. This happens when the "gap," after financial aid applies, is too high to finance personally. Students may not have a willing co-signer, or are not comfortable taking on additional loan debt. While disappointed, students are usually pleased to learn this before incurring costs on a non-refundable deposit or plane tickets. It can be a difficult conversation for all parties and sometimes includes tears, but anticipating loan debt upon graduation is part of the life planning skills a student must consider. Sometimes a particular program or location may be out of reach financially, but a student has a second choice that meets their academic and career goals, as well as their financial constraints.

Conversations sway in many directions, but no matter what the student brings, advisers can help. Some students may wish to enroll in a semester program but are also considering a shorter program based on lower program costs. The sticker price may look lower, but that does not mean there will not be issues with financing the program. Sometimes financial aid packages work better for semester programs rather than short-term programs. During the meeting, it becomes apparent that the "gap" for three weeks may be comparable to the "gap" for five months. In addition to a longer experience abroad, the semester program may offer additional scholarship opportunities compared to a shorter program. May/Summer financial aid is especially challenging, whether a student is at home or abroad. Some

awards are not offered during summer term; others are offered during summer, assuming that eligibility has not been exhausted. Pell Grants are a great way for many students to cover educational costs on campus and abroad; however, once the annual award has been given out, no additional funding is available. This means that a student attending full time fall and spring semesters will have exhausted their eligibility. A Pell Grant would not be awarded for summer. Direct Loans are similar: if a student uses his/her full annual award amount during fall/spring they are not eligible for summer. There are limited Private Loan options available for students who enroll less than half time and these loans are not exempt from financial aid rules.

A further limitation for summer is enrollment level: if a student has remaining Direct Loan eligibility for summer, they must be registered at least half time, six credits, in order to access it. If an adviser meets with a student during spring semester 2016, for study abroad of four credits planned for summer 2016, it is important to consider their awards for the whole year. If they initially declined their academic year Direct Loan, we can reinstate the loan for the current fall/spring, and disburse funds at that time, with the understanding the student will use the money for their summer study abroad costs. It is the student's responsibility to keep these funds safe until they incur the expenses. Likewise, if they have fall/spring PLUS or Private Loan eligibility in their package, they may wish to borrow funds at that time, again leveraging their options based on full time enrollment, and reserving the funds for their costs. As part of the process, the adviser reviews the student's record, outlining program terms and costs, funding plans for the "gap," options, and any other details worth noting from the preview meeting. We recommend students repeat this exercise with their parent or family member and identify what personal funds, if any, they can put towards expenses. Students and parents are invited to contact advisers with questions. Assuming they are comfortable with the funding options, the "next-steps" checklist process includes instructions once confirmed in their study abroad program. Students are sent a Study Abroad Cost Estimate (SACE) form, which is a breakdown of the approved cost of attendance for their term abroad. This one page document satisfies financial aid audit requirements and serves as a student's formal request to have their cost of attendance and financial aid adjusted.

Prior to revamping the business process to include this "preview," students would progress far into their confirmation checklist before submitting their SACE for adjustments.

Committing to a program, entering into a contract to pay the costs without a full understanding of options and limitations, does not serve these students well. The U of M is committed to financial literacy, as demonstrated by the recently launched complementary Financial Wellness Counseling program. Assuring financial fit for study abroad programs aligns with those objectives.

***Bridging Loan Program***

Another critical component to financing a student's study abroad experience is the timing of disbursements. Confirmation deposits, plane tickets, visa fees, housing deposits, and expenses may be due prior to aid disbursement making this particularly challenging for students dependent on financial aid. To address this issue, the U of M recently created the Bridging Loan Program, a successful manner of funding up-front expenses, allowing the cost of the program deposit, and in some cases plane ticket, to be billed to a student's account, deferring these costs until financial aid awards disburse for the term. In 2014-15, The Bridging Loan received Honorable Mention in the Andrew Heiskell Awards for Innovation in International Education and was featured in IIE Network as a Best Practice Resource.

The Bridging Loan has several requirements: students must have an EFC of $15,000 or less and be participating in an eligible program. In order to utilize the Bridging Loan, a student must complete the application during a FAPM where it is co-signed by the financial aid counselor. Completion of the Bridging Loan implies the student is comfortable with the funding options and that they understand how the loan will be paid back. Students then meet with an adviser to confirm details. Creation of this type of loan takes many stakeholders -- both inside and outside the university -- coming together for the betterment of U of M students.

***Office of Student Finance Study Abroad Grant***

Another exciting initiative is the U of M's Office of Student Finance (OSF)

Study Abroad Grant. For the last several years, OSF Administration has set aside institutional gift aid for students with an EFC of $10,000 or less. The SACE serves as the application for this one-time grant award of $1,000 for a semester, and $1,500 for an academic year. The OSF Study Abroad Grant is included in Preview Meetings as a resource towards bridging the "gap." The award of this grant, subject to donor conditions, is a source of significant satisfaction.

***Financial Aid Workshops***

Informational workshops are also used to assist U of M students. A two-part Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship information session is held every semester. The first hour consists of input from advisers who have read for this prestigious program. The second is an opportunity for feedback on a student's essay. The U of M offers "You Can Afford to Study Abroad" workshop twice each semester in which LAC and OSF Advisers review scholarship opportunities in the context of program features. The physical presence of a financial aid adviser, in conjunction with the LAC staff, demystifies financial issues. It also provides students an opportunity to ask all their questions without having to make multiple appointments in multiple locations.

These meetings ensure that students do not face any financial surprises when they get abroad. Financial transparency is the goal; we want our students to be prepared with all the necessary information. We rarely have questions once students have departed, as they have already been answered. Students must be realistic about the amounts and types of debt they are willing to incur, and understand future loan payments. Financial maturity is an important part of adulthood, and this is an excellent opportunity to empower our students. Is your institution doing all it can to prepare students for the financial requirements in their study abroad experiences? Do your college or university's study abroad and financial advisers combine efforts for holistic advising? If not, consider ways to work together to overcome financial barriers to studying abroad. At the end of our Preview Meeting, after questions and next steps have been addressed, most of our students say "wow, that was really helpful!"

# Using Electronic Portfolios to Highlight International Experience

Ann Hubbard, Angela Manginelli, AIFS Study Abroad

While electronic portfolios (ePortfolios) are commonly used in higher education, they remain relatively unknown and underutilized in the campus programming developed by education abroad professionals (i.e., developed for study abroad students). Built on accessible and low/no cost blogging platforms - these digital profiles are useful not only in documenting accomplishments but in allowing students to infuse elements of their personality and character by using full prose and images (in contrast to the text-only format of a resume). EPortfolios are a key tool for students to demonstrate how their life experiences – study abroad, internships, academics, student leadership roles, etc. – have helped them develop transferable skills. This step of giving meaning to experiences – such as their international travel, cross cultural encounters and involvement in student organizations – is the key that translates the doing into being, or the reason why it is worth reporting on where they have been and what they have done.

***Why ePortfolios?***

A recent study published by the Association of American Colleges & Universities (2015) found that "In addition to a resume or college transcript, 80% of employers say an electronic portfolio would be useful to them in ensuring that job applicants have the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in their company or organization." This contrasts with only 45% of employers reporting that viewing an academic transcript would be useful for the same analysis. Salman Khan, Executive Director of the Khan Academy, offers a viewpoint on the benefits of the digital age:

> Right now, transcripts have some statistics on your grades and maybe some standardized test scores. But in the future, they should include a portfolio of things you've created – robots you've built, programs you've written, things you've painted, whatever – along with what your peers and your community think of you as a leader, a communicator and an empathizer. This is already what people care about, but it hasn't been formally recognized. (quoted by Dockterman, 2015: 52)

And, the use of ePortfolios helps students acquire skills on a number of levels by (Rodriguez, 2015):

- Developing a personalized learning experience
- Connecting the different areas of their learning (academics, career, international experiences, life goals…)
- Being the judge of their own work
- Gaining awareness of their own progress
- Working with technology
- Showcasing themselves in a unique way to graduate schools and potential employers

***A Gap in Reporting on Outcomes and Transferable Skills***

Numerous studies – mostly conducted in the U.S. and Western Europe – point to students reporting on the skills they developed as the result of an international experience (AIFS, 2012; Dwyer, 2004; Vande Berg, Paige, & Connor-Linton, 2009); yet, many of these competencies remain unrecognized in that students do not know how to articulate them nor do employers necessarily realize the value of an international experience as an opportunity for skill development. A Finnish study titled "Hidden Competences" (CIMO, 2014) sought to answer the questions: How can we make employers better understand the learning outcomes of international mobility? How can we make students and others more aware of the skills acquired during an international experience? (2014: 6). The three basic

recommendations were that higher education institutions and industries need to engage in thorough dialogue; higher education and study abroad programs need to focus on learning outcomes and present them in a way that employers will understand; and students need tools and guidance to make their competencies visible.

### *ePortfolios, Transferable Skills and Cross-cultural Learning*

There is a significant intersection where transferable and cross-cultural skills overlap. Among the traits and qualities sought by employers and also considered to contribute to intercultural competence, are empathy, an openness to new and different perspectives, a high degree of self-awareness, and a capacity to develop new skills (Jones, 2013). Students returning from abroad should be guided in accurately assessing and articulating their skills. In creating ePortfolios, students engage in a process of reflection that gives meaning to their personal experiences. Paloma Rodriguez, who has established ePortfolios as the capstone to an International Studies Certificate at Santa Fe College in Florida, explains that:

> ePortfolios are a remarkable platform for the incorporation of career development elements... they allow students to display, along with their résumés, what employers value even more than specific majors: transferable skills (AAC&U, 2015). ePortfolios not only allow students to demonstrate that they possess these abilities; they also provide an extraordinary visualization of the kind of experiences that influence employers the most when making hiring decisions (Rodriguez, 2016: 232).

### *AIFS Study Abroad: a case study in the use of ePortfolios*

Two groups of students at AIFS Study Abroad create comprehensive ePortfolios which highlight the skills developed as the result of their international experience. One group includes students doing semester programs who voluntarily seek to fulfill the requirements for an AIFS Global Scholar Certificate. The other is a group of students selected to serve as Alumni Ambassadors upon their return to campus, working with the study abroad office to help promote the value of an international education experience.

Students in both groups create an ePortfolio as a sort of capstone. They are given access to a handbook on ePortfolio development and critiquing by staff of their first draft. Their support ensures students have a quality ePortfolio ready as they embark on the post-graduation job search.

***What is included in an ePortfolio?***

A student's international experience should be highlighted since studying abroad is something that sets undergraduates apart (less than 5% of U.S. students study abroad). Students are instructed on how to build short pieces offering examples of the skills and qualities that developed as the result of their experience. Suggested tabs (sections) in a student ePortfolio might include: home, about, resume, campus/community involvement, academics (or research projects), international experience (or study abroad) and awards.

***Guided Self-Reflection is Key***

The ePortfolio serves as a way for students to capture their experience, knowledge, and skills in both a meaningful and a practical way. Students have the potential to make their ePortfolio a showcase of their experience and skills. We have a student workbook titled "Marketing Your International Experience" that includes modelling the STAR method* for offering "stories" with purpose to demonstrate one's skills:

Situation (for example)
"In Germany, I found myself in an academic system very different from that of the U.S."

Task
"I needed to figure out how to stay on track with my studying despite no weekly assignments that needed to be turned in or deadlines for reading the textbook."

Action
"I set up a schedule and organized weekly study groups, making sure I covered the material and would be ready for the final exam."

Result
"I earned top marks in my classes and felt proud to have modeled good problem-solving and organizational skills in addition to the motivation I had for learning."

*The STAR method is widely used by career services professionals in the U.S. and is considered public domain.

***Plans for the future***

Although only one cohort of AIFS Global Scholars and Alumni Ambassadors have completed their electronic portfolios so far, the participants have already responded positively to the opportunity to learn how to present themselves more holistically than in a one-page resume. The process of crafting an ePortfolio has allowed students to be mindful of how employers will view their experiences and make them more intentional in the narrative they can craft about themselves. It is our hope that more colleagues in international education will add ePortfolios to their study abroad process, encouraging students to be more intentional in going abroad. This will facilitate a culture of self-awareness that will help them as they transition from the role of student to career professionals.

# A Mutual Goal: Leveraging Education Abroad to Maximize Career Opportunities

Liz Campanella, Villanova University
Gina Canterucci, New York University
Samantha LaCroix, EUSA Academic Internship Programs
Lorien Romito, Babson College
Donna Sosnowski, Babson College

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***Introduction***

EUSA – Academic Internship Programs, Babson College, Villanova University, and New York University came together to explore the impact of education abroad experience on students' employability. Our collective work and collaboration with career services colleagues can serve as a resource for practitioners eager to integrate career development into education abroad program design and the sharing of best practices.

***Competency Development through International Internships***

EUSA began examining the topic of career integration as a result of our collaborative approach to running international internships. Through this approach, EUSA learns common key performance indicators through this approach. Completing an internship abroad is an example. Beyond student testimonials, this outcome encompasses the skills and competencies students develop while abroad and the long-term impact on career readiness. In order to provide our partners with additional insights and metrics, EUSA first implemented PILOT (Personalized Learning Objectives Toolkit) and, most recently, an Alumni Employability Outcomes survey.

PILOT, developed in consultation with our partners and based on extensive research regarding the transferable skills and competencies employers

seek in their employees, continuously engages students in guided reflection, self-assessment, and competency development. Students select from four umbrella categories of Social and Emotional Growth, Leadership and Professionalism, Academic/Disciplinary Knowledge, and Global Perspectives, to identify up to five competencies they wish to develop over the course of the program abroad. These competencies, such as problem solving and intercultural communication, are discussed with students to explore the personal relevance and identify potential opportunities abroad to utilize and develop them further. Students are asked to reflect and capture stories that highlight use of each particular skill culminating in a written personal learning statement articulating what they have gained from their time abroad. Lastly, students are connected with resources on their home campus to help them integrate their learning statement into a cover letter, articulate the value of their experience in an interview, and update their resume.

EUSA's Alumni Employability Outcomes survey was developed, in consultation with partners, to provide quantifiable data regarding the impact of an international internship on students' employability post-graduation. The survey launched in spring 2016 to program alumni from 2011. Initial results showed that 88% of respondents pursued an international internship to enhance their employability, and 59% of respondents said their international internship helped them secure their first professional job.

We learned that to demonstrate the connection between an internship program abroad and enhanced career readiness, future surveys need to focus more on competency development. The real value of survey responses is when it can be compared against similar data points from a university's own research. Fortunately, more universities, like Babson College and Villanova University, are starting to look at the employability outcomes for their students who studied abroad.

***Employability Data for Education Abroad***

In an effort to understand better why 50% of Babson College students choose not to study abroad, Babson conducts an annual survey with graduating seniors. Trends over the past three years demonstrate students' concern for missing out on job or internship opportunities. Qualitative

feedback from the survey highlighted a general sentiment that education abroad was an "excuse to party in another country," or was not a good return on investment. This feedback was the impetus for a unique collaboration between The Office of Multicultural & International Education and the Undergraduate Center for Career Development.

In response, Babson aimed to change the narrative about education abroad amongst our students, specifically as it relates to the advantages of education abroad relative to employment outcomes. What we lacked, beyond anecdotal evidence, was the data to demonstrate to our business-focused students that education abroad facilitates important transferable skill acquisition that gives students a competitive advantage when they are conducting their career search.

The Center for Career Development collects and reports on Career Outcomes according to NACE (National Association for Colleges and Employers) "career readiness" competencies. These competencies: critical thinking/problem solving, oral and written communications, teamwork/collaboration, leadership, professionalism - serve as the framework for the programs and services that prepare our students for their careers. They are also key components of the education abroad experience. Employers greatly value international experience and seek candidates who demonstrate these competencies and have practical cultural knowledge, a tolerance for ambiguity, and a sense of curiosity.

Babson College has collected two years of data comparing the career outcomes, median salary, and industry sector for our graduates who studied abroad versus those who did not. We defined study abroad as any credit-bearing, Babson approved, education abroad experience inclusive of short-term faculty-led (10 days-2 weeks), summer, semester, or academic year experience. While the career outcomes and median salary data in 2014 did not favor those students who studied abroad, we were encouraged to see that studying abroad did not negatively impact students' ability to secure an internship. However, in 2015, we were pleased to see that the data shifted favorably for those students who studied abroad, across all categories that we measured. Specifically, study abroad alumni had a 96% job placement rate while those who did not study abroad had a 92% job

placement rate. The median salary for study abroad alumni was $1,000 more than those who did not have a study abroad experience. Additionally, students who studied abroad were 10% more likely to have conducted an internship during their time at Babson, indicating that study abroad does not interfere with professional development endeavors while they are students. There was no difference in the top industry for job placement (Financial Services) which might clarify students' misconceptions that certain majors or career ambitions prohibit the ability to study abroad.

The Education Abroad Office at Villanova University conducted a similar study utilizing NACE's First Destination survey in 2015.

The following statistics are helpful to frame Villanova's data review:
- Study abroad programs are defined as 5 weeks in length or more
- 57% of students studied abroad on semester programs
- 43% of students studied abroad on summer programs
- 40% of the 2015 class studied abroad
- They also looked at the breakdown of participation by college, led by Business, Arts and Science, followed by Engineering and Science.

Initial data from Villanova's 2015 First Destination Survey results did not show a significant statistical difference in placement rate for those who studied abroad compared to those who did not. Placement rate includes employment status, continuing education, military service, and volunteer work. For students who studied abroad the rate was 96.8 % versus 96.6% for those who did not. However, when we focused on the employment status (and excluded continuing education, military service and volunteer work) we found indications that perhaps study abroad improved the employment outcome with 77% of study abroad students employed versus 71% of non-study abroad students employed. Initial data from 2015 study showed that fewer students who study abroad continue education after graduation (14% versus 21% for student who did not study abroad).

The First Destination Survey offers education abroad and career services practitioners a useful tool to create tangible metrics for evaluating how the education abroad experience might influence a student's career path. Its rich dataset can be analyzed in many ways including by institutional type,

program type, program duration, country destination, student profile, and/or demographics.

***An Innovative Approach to Global Study and Career Development***

As higher education institutions work to demonstrate the impact of global study programs on future career opportunities, New York University (NYU) has adopted a collaborative model to support students' career development needs before, during, and after their global academic experience. By fully integrating the global academic experience with seamless career services, NYU has created a unique approach to blending study away and career development. The key organizational units that comprise this approach are NYU's Office of Global Programs (OGP) and the Wasserman Center for Career Development (WCCD).

During the early 2000s, NYU realized its vision for becoming a "Global Network University" and now operates eleven academic centers on six continents where undergraduate students can study for either a semester or a full academic year.

In 2013, university administrators committed to a new approach to providing seamless career services to students while studying away. With the rationale that fears or concerns about "missing out" on career development opportunities provided at the home campus should not deter students from studying away, the university created the position of Manager of Global Career Development (Manager) whose time is divided evenly between two key organizational units—the OGP and the WCCD. This position works closely with the Assistant Director for Global Academic Planning (AD) in the Office of Global Programs to help integrate students' academic experiences, such as participation in the Global Academic Internship Program, with their career development needs.

Each semester, the WCCD hosts Career Week at the global sites—during this designated event, the Manager conducts career development seminars either in-person at select sites or virtually with the NYU WCCD Team in New York. The goals of Career Week include connecting students to career development resources that they would have if they were in New

York as well as increasing global employability and cultural competencies. The Manager facilitates these goals by connecting students to employers through Alumni Panels at select sites and through Global Career Path Panels in New York via video-conferencing each semester. Additionally, virtual coaching appointments are available with WCCD staff during Career Week and throughout the semester.

Following students' return from study away, WCCD conducts Global Career Development seminars, such as *Telling Your Global Story*, which coaches students in how best to highlight transferrable skills gained while abroad and showcase them in their cover letters, networking pitch, and interviews. A second seminar, *International Job Search*, educates students on how to conduct a full-time international job search. This seminar considers perspectives of domestic students wanting to work abroad and international students wanting to work in a third country.

NYU's collaboration between the Office of Global Programs and the Wasserman Center for Career Development has successfully supported the mission of several academic units of the university who sought both a meaningful international component to their students' experiential learning and valuable career services during study away. This model benefits not only traditional internship-seeking students, such as those in business or media, but has also allowed students in areas such as public health, arts, and non-profit sectors to maximize career development while engaging in substantive internships during study away.

The case studies outlined in this article offer tools and techniques to promote further collaboration amongst education abroad and career services professionals. Anecdotally, we have known for years what the benefits of study abroad are on students' career preparation, but it is through concerted collaborative efforts that we can deliver measurable evidence. Our program design, data comparison and analysis, and departmental integration of services is allowing us to rewrite the narrative for students on what they should expect out of their education abroad experience.

# Career Development: The Minnesota Studies in International Development Program Model in Kenya

Mohamud A. Jama

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***Introduction***

This study was prompted by an invitation to co-present at the 2016 Career Integration Conference. As the Resident Director in Kenya for the Minnesota Studies in International Development (MSID) program, it was an opportunity to initiate research focused on one of the defining characteristics of the MSID Kenya program: grassroots internships that provide unparalleled experiential learning opportunities for undergraduate students.

The MSID program includes: seven weeks of classes in the capital city, a six week internship or research placement, and a final seminar held the last week of the semester. Students live in Kenyan homestays throughout the program to promote cultural immersion. Enrollment options include: fall or spring semester.

The objective was to establish if there was a connection between the Kenya internship placements and the jobs that recent graduates obtain. A quick and effective method for establishing if there was such a connection was to survey MSID Kenya alumni going back a decade and asking them a number of questions including: what they did at their internships in Kenya, what they think they learned from the internships in terms of academic knowledge, job skills, and personal qualities, and if this had helped them obtain the jobs they had.

Our universities have many functions and chief among what is expected of higher education currently is the extent to which students and faculty work together towards what economists and corporate leaders refer to as development of human capital (Hersh et al., 2009). Do MSID Kenya students use internships to equip themselves with knowledge, attitudes, confidence, and competencies necessary in securing meaningful employment? To what extent have the MSID Kenya alumni internship experiences been effective in competition for productive jobs and demanding careers? The answers to these questions (and more) were amply revealed by alumni responses analyzed below.

***Methodology***

The study was based on an online survey sent out to all the MSID Kenya alumni who completed the program between Fall 2006 and Fall 2016. The students were contacted by email, Facebook, and in some rare cases by phone, to ensure we had feedback from as many students as possible. In total, 448 former students were requested to complete the online survey, 90 responses were received, a 20% response rate.

The main objective of the survey was to analyze students' points of view on the following:

1. Perception of the MSID Kenya internship experience's impact on jobs/careers.
2. The alum's current and past employment situation
    a. Current employer
    b. Job title / description of what the job involves
3. The alums' internship experience
    a. The internship agency that hosted them.
    b. Activities conducted at the internship
    c. Knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained from the experience
    d. Other benefits derived from the experience

***Results***

The presentation of the results from the online survey will begin with a short description of some of variables in the study. This will be followed by respondent opinions on whether their Kenya internship experiences had any positive contribution towards their careers after school. Next, will be a brief analysis of the jobs currently held by the respondents. An analysis of the internships offered by MSID Kenya and what activities they do and what students usually learn from that experience follows, and to conclude this section, a sample of respondent suggestions on how to convert internship experience into attractive employment will be presented.

***Variables***

*Gender*

77% of respondents were female compared to 23% male. Female enrollment on the program has consistently been above 95%. The reasons behind disproportionately high response rate by male students may need to be explored further.

*Enrollment Options*

75% of the respondents had enrolled on the semester only option, 14% were on the academic year only option, 9% were on the semester plus presession option and 2% were on the academic year plus presession option. This proportion conforms to actual enrollments for the period covered by the study.

*Internship Tracks*

39% of respondents participated in internships related to public health in Kenya; 29% were internships linked to social service work; 13% of the respondents did internships on education/literacy; 10% did internships on an entrepreneurship/alternative economies track, while 9% of the respondents did internships related to sustainability and the environment. This approximates the internship track proportions on an average semester.

### *Alumni Employers*

26% of the respondents work with non-profit organizations. Almost the same number are employed by universities in the U.S. 12% are employed by international organizations and a slightly smaller group work with U.S. government agencies. The remaining 36% are employed in private sector organizations including social enterprise and businesses.

### *Student Perceptions on the Relevance of Internships to Careers*

The survey's primary focus was to establish if indeed there was a connection between internship placements and employment prospects. 70 out of the 90 respondents reacted to the question: "Did your internship experience assist you secure current or previous jobs?" responded "yes." 12 responded "no" to that question while 8 provided answers that was in between "yes" and "no." Two of these respondents stated that while the internship per se did not assist them secure the jobs they had, participating in MSID Kenya as a study abroad experience was instrumental in their careers. One had already secured her teaching position in a public school prior to MSID. An unemployed respondent working as a volunteer responded that the internship experience gave her a sense of direction. [It is] "hard to say; I doubt it was the only factor, but I am sure it has not hurt" was how one of the respondents reacted to that question. Three respondents were yet to complete their undergraduate studies and therefore could not provide a definite response to the question.

### *Characteristics of MSID Kenya Internship Agencies*

The 90 respondents were hosted by 71 different internship agencies. Internship agencies provided experiences for all internship tracks: public health, social service, education/literacy, entrepreneurship/alternative economies, and sustainability and the environment. These internship agencies range from the African Yoga Project, Central Body of Kisumu Bicycle Transporters, Pamoja FM Radio Station that serves Kibera informal settlement dwellers in Nairobi, to National Research Institutes such as the Kenya Medical Research Foundation (KEMRI) and Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI). The most common internships are offered by

hospitals (both government and missionary/church sponsored) as well as public health awareness non-profits. In total, 27 out of 90 respondents were hosted by this category of internship agencies. Community based agencies and non-profits that work with women were also common sources for placements.

***Activities Students Observe and Participate in at the Internship***

Respondents are usually engaged with a wide range of activities depending on their internship tracks. For example, one of those doing public health related internships reported shadowing medics, another public health track student reported studying the "interplay between church and state sponsored development projects."

Respondents who were engaged with community-based organizations are among the most positive about connecting their internship experiences with their career. These experiences ranged from assisting with: HIV support workshops, trainings on basic business skills for youth, workshops on gender equitable practices, and initiatives related to peace, security and youth development. One fulfilled respondent reported: "Assisted with and participated in grassroots organizing around women's, children's and, disability rights, wrote successful grants for the organization, analyzed changes in Kenya's Proposed Constitution that would affect access to human rights for Kenyans, accompanied staff on outreach trips to surrounding rural areas based on client needs, observed client support." Another "attended community workshops and meetings, wrote reports, applied for grants, managed website content, created promotional materials, attended court hearings for cases of domestic violence."

***Skills Learned at the Internship***

Respondents overwhelmingly appreciated learning outcomes from their internship experience. They reported that they had gained a wide range of skills depending on their internship tracks. One respondent described the skills she learned at Port Reitz District Hospital:

> I learned how a public hospital functioned given financial, staffing, and training constraints, the role of public health efforts in disease prevention and management, and the struggles of disadvantaged individuals and families in the region.

A student reported: "I built planning skills through…my research project. I gained cross-cultural communication skills by working with the local team to design and implement my project." Another reported that a hospital internship helped her learn "how to interact with healthcare professionals, how to discuss difficult diagnoses with patients and their families…I learned how to consider the patient as a whole person and assess what circumstances contributed to their hospital admission."

A respondent on the education track "developed teaching skills using very little materials which has been invaluable [I am an English teacher full time]. I also developed many skills surrounding research. I learned how to conduct interviews, manage my time, connect with administration to conduct interviews, and summarize my findings in a paper." Another "learned how to better communicate, how to be a better listener, how to empathize, how to multi-task, how to engage with individuals on a multiplicity of levels, and the importance of not assuming anything about anyone. We as Americans have become so conditioned to speculate and analyze things from a Eurocentric lens which is not beneficial to ourselves or others."

***Conclusion***

While this study has certain weaknesses in its methodology, it nevertheless demonstrates the following: That there is some relationship between MSID internship experiences and career choices made by alumni. Note that 48% of the respondents are involved in public development work at national and international levels and 36% are in private industry.

Students gain certain skills and personal qualities that positively contribute to their employment and career advancement. Higher education institutions and employers need to work in concert to promote experiences that make our students better candidates for different jobs.

# Global Careers: Do We Understand the Requirements for Careers Across National Boundaries? A European Perspective.

Nannette Ripmeester, Expertise in Labour Mobility

In the current world, the importance of employability has taken a tremendous shift. Where 15 years ago, students opted for a certain higher education institution because it was either close to home or just far away enough from their parents to feel a sense of freedom, modern students choose differently. Over time, students have turned into customers of higher education institutions, looking for data to back up their study choice: from parents to rankings to alumni, we have seen the sources progress and mature. But alongside the word *employability*, we have seen the word *global* grow in importance, too. Not only have students become more international in their study outlook, employers - as procurers of talent - are also becoming increasingly keen on students with an intercultural and/or international stance. These days companies are keen to hire students that have global-workplace-ready-skills: "we need people that are capable of transparently interacting with a variety of different people, with consideration to both diverse cultures and backgrounds" as Stuart Jehan from Robeco said during the employer panel at the EAIE conference in Liverpool in 2016.

> But does a higher education degree mean that students are adequately prepared for a career beyond national boundaries? In my opinion, many of us talk about internationalization of higher education while often failing to see what would prepare the new generation for a truly global career, one that takes place outside their home country.

Why does internationalization matter? Is it just because students want to be international? Is it just because employers seek international skills? Or is

it a combination of what our society needs and what our higher education "clientele" wants? I like to believe it is "the" right thing for our world at present considering xenophobia is on the rise and the best medication against this will be young people with an international outlook who have experienced other cultures and as such have become more acceptable to cultural differences. Hence, true internationalization of higher education creates global citizens ready to make their mark in the world. I am not talking about CEOs and Presidents only. Employability means making the most of one's talents. Likewise, global employability means making the most of one's talents without being limited by national boundaries and finding the niche for this talent on a global labor market. If we want internationalization of higher education to achieve this, we need to make sure the basics are there. It starts with an understanding of what your students need to make their first successful steps in an unfamiliar labor market. We often assume cultural differences only start to matter when we are doing business whilst talking about major business deals, but it starts already when students orientate themselves on the job market. Whether they prepare a CV or a resume, it is not just a question of wording. Whether they add a picture to it or not, it is not just a personal choice. Whether they emphasize all the skills required or just vaguely hint at certain skills, it is not just a matter of personality. The differences in job hunting are ingrained into the cultural DNA of both the job seeker and the prospective recruiter. If higher education truly wants to provide their students with the opportunity to go for a global career, we need to make them understand what gets them hired in the different countries.

When I started my international career at the European Commission in Brussels back in the nineties, I was in charge of a database with information on living and working conditions and regional labor market information for the European Member States. During one of the strategic meetings with representatives of all those countries, I presented a plan with topics to include in our system. The project I worked on was called EURES (EURopean Employment Services) and the tool exists until this day with the aim to enhance worker mobility within the European Economic Area. However, let us go back to that meeting. When I introduced one of the topics I planned to include, i.e. how to write a CV in each of the Member States, the noise level rose considerably. Every country delegation started explaining what

was required in their country to be considered a successful job candidate: from the Germans that preferred a chronological CV with no gaps, mentioning specifically all tasks, to the Brits who favored a short and bold overview of the skills acquired. Within 20 minutes, the differences displayed were so obvious and the amazement about those differentiations so convincing, that I knew we had discovered a topic that needed more attention.

Over time, I have been involved in the research and development of practical solutions, such as the "Looking for work around the Globe" workshops at Expertise in Labour Mobility, the HELM (Harnessing European Labour Mobility) project with the Bertelsmann Stiftung, and the educational gaming app CareerProfessor.works. All with the aim to understand and support the cultural DNA of what makes a successful job seeker in various countries. Why is a CV picture a no-go in some countries but essential in others? In North America and Australia, for instance, a picture is not included in a resume because it straight away provides information on gender, race, and age, which are considered non-essential and discriminatory reasons to either hire or dismiss someone for a position. In several European countries, on the other hand, a picture is considered a standard part of the CV, and gender, race, and age might even be a reason to favor one candidate over another. Understanding those differences is not a question of learning inside out what is required, but it is about grasping the underlying reasons for those differences. If the principles of equality are strong in a society and they want to favor women over men for a certain position to balance the gender gap, one is able to understand the reason behind certain actions.

The differences that our students encounter, in making the most of their global career potential, range from the type of employability skills in demand to what is expected in a job interview. The problem is that both recruiters and job seekers often fail to recognize the differences, but it is our graduates that will get judged on not understanding those differences. In higher education, we cannot change the labor markets across the globe; but, we can prepare our students for what awaits them to make sure we empower our graduates to make their global mark on the world by providing them with training about the differences that await them. In today's world of information technology, we can of course still use conventional workshops to spread knowledge but we should also look at what other

technical solutions are available to train students in this area. Think for instance about the opportunities that gamification of soft skills can bring. However, that would be another article. One that I would love to write.

# Internationalization in Canada: Current Context and Memorial University's Efforts to Embed Employability in the International Student Experience

Sonja Knutson, Jennifer Browne, Memorial University

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***Purpose***

This article provides an overview of the current issues, challenges, and successes of strategic internationalization in Canada and provides an introduction to programming which supports international student employability. In the Canadian context, workforce development and the reliance on international students are closely inter-connected. Many Canadian universities have developed programs to support international student transition to employment, including Memorial University of Newfoundland which has focused broadly on the development of employability skills and entrepreneurship as a viable career path for new graduates.

***Introduction***

> *International education is a key driver of Canada's future prosperity, particularly in the areas of innovation, trade, human capital development and the labor market.*
>
> (Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, 2012)

A primary reason for countries to engage in international student recruitment is the direct economic contribution of billions of dollars spent by international students at universities and in communities. While this direct economic impact is important, equally important in Canada are the

employability skills that international students bring to the communities in which they choose to study and live. The Higher Education Academy defines employability as "the opportunities to develop knowledge, skills, experiences, behaviours, attributes, achievements and attitudes to enable graduates to make successful transitions and contributions; benefiting them, the economy and their communities" (Higher Education Academy, 2015).

These students, already residents of Canada, with friends and networks generally well-developed, are a source of highly-skilled workers able to integrate relatively easily into the Canadian labor market and society. Canada's immigrant friendly policies allow students to work while studying and after graduation. These policies have encouraged post-secondary institutions in Canada to develop career and entrepreneurship supports tailored to the unique needs of international students as potential immigrants. Canadian universities are committed to growing career development learning opportunities for international students. Their initiatives support creative and thoughtful programming focused on the value of the whole student experience, both inside and outside the classroom, while contributing to the economic development of the country.

***Canadian Context***

According to the Canadian Bureau for International Education, Canada is the world's seventh most popular destination for international students. More than 300,000 international students are studying in Canada, more than half of whom are enrolled in Canadian universities. At the post-secondary level 10% of all students are international, with increasing enrolment in STEM fields. Canada's immigration policies are believed to contribute to Canada's success in international student attraction, allowing students to work part-time during their degrees, and up to three years following graduation.

The Canadian labor market forecasts reflect future shortages in professional and skilled trades that require highly qualified personnel, and there is concern about our ability to remain competitive in the new knowledge economy. The 2014 release of Canada's International Education Strategy set goals of increasing international student enrollment, while federal immigration policy continues to be tweaked to balance support of labor

market goals with other priorities. Each province also examines its own particular context and is able to develop specific immigration streams tailored to region-based needs. The demographic challenges are keenly felt in smaller centers in particular. There is a growing intent by federal and provincial governments further to refine immigration streams and incentives to ensure international students smoothly transition from study to work and then to permanent residency outside of the large urban centers.

***Memorial University: A Case Study***

Memorial University is located in a region of significant demographic decline. It has a special obligation to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador as the only university in the province. The province recently launched a Population Growth Strategy and is carrying out consultations in 2016 to develop specific implementation plans. In 2015, Memorial launched a Strategic Internationalization Plan (SIP 2020) which contains actions around support of the provincial population growth and labor market engagement:

> Action 2.9 Contribute to the population growth of the province through strong post-graduation transition programming and support of welcoming community initiatives which nurture relationships between the host culture and newcomers.
>
> Action 2.11 Identify the labor market entry of international students, and in fact all newcomers to the province, as a priority and work with local business communities and external professional accrediting bodies to help transition graduates into meaningful careers in the province (Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2015).

Newfoundland and Labrador's Labor Market Outlook 2015 anticipates almost 64,000 job openings between 2015-2025 due to expanded employment opportunities and an increase in the number of retirements. Approximately 57% of these job openings will require some sort of post-secondary education. Currently, and for the foreseeable future, there are more people leaving the workforce than young people entering with the gap expected to increase over the next decade. International students attending Memorial University are a key group to help fill labor market needs. It is

imperative that various stakeholders, including employers, municipalities, government, post-secondary institutions, community organizations, and other stakeholders, work together to ensure international students have employability embedded into the student experience to assist with a smooth transition to the local labor market.

Memorial has developed a strong focus on connecting international students to the labor market due to our context. It has also engaged external partners extensively, working with municipal, provincial, and federal governments, employer boards and councils, and non-governmental organizations that share mandates to settle and retain newcomers. The university ensures the message goes broadly to local employers that international students make ideal employees, having successfully managed to settle into the new community and having attained nationally recognized credentials. A March 2016 report of the Business Council of Canada contends that:

> 21st century leaders require strong communication skills, the ability to collaborate, adaptability, decisiveness, tactfulness and empathy… This underscores the need to nurture and develop soft skills at the K-12 and post-secondary levels – an approach that would broaden the pool of future leaders in the Canadian workforce (Business Council of Canada, 2016)

Thus, Memorial works with its partners to increase awareness of employers of the benefits of hiring international students, while working to increase international student understanding of how to enter the Canadian labor market.

To support international students and graduates to remain and work in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Provincial Government identified significant benefits in having a government presence focused on immigration and workplace development physically located on campus at Memorial University. In consultation and partnership with the Internationalization Office at Memorial, space was identified. Having such services available on-site to answer questions and promote and encourage international students to remain is a strategic move to increase immigration and retain international student graduates in the province. Other initiatives such as

The Provincial Nominee Program, which allows the province to nominate applicants who meet an established set of criteria such as specialized occupational or entrepreneurial skills, and provide an alternate and quicker path into the country, are very attractive options for students wishing to remain in the province and country.

***International student programming at Memorial University: employability and career success.***

Memorial University has specifically developed a variety of programming to increase international student success in securing employment, as well as increasing their employability and long-term career success. Some of these programs include the following:

*Professional Skills Development Program*

http://www.mun.ca/isa/employment/psdp.php

The national award winning Professional Skills Development Program (PSDP) was recognized as a "Best Practice" in supporting international students on campus: *17 High Impact Practices to Ensure Student Success* launched by the Educational Advisory Board in 2014 is an eight-week program focused on preparing international students for professional employment in the province and across the country. Founded in 2010, PSDP includes eight one-hour sessions (on topics such as communication, culture, volunteering), two networking events and a mandatory volunteering component. Since its inception, 623 international students have participated. The goals of the program include:

> Gain knowledge about the local community and work culture
> Improve resume with extracurricular activities
> Build personal and professional networks

Ongoing evaluation and feedback from participants is very positive with many comments such as, "One of the best programs for international students. Greatly helped me land three co-op terms. I was prepared well ahead of time for co-op application." Such comments strongly demonstrate that PSDP has

a positive impact on success in student and graduate employment.

*Entrepreneurship Training Program*

http://www.mun.ca/cdel/Student_Programs/ETP/

Since 2012, Memorial has offered an innovative Entrepreneurship Training Program (ETP) that aims to develop both the entrepreneurial mindset as well as technical and managerial competencies necessary to create new ventures. The program for international graduate students is a combination of workshops, networking events, special presentations, one-on-one advising, and mentorship. Graduate students were screened and selected for a 16-week program, for which they were required to participate in at least 80% of components to graduate. An Entrepreneurship Training Coordinator coordinated planning and implementation, while a steering committee comprised of staff from the School of Graduate Studies, Career Development and Experiential Learning, the Internationalization Office, and the Faculty of Business Administration provided guidance and oversight for the larger project.

In 2016, Memorial had the highest ETP enrolment to date with a total of 30 graduate students. Of the 30 students, 27 are international students. Since the program's inception, a total of 33 graduate students (18 in 2012-13 and 15 in 2013-14) have participated in ETP. Student feedback on the program was overwhelmingly positive, and all student participants from both 2012-13 and 2013-14 cohorts reported the ETP as meeting or exceeding their expectations. The majority of the students also noted that they intend to start a business after graduation.

*International Student Work Experience Program*

https://www.mun.ca/cdel/jobs_for_students/ISWEP/

The International Student Work Experience Program (ISWEP) is an on-campus part-time employment program for undergraduate international and English as a Second Language students with a valid study permit. These positions are completed over one semester and can be 40 or 80 hours in

length. Positions are available throughout campus with faculty and staff, and provide career related, professional experiences. Students and employers complete a Learning and Reflection Agreement to encourage dialogue between student and employer. This enables active reflection on, and identification of, the transferable skills and competencies gained as a result of the ISWEP experience.

Since 2010, the program has had 4,293 international students apply for on campus positions. Such high numbers demonstrate strong interest and demand for employment; motivations are not just financial, but also signify the desire to get relevant career experience in Canada, establish references, develop and/or enhance skills, and experience local work place culture. Funding for these employment opportunities comes directly from international student tuition. 5% of international students' tuition is directed to providing on-campus employment opportunities.

*Enhanced Development of the Graduate Experience*

http://www.mun.ca/sgs/edge.php

The Enhanced Development of the Graduate Experience (EDGE) is a number of professional development programs and services that assist students with the complementary skills and competencies required to be successful in their lives after graduate school. The program is led by a steering committee of various university stakeholders. The program focuses on nine key themes originally identified in a discussion paper on professional skills for graduate students by the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies. The Memorial University community, including graduate students, were also surveyed to rate the importance of each theme. Results from the survey and previous research supported the following focus areas:

- Leadership and management
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Critical and creative thinking
- Integrity and ethics

- Global and intercultural awareness
- Teaching skills
- Societal and civic responsibility
- Career development
- Research

***Career Advising***

http://www.mun.ca/cdel/Student_Resources/

Memorial University also has a dedicated career advisor for International Students. This position sees students one-on-one regarding their career development needs, facilitates ISWEP and the PSDP program, and is connected with many groups and resources internal and external to the University that support international student engagement and retention. Having a dedicated position has increased the opportunity to respond to the needs of this student population while offering a pathway to connection with all stakeholders.

***Externships***

https://www.mun.ca/cdel/Student_Programs/Externships/Externships.php

Externships are experiential learning opportunities that provide students short practical experiences in their field of study. An externship is designed to provide students with an opportunity to enter the workforce in a condensed period of time, to allow for networking, career exposure, and exploration. Externships allow participants to receive practical experience of the day-to-day activities of a position within an organization that is of interest to them. Students can apply their in-class knowledge to real life situations and thus bring back that hands-on experience back to the classroom and enhance their studies.

***International Student Employability***

The interest in international student employability is not unique to Canada. In the past year, Memorial has engaged in global conversations specifically related to this area of employability. In November 2015, Memorial University was invited to participate in a benchmarking exercise: "International Student Employability, Mobility and Industry" in Tasmania, Australia with nine other post-secondary institutions from four countries. The participants were asked to review both process and outcome benchmarking against the following key performance indicators: 1) international student employability 2) student mobility and 3) external strategic partnerships. A number of recommendations and best practices from each university resulted from the self-review and peer review process.

A Global Think Tank Summit, founded at the Tasmania Benchmarking exercise, shared knowledge in order to foster understanding and cooperation in international education and employability. The discussion highlighted common areas for improvement and future collaboration. An action plan to address challenges identified ten key areas in international student employability involving higher education organizations, governments, and industry (Booth and Read, 2015). The actions addressed multi-country challenges around visa restrictions and taxation settings: development of tools for employer hiring incentives, training and mentoring; improved communication to employers; and development of benchmarking instruments.

In spring 2016, Memorial University participated in a global collaboration, led by the University of Wollongong in Australia, exploring trends related to work-integrated and career-development learning, and resulting employability. The nine participating institutions across Canada, Australia, and the United Kingdom explored and shared curricular and co-curricular employability initiatives, some of which were specific to international student populations. Other countries and institutions are now joining the conversation and will identify best practice and how to overcome common challenges.

***Conclusion***

The dialogue regarding international student employability and subsequent transition into the labor force is occurring around the world. Many countries are creating strategies based on their own needs while globally there is increased dialogue, sharing, and research focusing on internationalization and employability. This paper provides an overview of what is happening in Canada and how one province and university is addressing issues and opportunities. Successful transition can only occur if the required and proper supports are in place with stakeholders committed to working together.

# GUESSS: An Entrepreneurship Agenda at The University of Cadiz, Spain

Antonio-Rafael Ramos-Rodríguez; José Ruiz-Navarro;
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## *Introduction*

The question of university responsibility for student employment is, by no means, limited to higher education in the USA. This case study directs attention to efforts made at the University of Cadiz (Spain) to understand how self-employment or entrepreneurship is encouraged and taught in Spain in particular and, more generally, in the context of Europe and, by implication, internationally. The focus in the USA, as evidenced by the current discourse, is on employability. The research described here suggests that an expanded agenda to include preparation for entrepreneurship would be timely.

Entrepreneurship is one of the main forces which act as drivers of change and economic, social, and technological development. Entrepreneurial skills constitute a strategic resource in society, contributing to the creation of economic dynamism and social mobility. Public authorities are particularly interested in the entrepreneurial phenomenon, recognizing that new entrepreneurs will accelerate economic development: through the generation of new ideas, the transformation of these into profitable businesses, and the ensuing creation of employment. Recent research highlights the importance of creating innovative businesses with high growth potential (World Economic Forum and GEM, 2015). These initiatives arise mainly in areas where universities, along with other external factors, create a supportive environment: entrepreneurial "ecosystems" that nurture start-ups with high growth potential that generate skilled employment and wealth for the future. In this endeavor, universities have a crucial role to play in

educating future entrepreneurs capable of creating high potential businesses or developing valuable projects and opportunities in the companies or organizations in which they will be employed.

For these reasons, it is vital that political leaders and academics understand the mechanisms that foster entrepreneurial potential in universities. These elements are key to the subsequent, successful creation of innovative, high growth potential business ventures.

At university, students may find the idea of becoming an entrepreneur attractive as an alternative to entering the labor market and facing the unacceptably high levels of youth unemployment in some regions. As stated by Lüthje and Franke (2003), the values related to self-employment (independence, challenges, and self-realization) are increasingly attractive to students. These are, of course, values also associated with student mobility learning outcomes.

Thus, in order to foster entrepreneurship, it is vital that teaching staff and academic authorities know and understand why students choose a career in business, how likely they are to be entrepreneurial and what role contextual factors, regionally, nationally and internationally, play. This has led many researchers to study entrepreneurial intentions of university students, one of the groups with the highest level of potential in this area.

In order to understand the mechanisms that generate entrepreneurial intent in students, in 2003 the Swiss Institute for Small Business and Entrepreneurship at the University of St. Gallen (KMU-HSG) designed the *Global University Entrepreneurial Spirit Students' Survey* (GUESSS) project under the leadership of Dr Philipp Sieger of the University of Bern. Data is gathered using an on-line survey conducted every two years. The seventh edition was undertaken in spring 2016. Participation in the project has grown steadily, with 759 universities from 34 countries taking part in the 2013/2014 edition and over 109,000 surveys completed. Participation has increased in the seventh edition to more than 1,000 universities from 50 countries around the world, and data is currently being gathered. The University of Cadiz (UCA) has been involved in the project since the sixth edition through the Entrepreneurship Chair which promotes entrepreneurship among the university's students and staff.

The main aim of UCA's participation in the GUESSS international project is to evaluate students' perceptions of their skills and capacity, their attitude to entrepreneurship, their levels of risk aversion, and the support of their family and friends. In addition, we wanted to assess several aspects related to the social, cultural, family, and university environment. The results obtained have allowed us to evaluate the quantity and quality of training provision, to guide and identify necessary actions and policies that would foster and support entrepreneurship within the university.

***Theoretical framework***

One of the most frequently researched questions in the field of entrepreneurship is how and why new business ventures are set up. As a result, a large number of theoretical and empirical contributions have been produced which aim to understand the initial phase of the entrepreneurial process (Schlaegel and Koenig, 2013). Creating a business requires careful planning and is the outcome of deliberate and intentional behavior (Bird, 1988), making the application of intention models extremely useful (Krueger, 1993).

To this effect, the theoretical foundations of the GUESSS project are based on one of the most widely used models of intention: the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Ajzen, 1991, 2002; Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). According to this theory, the probability that an individual will perform a specific behavior depends on the prior intention to participate in that behavior. This is influenced by three main factors: 1) an individual's attitude toward the benefits of initiating the behavior 2) acceptance of the results of performing the behavior according to the social norms of their reference groups (friends, colleagues, family) and 3) the perception that the behavior will lead to the desired results.

This last variable, also known as *perceived behavioral control*, has been used broadly with the concept of *self-efficacy*, introduced by Bandura (1997): the belief that one can effectively organize and execute actions in order to produce the required results (Bandura, 1997; Chen, Greene and Crick, 1998). This reflects the attribution of personal competence, control, and capacity to perform a specific job or task in a given situation. Self-efficacy affects the choice of action and the amount of effort employed (Waung,

1995) and is the main individual predictor of career choice (Bandura, 1986). The GUESSS project assesses students' entrepreneurial intentions and what determines them, paying special attention to a series of factors in the university, family, social, and cultural context.

***Methodology***

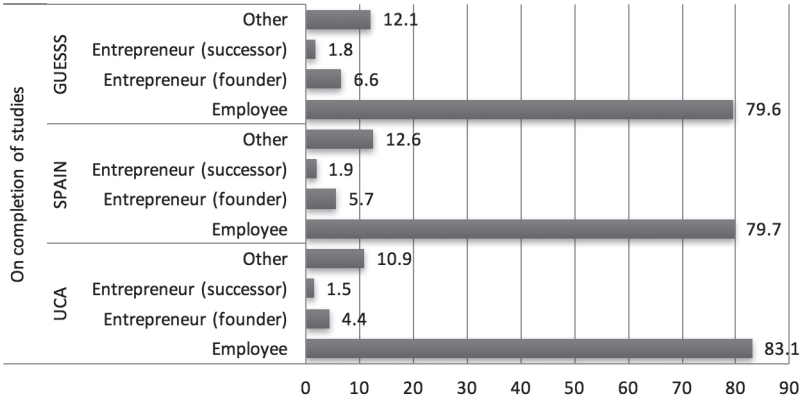
Data is gathered by means of a survey for students developed by the GUESSS team which complies with academic standards to guarantee reliability and validity. In Spain, the project is coordinated by ESADE, which sent the relevant links in Spanish and English to UCA in November 2013. The survey was distributed by the Vice Rectorate for Student Affairs and the Entrepreneurship Chair. As an incentive to students, an iPad was raffled among the participants and presented at an award ceremony. The responses were processed centrally to ensure uniformity of the data and were then distributed to the coordinator at each participating university.

The survey was sent to the 19,000 students registered at all levels of study in UCA, and responses were received from 2,286. 1,440 survey responses were considered valid, giving a valid response rate of 7.58%. The average age of those surveyed was 22.14 years old and 55.2% were female. The majority were studying a Bachelor's degree (84.2%), but there were also a significant number of Master's students (15.3%) while only a few were studying at PhD level (0.5%). Among the Bachelor's students, participation was more or less balanced as regards year of study except with respect to fourth year students who had a slight majority (35.0% as opposed to 20% for the other years of study).

***Results***

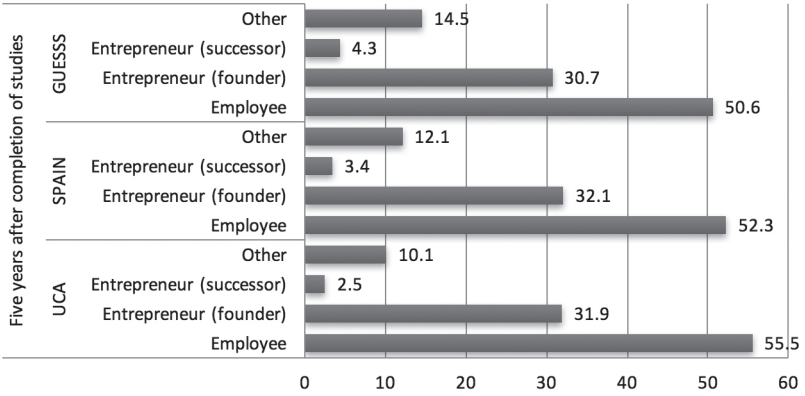
Table 1 illustrates that the behavior pattern of the UCA students is in line with the average of participants in the national and international surveys, although the entrepreneurial intention of our students just after completion of their studies is slightly lower. Thus, while at UCA only 4.4% of current students would be prepared to start their own business when they finish their studies; in the country as a whole the percentage is slightly higher at 5.7%, while the international average is higher still at 6.6%.

Table 1.
Career choice intentions on completion of studies. National and international comparison.




Five years after completing their studies, the behavior pattern (Table 2) indicates a significant increase in entrepreneurial vocation as opposed to the desire to be an employee. In this case, the percentage of UCA students is almost the same as the national average and slightly higher than the average of the 34 countries participating in the GUESSS project. In any case, the variation in entrepreneurial intentions five years after completion of studies is much more evident in UCA students than it is on national and international levels. Two factors could explain this: the low expectations of finding a job in the current environment; a lack of confidence in assuming the risks involved in setting up a business until additional training has been acquired over time through professional experience as an employee.

Table 2.
Career choice intentions five years after completion of studies. International and national comparison.




The results obtained have allowed us to analyze variable factors involved in entrepreneurial intentions: attitude towards entrepreneurship; support from society, family, and friends (i.e. subjective norms); perceived behavioral control; self-confidence; entrepreneurial competences and skills (or self-efficiency); the perception of entrepreneurship as a risk behavior and, finally, personal motivations. There is no doubt that environmental factors play a fundamental role in the formation of entrepreneurial intentions.

*Nb. Further details may be found in the final report of the GUESSS survey in UCA (Ramos-Rodriguez and Ruiz-Navarro, 2015).*

We sought to understand the formative factors could have a decisive role in the encouragement of entrepreneurship. Firstly, we assessed whether the general or entrepreneurial reputation of UCA had been a determining factor in the choice of university. Secondly, we evaluated whether UCA students perceive an entrepreneurial environment within UCA and whether the general education they have received in their degree programme had an entrepreneurial orientation. Finally, an analysis was made of the students' interest in their entrepreneurial education as evidenced by attendance at relevant events.

The results show that questions of entrepreneurship were not of primary significance; more than half the UCA students chose the university because of its geographic proximity to their hometown (57.3% as opposed to the national average of 53.7%), 16.7% for economic reasons related to tuition fees and the cost of living (13.2% in Spain), and 15.8% for other reasons (15.9% on a national level). Only 4.1% of the students surveyed claimed they chose UCA for its excellent reputation (12.0% in the national results), and 1.8% for its excellent reputation as an entrepreneurial university (1.6% at national level).

The objective was to evaluate students' perception of whether an entrepreneurial climate exists in UCA and if the university inspires the development of new businesses ideas, if there is a favourable climate to become an entrepreneur, and if the students are motivated to get involved in entrepreneurial activities. Results indicate that the average perception of an entrepreneurial climate among UCA students (3.8%) is slightly below the international average (4.0%) but above the average of Spanish universities participating in the study (3.7%). Nevertheless, the overall implication is that entrepreneurship is not seen as a critically embedded objective within the educational agenda.

As regards UCA students' perception about whether they consider that the general education received in their degree program was oriented towards entrepreneurship, the research evaluated five variables: 1) if the courses and services received increased their practical administrative and management skills in order to be able to start a business, 2) their understanding of the steps a person has to take to start a business, 3) their understanding of the attitudes, values, and motivations of entrepreneurs, 4) their ability to identify a business opportunity and 5) if the courses and services received increased their ability to develop networks. The results obtained indicate that the evaluation of UCA students (3.9) is slightly below the international average (4.0) but slightly above the national average (3.8).

Finally, an estimation was made of the proportion of UCA students that receive or have received some type of training related to the creation of businesses, either directly or indirectly, voluntary or compulsory. Over 58% of UCA students have never received any specific courses in entrepreneur-

ship. This is a high figure, but is slightly lower than the national and international averages, which are over 60%. This might suggest that nationally and internationally insufficient attention is being given to the provision of opportunities that might encourage students to consider self-employment as a realistic career option.

***Conclusions***

The measurement and evaluation of student entrepreneurial intent is essential if we are to foster entrepreneurship and cultivate a climate capable of generating innovative business ideas with high growth potential.

In this document, we have analyzed the mechanisms which generate entrepreneurial intent in students in a university in southern Europe, in order to reach a better understanding of the factors in play and how they affect students' attitudes. The results obtained may be of interest to academic authorities and other public and private institutions involved in the decision-making process in the field of educational policy both within, and beyond, Europe. In addition, they should provide valuable assistance in developing conducive university environments able to foster students' entrepreneurial competencies.

# SECTION THREE
## *In theory: exploring the narratives*

# For Fit or For Skills? How Employers Really Hire, and Why It Matters

Mark Lenhart, CET Academic Programs
Erica Tealey, University of Minnesota

When we talk about study abroad and career integration, we often note that the skills employers seek are precisely those skills that students gain while studying abroad—the ability to work independently, the flexibility to work with people from different backgrounds, an appreciation of varied viewpoints. We also note what might be considered to be the main difficulty in career integration: employers often fail to recognize the connection between study abroad and these skills. We lament that study abroad experience on a résumé is undervalued by employers (Anderson, 2015:53), and frequently conclude that the best practice is simply to teach students how to lead employers to see the connections between study abroad and the skills they seek in new employees. We advise job-seeking study abroad returnees to unpack their experiences and clearly identify the skills they gained while abroad.

But what if our foundation is all wrong? What if, when making hiring decisions, employers do not actually prioritize finding candidates with the skills that they claim to seek? What if, instead, employers prioritize "fit," and actually select candidates not because of skills, but because of their ability to fit well within the company culture? If this is indeed the case, perhaps we have misled students by overemphasizing the importance of study-abroad-developed skills in today's workplace.

The business world has been debating the merits of hiring for fit versus hiring for concrete skillsets for some time (McCutcheon, 2016). It is, in fact, not uncommon for employers to overlook a lack of certain skills when a candidate otherwise presents him/herself as a good fit for the organiza-

tion. Moreover, some research suggests that hiring for fit is good for not only employers, but for *employees* (Enguinuity Advantage, 2016). Why? Because the goal of any hiring manager is not merely to create a harmonious workplace environment in which employee share values, the goal of a hiring manager is also to maximize employee performance.

Take, for example, a company where teamwork and collaboration are integral parts of the work culture. An employee who has the required skills, but works most effectively independently or as a solo teleworker, simply will not thrive at this company. Research suggests that employees whose values align with the company ethos not only perform better, but stay in their positions longer than employees who are hired based on skills alone. One study notes that 46% of U.S. employees fail at the workplace within 18 months of hire due to *lack of cultural fit* (Cullison, 2011). It is, therefore, not surprising that 80% of employers worldwide named cultural fit as a top hiring priority (Rivera, 2015).

All of that said, Lauren Rivera, Associate Professor of Management and Organizations, and Associate Professor of Sociology at Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management, maintains that there is a downside:

> When done carefully, selecting new workers this way can make organizations more productive and profitable. But cultural fit has morphed into a far more nebulous and potentially dangerous concept. It has shifted from systematic analysis of who will thrive in a given workplace to snap judgments by managers about who they'd rather hang out with. In the process, fit has become a catchall used to justify hiring people who are similar to decision makers and rejecting people who are not (Rivera, 2015).

When gatekeepers choose candidates with whom they feel a natural affinity, diversity is lost and "group think," a roadblock to any high-performing team, becomes the norm. Current discourse within the business world maintains that hiring for fit and hiring for diversity are not as mutually exclusive as they might seem. Because hiring managers "left to their own devices, …often define merit in their own image" (Rivera, 2015), companies need to buck the trend by explicitly defining a company's culture both

inside and outside of company walls, transparently discussing the value of diversity with new and existing employees, and standardizing interview questions for all hiring managers. With these tactics in hand, companies can make strides in both arenas (Enguinuity Advantage, 2016).

So, what does this mean for our field? And how should we, as career integration advocates, advise our students? Here, we offer two strategies. First: demonstrating fit. We need to openly advise students about the value that some companies place on cultural fit. A returning student's attempt to explain the critical skills s/he learned abroad will fall on deaf ears if these skills are not of primary importance to the interviewer. Instead, returning students might be advised to use their study abroad experiences to demonstrate *how*, exactly, their personal values align with those of the company.

Second: evaluating fit. We need to empower students to, themselves, consider fit when choosing potential employers. Study abroad helps develop and define a student's core values to the point that upon return, that student needs to work in an environment where those values are appreciated and shared. The student whose life commitment is to social justice will perform best at a company where that commitment is not only admired, but even facilitative of mutually agreeable relationships with colleagues. While this may seem an obvious point to make, the importance of including this as a part of career integration advising cannot be overstated. Study abroad students are accustomed to considering ways in which they may or may not fit in within a certain culture—*studying abroad teaches them to do this*. As advisors, our job is to remind them to exercise this skill to its fullest potential when starting their job search process, and critically evaluate each company for whom they consider working.

To enact these two strategies—demonstrating fit and evaluating fit—we offer four tactics: self-reflection, research and networking, effective interviewing, and personal branding.

### *Self-Reflection*

In order to ascertain whether their own values align with those of a company, students first need to understand what their own values are and how they

have been formed. We recommend an interactive, partner-based exercise focused on the intersection of skills and values. One student is encouraged to share an anecdote from his or her study abroad experience. The partner listens to the anecdote and matches it with skills. (We provide a list of skills; the partner simply checks off the ones that seem appropriate to the anecdote.) The listening partner also writes down the values s/he observes. In this exercise, the first student's values are not only brought to light, but also aligned with an experience that s/he can easily reference later on. Students come to recognize their own values and start to appreciate the process of matching those values with specific experiences and skills.

***Research and Networking***

Study abroad students frequently return with a list of new goals for future employment. We encourage students to spend time researching potential employers with whom they might attain those goals. Company websites offer an excellent starting point. We also advise students to network with company insiders—up to 80% of positions are secured through networking! (Beatty, 2010)—and allow discussions of shared values to foster deeper connections with company representatives.

***Effective Interviewing***

Our conversations with employers have made it clear that to stand out at a job interview, students must articulate not only the skills they bring to the job, but also the ways in which they can fit into the company culture. This is especially true for those in the technology fields, where emphasis on cultural fit has actually detracted from emphasis on diversity in hiring.

To do this, we advise students to employ the STAR method—situation, task, action, result—when responding to behavioral-based interview questions. This structured technique can help them fully demonstrate their experiences. For an example, if students want to show alignment with the value of "teamwork," they can describe the situation (an immigrant shelter in Mexico, for example), the task (volunteering), the action (completing a design project), and the result (all voices represented equally). Utilizing the STAR method ensures that both skills and values are addressed in an interview.

| | |
|---|---|
| **Teamwork** | • Volunteering at an immigrant shelter in Mexico (community engagement)<br>• Completing a design project with all voices represented equally (integrity) |
| **Decision-Making, Problem-Solving** | • Internship in Kenya – creating promotional materials (creativity)<br>• Managing coursework, job, and internship (excellence) |
| **Planning, Organization, Prioritization** | • Milan cross-cultural social events with host sister (fun)<br>• Sorority social chair (fun) |
| **Communication** | • Fundraiser for Nepali orphanage through GoFundMe (Compassion)<br>• Remote internship (open-minded) |

***Personal Branding and Online Identity***

Finally, students can demonstrate the ability to fit with a particular organization via their personal brand or online identity. We encourage students to include information about the skills they learned and values they gained when studying abroad on *every* on-line channel they maintain, be it a personal website, a blog, a social media app like LinkedIn, or an e-portfolio. Additionally, we raise this notion of personal branding as early as pre-departure so that students are ready to promote their personal brand, values, and, ultimately, their ability to fit within an organization, immediately upon return.

***Conclusion***

It is no longer enough to talk to study abroad returnees about transferable skills. Instead, we need to remind students of the importance of cultural

fit within a workplace. By utilizing tactics such as self-reflection, research and networking, effective interviewing, and personal branding, students can weave their study abroad experiences into the job search process, and learn to effectively evaluate and demonstrate their ability to fit in at a prospective company.

# Study Abroad Students and the Capacity for Change

Constance Whitehead Hanks, Independent Consultant

Over the past decade, the field of study abroad has intensified research and assessment of data to define and quantify developmental and academic outcomes and transferrable skills acquired through undergraduate study abroad. As liberal arts colleges have been challenged to justify the cost of their education, administrators outside the field of study abroad have shown a growing interest in the value of the experience and its impact upon graduate employability and career-readiness. By combining three sources: what we have learned about study abroad outcomes; research led by Jeffrey Arnett at Clark University on the career values and goals of today's recent graduates; and John Kotter's, That's Not How We Do It Here! (Kotter and Rathgeber, 2016), I surmise that, through study abroad experience, undergraduate students acquire some of the most valued and sought after skill sets needed to be successful in today's work force. The acquired skill set that I focus upon here is the study abroad student's increased capacity to assess and implement change.

According to Darwin, adaptability is the key to survival. But how fast are we truly able to adapt and what challenges does change bring? Technology and social media have accelerated change at a faster pace than ever before. Twitter, invented ten years ago, is now a major tool for driving social and political action. It was the communication catalyst for the London riots in 2012 and the Arab Spring in 2010. Political candidates and global leaders use it as a tool for engaging constituents. We are instantly informed of terrorist attacks and other tragedies around the globe in real time. Paper media is all but obsolete and is always behind the latest Tweet. Social media and technology have changed the world and the way we communicate at such a rapid pace that we find ourselves in a constant state of adaptation

and evaluation, often having to adapt again before we have had time to evaluate. Governments, businesses, community organizations, and individuals need to learn about the newest technological innovation in order to keep up with the competition. The business of technology incorporates planned obsolescence which perpetuates a frenzied pace of change.

Today's freshmen will face a very different world when they graduate. As higher education faculty and academic administrators, we are tasked with preparing students for this future. Universities and libraries were once thought of as crucial physical repositories of knowledge, places for sharing that knowledge, and bases for expanding that knowledge through research. Since 1989, with the invention of the World Wide Web, the way of teaching and learning has dramatically changed. MOOCs and other online courses have made sharing of knowledge easier than ever, and far less expensive. Information is instantly available from innumerable locations and in multiple languages. How can traditional brick and mortar colleges and universities compete with this enigma that has transformed the world in less than thirty years? How do they avoid becoming obsolete? What perpetuates students' attendance at physical houses of learning?

In order to understand the value of a liberal arts education, it is important to understand the values and goals of our clients: students. What are they hoping to gain from a college education? Do they feel they are getting the skills for future success and at what cost? How does a study abroad experience play into these questions? For insight, I turned to research led by Dr. Jeffrey Arnett, Developmental Psychologist and Professor at Clark University (Arnett, 2015).

Arnett coined the term "emerging adulthood" in 1990. He points out that this generation has entered a knowledge and service-based society which requires a higher degree of education for success than those in the past. His research shows that societal changes have created this new "emerging adult" stage in human development. Emerging adults are not engaged in the traditional commitments of adulthood (marriage and children), but continue to explore their own identities, interests, and employment opportunities over a longer period of time than previous generations.

The following findings from that research summarize current students' views about their education and preparation for employment:

- 56% of the 1000 respondents felt that a liberal arts education was not valued by the job market; 44% felt that a liberal arts education was important no matter what field you go into.
- 63% found their college debt manageable and their education worth it.
- 60% thought their college degree had provided them with satisfactory employment opportunities; 40% did not.
- Only 36% said they were well-prepared to develop creative solutions to complex problems.

Additional findings showed that recent graduates are looking for flexibility, good pay, personal fulfillment, and a work/life balance. Personal fulfillment is more important than a higher salary. The vast majority hope that their college education will provide them with the skills and connections to get them that ideal job. Most feel that they would seek additional education later in life, and they would be changing their careers at least once or twice.

The irony is that not only do educational institutions need to adapt to changing student expectations, but prospective employers also find rapid change impacting their ability to remain competitive in their fields. For example, most young adults have never needed to go into a bank. Increasing consumer demand for local and organic food is altering our food supply operations. Drones provide new ways of using airspace. The list goes on and on. In order to prepare today's students for tomorrow's work force, a college education must prepare students to deal with frequent change in their fields of expertise as well as in their daily lives. If we do not change, we become defunct.

Over the past 25 years or so, change management has become its own field. One of the leading commentators is Dr. John Kotter, professor emeritus of Harvard Business School and founder of Kotter International. Kotter's book, That's Not How We Do It Here! A Story about How Organizations Rise and Fall - and Can Rise Again (Kotter and Rathgeber, 2016), is an alle-

gory about a family of meerkats who are forced to reassess their daily roles and routines due to unexpected change in their environment which threatens their existence. As with our own educational institutions, as well as the organizations where our students may find employment, the only choice for the meerkat family is to change or accept their demise. Change is not easy, and it takes a team of visionaries and risk takers to successfully move a community in a new direction.

Kotter differentiates between managers and leaders in this process. The managers take responsibility for daily organization and planning. They assess problems and make sure the workers are steadfast and efficient in their roles. The leaders establish direction, motivate and mobilize other meerkat family members to see strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats quickly, and to come up with creative ideas to make the family safe, happy, and healthy. Their intra-communication within the family is essential.

Nadia, who evolves into one of the main leaders in the book, is compelled to leave the community when her family finds itself struggling against unexpected problems. She knows that staying will be fatal. Through her travels, observations, and conversations with new groups of meerkats, she begins to understand her own family's assets and liabilities. She faces new challenges and learns to cope with them; she realizes that she can apply what she learns to help her own family. Nadia develops the confidence to discuss her thoughts with others and to help create solutions for her family's dilemmas. With her increased confidence, she learns to support and motivate the group in executing solutions with a positive perspective. So how does Nadia's experience correlate to our students' study abroad experiences?

Nadia's developmental outcomes parallel those of our students. We know from research, as well as conversations with students, that time abroad is a life-changing experience. Students develop independence, confidence, creative problem-solving skills, observational skills, intercultural communication, adaptability, and tolerance, to name just a few attributes. Additional opportunities for engagement with the local workforce or communities abroad, through an internship or service-learning project, expand hard skills and knowledge, broaden industry perspectives, increase tolerance for difference, and provide connections that may last a lifetime. In the role of outsider, students are forced to be humble and questioning.

Our students are risk takers and investigators. They want to see and experience differences first hand. Explorers Kublai Khan, Marco Polo, Sir Francis Drake, Ferdinand Magellan, Neil Armstrong, and Nadia all traveled afar to see what else was out there; they wanted to know the unknown. For some there were people and lands to conquer, riches to acquire, and power to be obtained. For others it was an escape from unfavorable conditions to seek a life and conditions that offered hope. Today's travelers explore the world for similar reasons, but one thing they all have in common is their willingness to accept risk and embrace change. Through their experience abroad, they are forced to adapt, change perspectives, toss out old rules, and accept new norms. They need to be organizers and planners. They need to look inward to their own values and tolerances. In Arnett's poll on emerging adults, only 36% felt that they were prepared to provide creative solutions to complex problems. Could study abroad help close this gap? Students develop the skills to become future leaders and managers, to become change makers through an international education.

As academic professionals in a data-driven society, many expect us to continue to quantify the outcomes of our students study abroad experiences, and we will. While I commend and appreciate the work of friends and colleagues to do so, I also choose to look with a more anecdotal perspective at literature, history, and the liberal arts in general to understand the value of study abroad. For I know, through the stories of my friends, colleagues, and past students, that each person's reason for going abroad is unique, and the unique outcomes of that experience will last and evolve over a lifetime. In the realm of empirical data, we only collect one brief snapshot of an event/experience that has a much longer and interesting story. One of the main threads that connect all of us who have lived outside our native culture is that we made a choice to embrace differences, to challenge ourselves, to learn and to grow. These skills and attitudes bring not only stories, but skill sets and a capacity for change. As educational professionals whose clients are looking to find opportunities to be successful adults, we need to facilitate more discussion about how study abroad contributes to managerial skills; how it develops creative problem solving; and how it provides the confidence and independence to accept change and become a change maker. The development, definition, articulation, and execution of these uniquely acquired skills will prepare students for personally fulfilling employment opportunities as they enter the work force.

# Global Competencies – Rhetoric or Holy Grail?

Patrice Twomey, University of Limerick
Diana Cvitan, Fairleigh Dickinson University

Over the past two decades, we have seen a tremendous expansion of international education initiatives throughout higher education, moving beyond traditional academic programs and study abroad, to strategic and comprehensive internationalization. While such internationalization may take various forms, and respond to different drivers, the desire to provide students with experiences and opportunities for global learning very often serves as a central focal piece of international education, with study abroad serving as the "gold standard."

Globalization is most often cited as the rationale. As higher education practitioners and scholars, we remind ourselves that students need to be prepared for life in a globalized society. But what does that preparation look like?

Much of this continues to be debated in international education circles, but Scorza (2014) suggests that two models of global learning have emerged, each controversial in its own right. One model prepares graduates for civic engagement on a global scale. The second takes an economic approach, recognizing the need for graduates to be prepared for professional success in a global marketplace:

> At the same time that internationalization and global learning initiatives were growing on college campuses, the public discourse began to shift to the value of higher education. The question of graduate preparedness and employability took centre stage. With tuition costs and student debt rising, students wanted to know how

components of their educational experience would provide them with better chances for employment after graduation.

***Universities***

> Employers are increasingly seeking to recruit global graduates – graduates who see the world through a wider lens and who have both global knowledge and cultural agility. (University of Manchester, n.d.)

> Global competency is a key to success in today's job market. It is imperative to be 'global ready' to compete in a demanding, constantly changing global economy. (Binghamton University, n.d.)

***Employers***

> All major hiring companies need global citizens. Global sensitivities, global perspective, global insight; along with maturity and a capacity for risk-taking, are exactly the skills every major organization is looking for – in every industry. (Willard, n.d.)

> Through our people, leadership development, services, technology and scale, GE delivers better outcomes for global customers by speaking the language of industry. (GE, n.d.)

A most basic challenge for educators and employers working within this framework is understanding the terminology and related definitions. A review of the literature quickly reveals a great variety of concepts: intercultural, cross-cultural or international skills, global or world citizenship, cosmopolitanism, globalness, global awareness or a global mindset, to name a few. Additionally, there is no universally accepted checklist set of knowledge, skills, and attributes that would define an individual as "global." However, the "global competencies" label allows for a better alignment with employer desires for graduate preparedness. Global competency models integrate intercultural and cross-cultural skills, a global mindset, and a cosmopolitan attitude (Hunter, 2004). These are viewed through the lens of personal and professional success. Because of this fuller focus on professional success

(Barman and Konwar, 2013), the concept most lends itself to research in graduate employability.

Examples of the knowledge, skills and attitudes/attributes can be drawn from several studies. Deardorff (2006) and Hunter (2004) highlight knowledge of world events, history, economics and cultural norms, the ability to work in multicultural teams and communicate effectively with others around the globe, a non-judgemental view of others' perspectives, openness, curiosity, and resilience. Employers in subsequent studies (NCUB, 2011) have echoed these when asked to identify global skills.

Employers have also expressed a general appreciation of study abroad and the experience it provides students (European Commission, 2014). 96% of employers surveyed believe graduates should be able "to solve problems with those whose views are different than their own" and 78% believed students should "gain intercultural skills and a knowledge of societies and countries outside the U.S." (AAC&U, 2015).

However, other studies reflect a differing assessment of global competencies. The NACE Job Outlook 2016 survey (NACE, 2015) found that the employers' views of the relative influence of fluency in a second language and study abroad experience is very low (2.2 and 2.0 respectively, on a 5.0 scale). Even among global employers (those with more than 25% in international sales), another study found lukewarm value placed on foreign language skills and study abroad (Trooboff et al., 2008). In both studies, global competencies ranked much lower than the more generic skills of "communication," "teamwork," "leadership," "flexibility," "initiative."

We must ask ourselves: Have practitioners and advocates of international education just been peddling "global" propaganda? Are universities complicit in promoting an untested or baseless concept? Or, is there a true basis and need for these global competencies that employers themselves do not recognize?

Discourse around global competencies appears to be largely framed by academic and international education practitioners. It could be argued that, implicit in the discourse, is an assumption that an "economy of global

competence" exists in the graduate job market. In other words, job-seeking graduates with global competencies enjoy added-value in the job market as compared to those who do not.

Therefore, we wanted to consider the influence of global competencies in recruitment and selection decisions. To do this, we undertook a series of semi-structured interviews with ten European graduate employers. In selecting our sample, we focused on organizations with a global reach. Our sample included employers operating across a range of models: "follow-the-sun" whereby the global workflow is passed between operations in different time zones allowing for a 24/7/365 service; the global project whereby teams are dispersed but deliver on a shared project; co-location whereby multicultural teams in a single location deliver product or services globally; international secondment or expatriation. All participants were in a senior role within their organization. In selecting participants, the decision was made to focus on business unit managers as distinct from HR managers. This was driven largely by a desire to avoid corporate or jargonized responses and to encourage respondents to consider the term within specific business functions. To ensure broad industry coverage, participants were drawn from the ICT, financial services, and aviation, food, and manufacturing sectors.

We began by asking employers if they considered their organizations to be global. As we selected participants on the basis of what we believed to be a global orientation, it was perhaps not surprising that they enthusiastically affirmed the global nature of their organizations. They supported their view by citing indicators such as number of sites, number of employees, revenue, and branding. In addition, many participants referenced the opportunities and challenges associated with operating in a global business environment. These included an increasingly competitive economy, pressure from lower cost economies, global production chains, growing complexity in relationships with suppliers and customers, global capital flows, and the accelerating role of technology in their businesses.

It could be argued that this unequivocal resonance with the term "global" suggests that employers, in their talent acquisition strategy, should be proactively seeking graduates who can demonstrate international experience and engage with customers, co-workers, and intermediaries across

cultural and geographical divides. We were therefore somewhat surprised that participants appeared to struggle to give definitive meaning to the terms "global competency" and "globally competent graduate." Certainly, there is very little evidence that employer behavior in recruitment and selection has any traction with global competency frameworks highlighted in the discourse. Employers reported that they do not purposefully recruit with global competencies in mind. In practice, they viewed the term as indistinguishable from the generic competencies, skills, and attributes that their organizations look for in graduates, regardless of their role or location.

We asked employers to specify those competencies and attributes. Overwhelmingly employers stated that technical ability is the threshold competence at the point of application:

> It's all about the fundamentals – I mean, can they produce a set of accurate accounts?
>
> Their ability to perform the basic function is what will land a graduate an interview.
>
> Your coding ability is key. If you can't show that, you won't get called for interview.
>
> What we want to see from the CV is a sense that they can do the job. We look for the other things at interview stage.

Our interviews focused on the competencies that are often automatically associated with a global orientation: for example, foreign language ability and significant international experience. Responses showed that these competencies do not in fact constitute a key differentiator in graduate recruitment for European employers. This may be indicative of the fact that international experience is quite mainstream in the European higher education arena. For example, under the Erasmus program alone, over three million EU students have undertaken an international work or study placement as an accredited part of their program. Likewise, over half of EU citizens can speak at least one foreign language, with one in four using a second language daily. Some employers did report that they view interna-

tional experience in a CV or application as being an indicator of something broadly positive. This was nuanced, however:

> It wouldn't get them an interview but it would be a good talking point if they made it through to interview stage.
>
> It wouldn't be a deciding thing but it would be of interest, I suppose.
>
> It really depends on what the candidate makes of the experience. Did they go as part of their program or did they take the initiative themselves?
>
> Tick-boxing international experience wouldn't cut it – the graduate would have to be able to demonstrate their learning.

What employers appear to be looking for is evidence of graduates having pushed the boundaries or, as one employer put it, "of having been disc-ommoded in life." International experience certainly represents a potential conduit for graduates to be challenged in this way. However, what is critical from the employer standpoint is that graduates possess the ability to demonstrate their learning. Interestingly, many employers had the view that graduates do not need international experience to evidence being "discommoded." They readily cited examples of alternative experiences such as students having moved around and changed schools as a child, undertaking volunteering work, and working with international students on project teams. We were particularly interested in hearing from employers what specific skills, attributes, and competencies they looked for in graduates for their specific function (as opposed those espoused in their organizations' corporate literature). For the most part, employers did not reference the standard list of competencies so widely seen in the discourse and in corporate recruitment publications. Rather, they cited a diversity of (often subjective) qualities. They included "passion," "grit," "resilience," "integrity," "readiness to get involved," "common sense," "willingness to take every chance given," "honesty," "no ego" and even "ruthlessness."

Finally, we asked employers to give examples of where their global business model worked and instances of where it did not work and why. The reason

for doing so was to test for any identifiable competence themes. Although participants appeared to struggle with this initially, two themes emerged: communication and ability to flex. Employers reference a very broad range of skills in the context of communication. These included listening, articulating, understanding, reflecting back, questioning, distilling, relating upwards, influencing, creating rapport, and building relationships. Under the theme of flexing, employers focused on the ability to flex between themes, cultures, business environments, and business relationship norms.

> We Irish are good at building rapport with our Near East colleagues. Our U.S. counterparts reckon we spend too much time on relationship building at the expense of getting the project done. Who's right, who's wrong? I don't know! It's misunderstandings like that that can get in the way of progress on a project.
>
> The German guys on our team love precision – they feel better when everything is set out and not open to interpretation. We prefer stuff to be looser, more fluid. We can drive each other mad.
>
> Some countries are very litigious when it comes to contracts. If the code doesn't do exactly what the contract says, they will sue you. In other places, they don't freak out if the spec changes half way through the contract. Often this means they get a better product. If you don't understand the environment you're working in, it can cost you a lot of money.

What was clear from our research was that the term global competency is not as defined or as visible as the discourse might suggest. For the most part, employers view global competencies as the generic competencies that they look for in graduates. However, many of the competencies that the business managers cited as being essential are generally subjective, difficult to define, and difficult for employers to observe at application or interview. By the same token, graduates too might be challenged to demonstrate many of these competencies in the recruitment and selection process. What emerged strongly was that there is no room for complacency on the part of graduates with international experience. If that gives them any edge in the European context, it is that it provides a larger backdrop against which to develop, test,

and frame generic competencies.

In our research, we were driven by a desire to elicit candor rather than "corporate speak" from employers. This revealed a widely-experienced difficulty for global employers in contextualising what they want from graduates. In this void, graduates too will struggle to contextualize what they have to offer global employers. Whilst we readily acknowledge the limitation of this study in terms of the sample and geographic setting, the consistency of the employer response has generated a range of compelling findings that call for further research.

It is clear that employers struggle with the concept of global competency. Might it be that the "global" is already so embedded in the "generic" that it is not seen? There remains much to be understood in how generic and global competencies are identified, valued, and articulated in academic and professional settings: "food for thought" for higher education, graduates and employers alike.

# The Advantage of Self-Authorship for Career Readiness

Ashley Metz, University of Minnesota

It is crucial for students to be equipped for today's competitive workforce once they have completed their undergraduate career. Education abroad is critically helpful in preparing them for post-graduate life in multiple ways, including a variety of transferable skills (such as problem solving, language learning, adaptability, tolerance for ambiguity, and empathy). Education abroad also assists students in working toward and/or achieving self-authorship, which is less often discussed. While attainment of the mentioned skills is very important, potentially the most valuable piece students can take away from their time abroad is the self-growth they experience.

Self-authorship is defined as the internal capacity to define one's own beliefs, identity, and social relations (Magolda, 1998). The process of self-authorship takes students through four phases:

- *Following Formulas* (following the path laid out for them by their parents/guardians/educators).
- *Crossroads* (veering down a new path because the original path paved for them no longer fits).
- *Becoming the Author of One's Own Life* (gaining confidence in making choices and standing behind them).
- *International Foundation* (being grounded in one's own self-determined system) (Iverson & James, 2013).

College is a prime time for self-authorship to occur, as students are independent for the first time and attempting to define themselves and discover their identities. When students first arrive on campus, they typically have not had many opportunities to make decisions for themselves and still rely on those in authority to provide them with answers or guidance in many aspects.

There are three developmental dimensions toward self-authorship: cognitive, intrapersonal, and interpersonal (Pizzolato, 2003). Cognitive maturity is understanding citizenship and the depth and complexity of it; intrapersonal capacity is developing a sense of efficacy and understanding of taking responsibility for one's own actions; and interpersonal ability is gaining awareness of self in relation to others and their communities (Iverson & James, 2013). Intrapersonal and interpersonal development are necessary for adults to build complex belief systems and to develop authentic and mature relationships with others (Iverson & James, 2013). Psychosocial theorists have done research on how adults construct a sense of self that enables them to be an effective participant in a variety of personal, occupational, and community contexts (Barber et all., 2013). Their concept of identity stems from the interaction of physical and cognitive growth and the demands of the environment (Magolda, 1998).

Developing a strong sense of self in college can be difficult given the demands and hectic climate of college life, both on and off campus. Students need both time and space to explore and realize other parts of their identity. Classroom instruction can sometimes limit students' opportunities to experience complexity and dissonance. In traditional classrooms, students develop dependence on authority figures; they rehearse their futures as passive citizens and are trained that education means listening to teachers tell them what to do and what things mean (Magolda, 1998). While students do make substantial gains on campus during their college years, many are not self-authoring by the time they graduate and continue to look to others for direction as they start navigating adult responsibilities (Barber et al., 2013).

When students participate in international programs, they experience tension and discomfort in confronting unfamiliar challenges (such as culture shock, cross-cultural communication, and language barriers). Education

abroad is important for self-authorship in that it prompts more self-reflection and offers more high-intensity situations for students to navigate. When confronted with challenging and provocative situations, their emotional reactions push them to take action to better understand or address the discomfort (Pizzolato, 2003). The tension they experience from dissonance helps them shift to an internal sense of authority and prepares them to become the driver of their own life (Pizzolato, 2003). Learning in a classroom on campus has the potential to be provocative, but does not usually contain the same depth or intensity as first-hand cultural immersion.

Self-authorship prepares students for the workforce; they will be able to more adequately develop their own visions and goals for the future, learn how to effectively collaborate with others, develop strategies on how to communicate with diverse others, and learn how to take responsibility for their own actions (Magolda, 1998). By having had an international experience, they will likely be stronger employees with a clearer focus on what they want to achieve (on both personal and professional levels) and have a higher capacity for critical thinking. For many, a desire to refocus their academic major/minor area of study or professional plans is immediate upon return home.

Giving students the capacity for lifelong learning is essential given the fast pace of technology, science, the economy, and cultural norms in today's world (Magolda, 1998). Employers desire employees who are self-directing and make their own decisions, and those who are better equipped to identify their strengths and maximize on their abilities (Magolda, 1998). Self-authorship achieved through education abroad will create more self-aware students who are ready to be productive global citizens of society, both as participators and leaders.

# Finding the Right Words

Martha Johnson, University of Minnesota

Over the course of our Career Integration initiative at the University of Minnesota, discussions with career colleagues, employers, and graduate and professional school committees have consistently confirmed what we have suspected all along. Many of them do not really understand the value of a student experience abroad, particularly if they have not been abroad themselves. Even those who do recognize the potential benefits tend to demonstrate many of the value judgments and biases that have been historically reinforced within the dominant narrative of education abroad.

The reality is that while educators, employers, and committee members may not say it, the list of the "best" and "worst" ways to go abroad goes a bit like this: Africa is better than Europe, language study is better than study in English, and study at a local institution is better than a study center.

This pervasive mythology, mired in nostalgia and old paradigms, is not based in research or measured outcomes, and has a dangerous potential to effectively marginalize program participants on all of the program types deemed to be of less value. If educators themselves do not see particular strengths or equivalent value to longer programs in their shorter counterparts, then how can students be expected to identify and articulate what they have learned on these programs? In other words, while a majority of students in the U.S. who study abroad do so on short-term programs, many in the English-speaking world, they have likely come to have a sense or understanding that this is not "real" study abroad, and therefore less useful or relevant to potential employers or admissions committees. They might even secretly feel that they should be ashamed of their choice, and to feel that what they have studied abroad is of less value-*wrong*.

The result is an unfortunate tendency apologetically to qualify discussion of their experience with disclaimers. Students will comment that they "only" did a short program in Ireland…or to move on quickly to other more impressive subsequent experience. The truth of the matter is that for all of our discussions about access, experiential learning, etc., the majority of educators feel, deep down in their hearts, that longer is inherently better.

That is what I believe we, as practitioners in our field, need to challenge. It is the inherent assumption that I am bothered by, and that I also know students pick up on and internalize. Advisors and faculty tend to position short-term programs as an absence, or a consolation…they are fine if the student is not "able" to go for longer, or as a first experience, or if they are "not ready" for a longer experience. The very language we use defines these programs by what they are *not*: a language of deficit and failure.

I teach a three-week seminar in Ireland every other year, and at orientation about half the students are apologetic, already, about "only being able go on," or choosing to go on, a short-term program. They already have come to believe it is not as good as a longer program.

I believe that there are, in fact, specific ways that short-term programs have an advantage over their longer counterparts. Short-term programs allow a focus and depth for the study of a given topic. By design and nature, a short and focused program will immerse students in course content. When a well-designed course engages with the site and uses supporting lectures and excursions, short-term programs offer the opportunity for students to focus on content in context, without the disruption of juggling multiple classes at a time. This optimizes interdisciplinary elements and fosters learning in a different way. A focused, overarching, academic lens can offer often needed thematic guidance to navigate a new place and culture. My students, for instance, do not learn everything about Irish society, but by focusing on the role of theater and literature in Irish identity, they have an intellectual entre to broader cultural issues. Being immersed in one academic focus makes the overwhelming inundation of new local information more manageable.

Short-term programs allow for the exploration and utilization of sites that would not be viable destinations for a longer term of study, or where there are not local universities. Short-term programs have a unique capacity to maximize specific sites in a way that is more in-depth than a one-day or weekend excursion, but does not require the infrastructure of a full semester. At the University of Minnesota, we are able to offer incredible and rigorous academic programs studying volcanoes in Iceland, researching biodiversity in the Galapagos Islands, or making a pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago in Spain, that could not be offered in the same way through traditional education abroad offerings of longer durations.

Short-term programs foster faculty and instructor engagement. Instructor-led programs are one of the best possible means to engage faculty in the project and process of broader internationalization. Faculty will go so far as to report that their experience teaching abroad is rejuvenating in ways teaching on campus is not, and ultimately influences their teaching practices in general. When faculty share their passions, research, expertise, and local relationships with students, and act as cultural mentors, it is inspiring for both. Students have the opportunity to engage with the instructor in a way that they are rarely able to on campus, leading to life-long mentoring relationships.

Short-term programs provide access. I have heard the growth of short term programs described as the "democratization of study abroad," and I think there is a truth to that. While we work to make all types of programs accessible, relevant, and interesting to all students, the reality is that on most campus students from many underrepresented demographics have significantly higher participation rates in short-term programs.

This creates an exciting opportunity to optimize the diversity of the cohort. Short-term programs require students to experience difference *within* the group. Instructors who have participated in, or taught short-term programs, already know this. Many of the most remarkable, honest, and transformative moments I have seen abroad have taken place within group discussions. The diverse cohorts we are sending abroad interact in an intense way. Unlike on longer programs, where cliques tend to form and the focus is on fostering independence, short-term programs force

an element of community into moments of cultural anxiety and cognitive dissonance. The experience is, by nature, shared.

The ensuing conversations can be extraordinary. When a group is facilitated and structured to foster respect and honesty, students take risks on conversations that would likely never take place at home. Students become close with students they may never have met or befriended on campus.

In a research project conducted by the Academic Director of the Learning Abroad Center, a student who had participated in a Global Seminar commented: "My favorite memory is of having long conversations with two people on the program who I couldn't be more different from. We are very different people. We have different beliefs, different majors, I would have never talked with someone like them in real life, you know what I mean?"

The reality is that short-term programs do develop career and life skills, but require us to help students identify and articulate what they *did* learn, rather than apologize for what they did not.

At the University of Minnesota, we have challenged ourselves to take a closer look at how all of our programs integrate and facilitate the development of career related skills. Many of the skills employers desire should be developed by any program abroad…flexibility, problem solving, interpersonal communication… but one that is consistently in the top five is teamwork. We know short-term programs are often uniquely capable of helping students develop the ability to travel, work, and learn with a team of people, while often simultaneously experiencing difference.

None of this is to say that most students do not wish they had gone for longer. But that is often only with hindsight and the benefit of the knowledge of their ability to succeed abroad.

Opinions, anecdotes, nostalgia, and value judgments are not valid bases for a sound pedagogical argument. Research, has shown that duration, destination, and progress in cultural competency do not correlate in the way educators have historically assumed, and that gains on well-designed short-term programs are about the same as their longer counterparts.

It is the same case in longitudinal studies like the SAGE research, which found long-term impact was not reliant on longer duration. Responses to evaluations indicate just how strongly our students feel about the impact of their programs.

For some students, in some destinations, and in some academic areas, the right short-term program can be a better match. If we can accept that no experience abroad is *inherently* better, it forces us to focus on excellence in program design and the development of tools to assist students in identifying and articulating the value of the particular program they chose.

To this end, I challenged myself to integrate an exercise to be delivered on-site designed to prepare participants for their return. The majority of the students on my program are not literature, theater, or cultural studies majors, and Ireland as a destination is, arguably, devalued in a particular way because of pervasive stereotypes related to drinking, so the connection to their futures and careers is not intuitive.

I developed a simple exercise (below) to be completed during one of the last on-site classes. It requires students to identify and articulate what they have learned, by taking a moment to reflect on it, well before they are in a situation when they need to do so. Students write down three answers to the question "How was your study abroad?" and then are asked to do so a second time in the context of a job or graduate/professional school interview. All students share their answers, and therefore get to hear their peers' answers as well.

By shifting focus for the second round, from friends and family to employer, etc., I can facilitate a conversation about considering what answers an employer will value. During the exercise, I give the students the list of the top ten skills Minnesota employers have ranked as most desirable in graduates. By providing them with the list, I effectively give them the actual words to integrate into their answers, and remind them that this response should be less about what the student has learned, and more about how that will benefit the organization or company they are interviewing for: teamwork, the ability to work with people with diverse perspectives, problem-solving.

The exercise has been successful and appreciated by the students. Some have commented that as future architects, engineers, or accountants they were not actually planning on listing the experience on their resume until this discussion. The hope is that now they will, and when they are asked, "How was your study abroad in Ireland?" they will have the right words to answer.

## APPENDIX

On-Site Career Exercise: Beyond "It Was Great!"

It is a challenge to articulate what you have learned on your program. Friends, family, professors, and work colleagues will ask: "How was your study abroad?" This is your opportunity to share a little about Ireland and what you have learned during your time here.

1) Identify and write down THREE specific points or things that you found particularly interesting, surprising, or learned from on the program.

Examples:

- Dublin was much more diverse than I expected it to be.
- The arts, music, and film scene is incredible for such a small country.
- The economy has really struggled after the failure of the Celtic Tiger and the global economic crisis.

All students share responses. Next:

2) Here is the list of the top ten skills Minnesota employers are looking for.

1. Function as a team member
2. Effective interpersonal communication
3. Learn new ideas quickly
4. Identify, define, and solve problems

5. Appreciate and interact with individuals different than yourself
6. Critical and analytical thinking
7. Creative/innovative thinking
8. Locate/evaluate information
9. Competency in a field of study
10. Writing skills

Repeat the previous exercise, but prepare the response for a job or graduate/professional program interview.

Examples:

- During my time in Ireland, I learned the importance of considering the history of a place and culture, and how it might affect approaches to business.
- By living and travelling with 23 people I had never met before, I learned a lot about teamwork.
- While abroad, I found that I was good at, and often took the lead, when organizing meals or excursions for students within the group.
- The group was very diverse, and I studied and worked with students with very different backgrounds and interests than mine.
- All students share responses.

# The New Philistines or the Gradgrind Syndrome

Michael Woolf, CAPA The Global Education Network

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*Did you ever think, Clarice, why the Philistines don't understand you? It's because you are the answer to Samson's riddle. You are the honey in the lion.*
Thomas Harris, Hannibal

*A Philistine: the enemy of the children of light, or servants of the idea.*
Matthew Arnold, Culture and Anarchy

*The foundation of democratic and liberal societies is a critical spirit, which is nurtured by knowledge of the humanities. Without exception, totalitarian states invariably reject knowledge in the humanities, and states that reject such knowledge always become totalitarian.*
Takamitsu Sawa, President of Shiga University, The Japan Times, August 23, 2015

*The Philistines yet again spread themselves abroad in the valley.*
Chronicles 14:13 King James version

***Introduction: Study abroad and the employability agenda***

Over the last decade or so, there have been changes in the manner in which the field of study abroad describes itself. The shift in emphasis and rhetoric reflects an intimacy between domestic higher education in the USA and international educational organizations who teach American undergraduates abroad (sometimes oddly called "providers"). These organizations, such as CAPA The Global Education Network, exist essentially to create programs abroad that align broadly with the academic objectives, practices, and priorities of American universities. External pressures and internal alterations within higher education in the USA inevitably impact upon the agenda of

study abroad.

One expression of this relationship has been the way in which questions of career preparation have permeated the prevailing discourse of study abroad. There is no clear timeline or single cause for the emergence of this emphasis but it exemplifies a necessary responsiveness to movements in U.S. higher education.

Study abroad conventionally and traditionally focused on issues linked to learning languages, broadening sensibilities, and creating insight into other societies beyond that of the USA. We might reasonably argue that these objectives do not preclude aspirations related to career preparation. However, in times of economic uncertainty, the purposes of education tend to be contested, and debates about the relative value of educational priorities intensify. Competition for restricted resources often leads to a critique of liberal arts principles perceived as having limited relevance to the economic situation. The traditional liberal arts emphases associated with study abroad are vulnerable within this ideological environment.

In many parts of the USA, higher education is subject to pressures to direct their attention towards the degree to which they prepare students for jobs. A synergy between domestic higher education and study abroad inevitably means that those pressures are replicated. Thus, employability becomes a more critical objective both in rhetoric and in program planning.

A focus on the impact of study abroad as a collective good has given way to a narrative based around personal benefits. For many years, the rationale for study abroad was formed in somewhat utopian terms: as a mechanism that would increase understanding between diverse people and, therefore, be a force for social good in an international context. That idealistic aspiration has become muted in these more utilitarian days.

The outcomes of study abroad are more often framed in terms of enhanced professional skills that will bring individual financial benefits. Enthusiasm for this proposition has, in some places, led to messaging, marketing, and “research” that asserts a direct connection between study abroad, successful job hunting, and enhanced salary levels; selective interpretations

of dubious evidence reflect a perceived imperative to justify study abroad in utilitarian terms.[2]

***What does employability mean?***

The presence of employability in the agenda of study abroad does not, however, have to replicate crude utilitarian priorities. A nuanced sense of what career preparation means in our context can integrate with, rather than undermine, objectives associated with liberal arts education. The danger in the indiscriminate prioritization of employability is that it becomes too closely allied to, even synonymous with, vocational imperatives. Political rhetoric melds with an acute awareness of the increasing costs of higher education to suggest that a shift towards functional models might offer an ostensibly appropriate response. This is seductively appealing, an apple ripe for picking from the tree of knowledge (with consequences as painful as those endured in Eden). It signposts a bleak pathway for education: a route bereft of light and shade. It might, in any case, be counterproductive if the ultimate objective is to produce creative and productive citizens prepared to contribute to social, political and economic development.

The phrase "return on investment" has penetrated the rhetoric of higher education and study abroad. On one level, it enforces the transformation of benefits from the collective to the individual level. It also promotes the illusion that educational outcomes are relatively simply measured (profit or loss). It assumes, wrongly, that a mechanistic metaphor (not unlike the idea of inputs and outputs) can represent complex processes involved in educational experience. What we learn cannot be simply predicted. The

[2] This "research" lacks much credibility. Forbes Magazine have repeatedly suggested that the probability is that the reputation of the university attended is a critical factor. They have also carried a number of articles taking issue with the STEM- employability-income orthodoxy. By way of example, George Anders cites Stewart Butterfield, Flickr and Slackbit cofounder and CEO, who has an undergraduate degree in philosophy and a master's degree in philosophy and the history of science:

> Studying philosophy taught me two things: I learned how to write really clearly. I learned how to follow an argument all the way down, which is invaluable in running meetings. And when I studied the history of science, I learned about the ways that everyone believes something is true--like the old notion of some kind of ether in the air propagating gravitational forces--until they realized that it wasn't true.

Estimated net worth is just under $2 billion (Anders, 2015).

distinction between learning outcomes (what educators imagine students will acquire), and outcomes of learning (individual insight), expresses that unpredictability. Dorothy on the yellow brick road went in a futile pursuit of wisdom from the Wizard of Oz. What she acquires, outcomes of learning, is more profound, and derives from accidental encounters upon a path that was neither straight nor easily navigated.

This is not to suggest that there is anything wrong with the entirely creditable objectives of vocational education. However, except in a limited number of contexts, those are not part of the core business of universities which is broader, deeper, and more complex. It can be argued (and sometimes is) that the universities should justify their existence by training students to perform functions that meet the needs of business and industry (to be human resource agencies for employers). The fact that those functions will probably be redundant by the time most students graduate is largely ignored in enthusiastic endorsement of the notion of "relevance" to some imagined economic imperatives. Critically, that imperative seeks to redefine the purposes of higher education in relation to external standards that are skeptical of entire fields of knowledge.

A key role of higher education is to encourage creative thought and independent, innovative research: a spirit of inquiry that challenges orthodoxy. That objective is clearly subverted if the priority is to meet the personnel needs of the commercial-industrial sector. The university has a wider responsibility beyond training functionaries.

There is nothing new about ideological disputes concerning the function of education. A simplified model indicates a theoretical spectrum. At one extreme, the purpose of education is to teach students to perform functions that serve employment requirements. This, clearly, becomes a more complex proposition in the contemporary environments where those requirements are fluid. Nevertheless, this view of education is driven by a relatively focused perspective in which training for purpose and education are closely interwoven. We might designate this as narrow utilitarianism. At the other extreme, the emphasis is on personal growth and the broadening of the mind. This represent an extreme form of, what we might call, educational liberalism.

From another perspective, the utilitarian model creates a broader responsibility for both the subjects taught and the relevance of those to an employment market. It does, however, narrow the curriculum. In contrast, a liberalism model broadens curriculum but narrows institutional responsibility; graduate employability is not central to the core agenda.

This simplified model of ideological conflict is reflected in conflicting versions of the primary function of higher education in domestic and international contexts. In study abroad, a utilitarian tradition goes back to the Late Middle Ages. From 1592 to 1610, students from Jagellonian University in Poland travelled to Padova University to be taught by Galileo. This kind of explicit functional motivation has a very long history and, while generalisations may over-simplify, is manifest in contemporary educational mobility in many contexts; anecdotally, Indian and Chinese students, for example, study in the USA for the explicit purpose of enhancing professional skills and status at home. Government scholarships are, also, predominantly motivated by the need to fill skill gaps. In contrast, traditional values associated with U.S. study abroad emphasize personal growth and the acquisition of expanded sensibility rather than specific skills.

Within the context of nuanced and thoughtful study abroad, it is possible to reconcile what feels increasingly like a false dichotomy. A liberal education agenda does not preclude the acquisition of applicable skills. Indeed, in a globalized environment, a productive graduate needs precisely the creativity and flexibility associated with a liberal learning ethos. However, the broader contexts in which we function are not always nuanced or thoughtful. Narrow utilitarianism is a potential threat to the values of a civil society. There are historical precedents.

***The roots of the rot***

In Hard Times (1854), Charles Dickens offers a bleak vision of a society rendered inhospitable to humanity through industrialization of education and environment. The central figure of Thomas Gradgrind represents a satirized version of utilitarian ideas. Education, in his view, is about the inculcation of facts that serve the needs of industry. The blighted industrial landscape of Coketown is the objective correlative of that barren philosophy:

> It was a town of unnatural red and black like the painted face of a savage. It was a town of machinery and tall chimneys, out of which interminable serpents of smoke trailed themselves for ever and ever, and never got uncoiled… there was a rattling and a trembling all day long… the piston of the steam-engine worked monotonously up and down, like the head of an elephant in a state of melancholy madness. (Dickens, 1854:18)

The object is to create fodder for the "melancholy madness" of industrialization. Distinctions between the mechanical and the human are obscured; "fancy," Dickens' shorthand for the creative imagination, is eradicated.

Thomas Gradgrind defines himself as: "A man of realities. A man of facts and calculations." (1854:4) Creative thought has no place in a system in which training for purpose defines learning objectives. Gradgrind's extreme views are not customarily found in current debates about employability in study abroad. They signal rather a cautionary note, a warning of the direction in which thoughtless rhetoric may lead. We should resist linking higher education and employability in too literal a manner. This is a field littered with political and educational potholes, a place in which "serpents of smoke" threaten to strangle our ideals.

We have an obligation to reassert the significance of what Arcadia University President, Nicolette DeVille Christensen, calls "the life of the mind" (quoted by Budd, 2016). Study abroad embodies the principles of liberal arts education in ways that affirm that significance. The idea of an expanded rather than constricted educational agenda is reflected in the basic structure. The implication is that the impact of new ideas will be heightened by engagement with them in unfamiliar space: learning beyond national boundaries, metaphorically and literally, expands the geography of intellect and sensibility.

### *The New Philistines*

A crude focus on employability has also had negative political consequences. It is distorted to validate philistinism. A kind of anti-intellectual, philistine primitivism has gained credence in the public arena. Some forms

of knowledge are seen as intrinsically more important than others, that studying, for example, technology, engineering, applied science is somehow more socially responsible and productive.[3] In the political context, this has led to denigration of the value of the humanities and a reduction in funding. This impoverished view has been reiterated across the globe by many politicians.

Nicky Morgan, The Secretary of State for Education in the U.K., in 2014 argued that: "The subjects that keep young people's options open and unlock doors to all sorts of careers are the STEM subjects: science, technology, engineering and maths" (Morgan, 2014). In 2011, the Governor of Florida, Lynn "Rick" Scott, who like Nicky Morgan has a Law degree, argued as follows: "You know, we don't need a lot more anthropologists in the state. I want to spend our dollars giving people science, technology, engineering, math degrees. So, when they get out of school, they can get a job" (quoted by Anderson, 2016). This view is close to becoming a political orthodoxy. Kentucky Governor Matt Bevin, who has a degree in East Asian Studies, declared that: "There will be more incentives to electrical engineers than French literature majors" (quoted by Beam, 2016). In the Republican presidential nomination debate in November 2015, Marco Rubio reiterated the need to prioritize vocational education. He chose to make that point by comparative denigration of philosophers: "For the life of me, I don't know why we have stigmatized vocational education. Welders make more money than philosophers. We need more welders and less philosophers" (quoted by Jones, 2015). The statement, that is factually and grammatically wrong, suggests that Rubio should retake English 101. This rhetoric is not the sole province of the political right. President Obama said of the value of Art History – a flippant comment for which he later apologized: "I promise you, folks can make a lot more, potentially, with skilled manufacturing or the trades than they might with an art history degree" (Obama, 2014).

These views are not just characteristic of the Anglo-American world. The Japan Times reported that on June 8, 2015 the presidents of Japan's national universities were informed by the education minister that they

[3] Research in this area is notoriously anecdotal but in the U.K., "The Guardian" carried a report suggesting that, contrary to the assumptions that litter this rhetoric, psychologists and geographers were the least likely graduates to experience unemployment (White, 2010).

should cease teaching the humanities and social sciences and move into areas with greater utilitarian value (ICF Monitor, 2014). In 2014, Uganda's President Yoweri Museveni asserted that it was "unfortunate that many universities continue teaching very useless courses at degree level rendering their graduates jobless after graduation" (quoted by Wandera, 2014).

These statements, examples could be multiplied many times over, collectively demonstrate a crass disregard for fields of knowledge that teach students the importance of nuanced thought. They also largely suggest that the value of education should be measured in terms of personal, mostly financial, benefits. These views disregard the function of education as a social good; an educated citizenry is critical to the health of a productive civil society. The role of education in opening minds to richer, more fulfilling experiences also receives little attention. There have been many serious, sometimes effective, challenges to this new orthodoxy but a contempt for knowledge, characterized as without utility, is embedded in a form of primitive political populism that has a long history and a persistent presence.

***What can be done?***

Education abroad professionals have an obligation to challenge these assumptions by reasserting, ironically as many employers do, that students with a broad liberal arts education are valuable precisely because they have acquired capacities and skills that will enable them to adapt to the changing needs of the fluid work place. Study abroad expands rather than restricts the agenda of education, creates citizens better qualified to contribute to the well-being of our reality, to live richer lives beyond the market place, and to gain access to spaces beyond the parochial. The correlation of unfamiliar ideas with unfamiliar environments creates the potential for high impact education. A critical consequence is the education of flexible and curious citizens able to adjust to the demands of an evolving work place.

The prevailing political rhetoric, in contrast, validates an ethos of philistinism by demeaning the importance of the humanities and social sciences. It endorses ignorance of those forces that created the world in which students live. All knowledge has value. By way of an extreme example: it would be foolhardy to argue that we should teach Alchemy as a practical skill, though

it has been taught within the context of international education. Between 1547 and 1550, the English mathematician and philosopher Dr John Dee lectured on alchemy in Europe. It is, in the current environment, a justly "under-represented" discipline but, beyond flippancy, understanding the significance of alchemy is not irrelevant. It offers an insight into the sixteenth-century mind and, more importantly, demonstrates the fact that knowledge is conditioned by time and space. Simply, what is important now has not always been so and will not necessarily be so in the future.

Understanding the conditional significance of knowledge is critical to the relationship between education and employment. It is not only alchemists who are redundant. Entire fields of employment have disappeared and entire fields have emerged in living memory. If students can listen creatively, speak effectively, read with discrimination, write accurately and intelligently, and think critically they are better equipped to prosper as happier citizens and more productive employees.

There are many thoughtful initiatives that demonstrate that career preparedness can be productively integrated into higher education; study abroad can extend and enhance that process. However, there are interventions, often politically motivated, that, at the extremes of narrow utilitarianism, seek to hijack the agenda of higher education. The employability agenda has been perverted to validate philistinism: to argue that there is a hierarchy of knowledge; that universities need to be controlled to meet needs of the market; that the humanities and social sciences have no significant role in political, social, and economic development; that we no longer need to teach young people about the meaning of histories, the power of the imagination, the forces that have shaped their reality.

These views are not just educationally and intellectually unsound; they are reactionary and morally reprehensible. They emanate, for the most part, from those who have enjoyed the fruits of a broad education that they would now deny others. In so doing, they re-enact the Gradgrind syndrome.

***It's all about me!***

The concept of employability addresses reasonable expectations. Given the costs of education, individuals might expect to be qualified for desirable and appropriate careers. Those expectations are not, however, best met through an impoverished view of what students need to learn.

An ideology of employability that denigrates one form of knowledge over another is based on ignorance of the history of knowledge. It also myopically focuses on the impact of education on individuals. The provision of education is a political issue because the creation of an educated citizenry has social and economic impacts upon the health and wealth of nations. Education has a clear function within contexts beyond individual satisfaction: it is a social good.

In study abroad, that social good has a trans-national significance. Grassroots interactions between young people from diverse national contexts create the potential for enhanced international understanding. Such encounters may empower students to transcend stereotypical concepts of the world beyond the familiar. The demystification of the foreign, if enacted on a large enough scale, would expand the impact of cosmopolitan ethics and ideas. The role of education in the creation and maintenance of a civil society needs to be re-affirmed in the discourse of international education. In short, the question of meeting the needs of individual students is critical. The question of meeting the needs of society is of profound significance.

We are also ill-serving a generation of students by allowing the objectives of higher education to be defined by the imagined needs of employers as filtered through ill-informed prejudice. Underlying political posturing is a disturbing form of discrimination in which influential figures, who have benefited from a broad liberal education, propose policies in which the importance of knowledge is narrowed and constricted. The function of universities is reduced and students are taught only that which is imagined to be useful. Ethically, this is indefensible. It implies that we should be training, not educating, a generation who are denied access to the riches enjoyed by those who now promote narrowed priorities. Practically, it is stupid. The real needs of employers have repeatedly been defined in

terms that align with the ideals of liberal education. In short, a hammer is employable but it has a limited range of intelligence and sensibility. Education is not simply a matter of utilitarian function but addresses a profound responsibility: we are in the business of enrichment and empowerment.

I am not suggesting that crude utilitarianism is widely endorsed in the field of education abroad, nor am I suggesting that we should ignore our responsibilities to give students skills that will enable them to succeed in their careers. I am arguing that the dichotomy between liberal education and career preparation is false and that, to the contrary, the objective of liberal arts education is essential to career preparation. Shifting emphasis to a narrow employability agenda is not only misguided; it impoverishes learning and betrays the legacy of wisdom that we should aspire to transmit.

In "Tradition and the Individual Talent," T.S. Eliot reminds us that we belong to a tradition that defines us. The denigration of the humanities expresses a preference for ignorance over the pursuit of learning:

Some one said: 'The dead writers are remote from us because we know so much more than they did.' Precisely, and they are that which we know (Eliot, 1921)

We live in a flawed world and our commitment to the transmission of this wisdom will be limited by our own capacities and the several demands that compete for attention in higher education. There is no dishonor in failing short of aspiration. However, to choose to fracture the connection with our collective legacies is the choice of philistines: intellectual vandalism.

***Conclusion***

Students with a broad liberal arts education are employable precisely because they have acquired capacities and skills that will enable them to adapt to the changing needs of the fluid work place; those skills belong to a humanistic and inclusive approach to teaching and learning.

An employability agenda based on the assumption that one area of knowledge is intrinsically superior to another derives from uniformed prejudice.

We need to ask questions that expose an ideology of ignorance: is history irrelevant? Is study of our national literature worthless? Should we ignore the impact of creative arts? Why are statistics more important? Why is engineering a higher form of knowledge? The idea of a hierarchy of wisdom profoundly distorts the importance of all knowledge, that of the historian and the chemist, the poet and the engineer.

If vocational objectives are made a priority and if we allow them to be embedded in the aspiration for employability, we are abandoning a moral and intellectual obligation: universities should make students think not just act. We must avoid being seduced by assumptions that reduce the function of higher education to the manufacture of drones.

We must not give the philistines tools to deride whole areas of knowledge and to dismiss intellectual aspiration and curiosity. We must not give them the tools to disregard the critical significance of the life of the mind. We must not give them the tools to impoverish learning. We must not give them the tools to take away our souls.

# How Employability Strengthens the Value Proposition of Study Abroad

Marty Tillman, Global Career Compass

In recent years, professionals in the international education industry have focused on making the case for study abroad (and international internships) by addressing its value in these terms: the experience creates global citizens, creates career-ready graduates, builds essential (sometimes industry-specific) professional skills and cross-cultural competencies, strengthens linguistic ability, and fosters a better understanding of critical world issues. And of course, if purposefully designed with any one, or all, of these goals in mind (and effectively communicated to students), education abroad programs have the potential to succeed in adding enormous value to a students' academic experience and personal and professional development.

In addition, education abroad supports student employability, therefore, it demonstrably makes a significant contribution to the value proposition of a college education. This linkage is supported by a large volume of research (see Tillman, 2012) which points to the high correlation between education abroad and the increased likelihood of employability after graduation (meaning a higher likelihood of employment in a shorter period of time than for students without international experience).

The importance of linking a college degree to the expectation of employment is highlighted in the key findings from a 2016 report of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences (1):

- Only 40% of students complete a bachelor's degree *within four years*
- Students take *an average of almost six years* to earn a bachelor's degree

- Earnings of the average four-year graduate exceeded those of a typical high school graduate by more than $21,000 (and compounded over a working life, the sum of this earnings difference greatly exceeds the cost of paying for college)

  American Academy of Arts & Sciences (2016)

Why is this information important to international educators? Because there is a gap between what we learn from this data and the perception of Americans about the overall value of higher education.

In a recent survey report, only 40% of Americans believe that a college education is *necessary* to leading "a successful professional life" (Public Agenda, 2016). This report goes on to say that "universities do not communicate our value well." This is a very practical way to examine the more esoteric discussions of late about the *return on investment* of going to college (the "return" referring to whether or not the degree actually leads to employment upon graduation). In this same public opinion survey, Americans hold a contrary, more positive view, when considering value of a degree in purely economic terms: 52% say "a college education is still the best investment by people who want to get ahead and succeed."

So while questioning the undo emphasis placed on getting a degree, the survey acknowledges that the majority of respondents understand that obtaining an academic credential pays off, literally, in the long run. Why are institutions not more forcefully making this case to students and their families?

The need for institutions to make this linkage more transparent for students is made clear by findings of a 2016 Kaplan Survey, prepared by the Economist Intelligence Unit, which highlights the wide gap in student understanding of the value of international experience:

Here are the survey's principal findings:

- Graduates believe that institutions of higher education have a responsibility to prepare them for today's global economy and workforce.

- Three out of four respondents agree that it is part of the role of universities and colleges to prepare them *by offering access to international experience*. And almost as many (70%) feel that their higher education has challenged their beliefs and exposed them to different cultures and ways of thinking beyond their home country.
- Most students have access to international experiences during their studies, but only a minority take advantage of them.
- Opportunities to gain international experience during their studies were available to 75% of respondents. Most (69%) were offered the chance to study overseas, while 62% had access to foreign language courses and 55% to international cultural exchanges. *But only 34% of those with access to international experience actually pursued it.*
- Many students do not realize the importance of international exposure until after graduation, when its full value becomes clearer.
- Half of respondents feel that they failed to recognize the value of international experience during their studies, suggesting that higher education institutions may need to help students recognize the benefits of participation.
- International experience in higher education is seen as improving the chances of finding a job. Respondents who had gained international experience during their studies were twice as likely to be employed -within six months of graduation- than those who did not have the same opportunities.

We have clear evidence of a widespread gap in understanding among students enrolled in higher education institutions about the value of international experience to their overall collegiate experience. And we also know there is a growing devaluation among the general public about the value of a college degree (specifically its worth in the current economy).

To close this knowledge gap, the linkage between learning outcomes of international experience and student employability needs to be more effectively and purposefully communicated to students and their families.

# Moving from Study Abroad to Career Integration: Destigmatizing the Goal of Employability

Audrey J. Murrell, Bryan Schultz, University of Pittsburgh

The tradition of sending American students abroad while in college has evolved substantially since the turn of the 20th century. Initally small groups of affluent American university students went abroad to top international institutions to study, research, and have an international experience often independent from their academic field of study (de Wit and Merkx, 2012). Many institutions subscribed to the notion put forth by William Hoffa in his book A History of Study Abroad that any and all travel "has educational potential" regardless of its content or purpose (Hoffa and DePaul, 2010). However, recent trends indicate that American study abroad programs have expanded their objectives beyond international experience and are aimed at more complex outcomes such as international political knowledge, cross-cultural exposure, and cultural awareness through semester or year-long intensive programs of study (Carlson and Widaman). While there is no debate that international experience is meaningful, there are lingering questions over the ultimate goals and measures of study abroad programs beyond mere exposure to cultures outside of one's culture of origin. Is exposure sufficient and if not, how can we redefine study abroad in ways that add value to key academic and student outcomes?

We argue, like a number of scholars, that the traditional view of study abroad can create competing pressures between academic, career, and global activities and outcomes for our students. Similar to other schools, we have redefined the study abroad experience away from an interruption of academic study for an often one-time international experience and toward an opportunity for career and academic integration via situated learning within a global context. This means that the goal for colleges and universities should not be merely to increase the numbers and types of

student who travel internationally, but to define ways in which learning is enhanced by the global context in which it occurs to prepare college students as globally competent professionals. Defining an explicit goal of study abroad programs as career integration also means that academic, global, and professional development experiences must be provided as a coordinated effort to develop students for both their professional and personal lives after graduation.

At first look, this may seem to be an idea without controversy. Why would anyone object to efforts that prepare students to be globally-ready professionals and world-savvy citizens? Yet, a focus on career integration highlights the divide in the higher education community over whether education itself must have the explicit goal of "employability" especially for undergraduate education. This dichotomy is perhaps fueled by the ongoing discussion of the cost of a college education and correlated measures that attempt to quantify the return on that investment (Selingo, 2013). In addition, the significant attention being paid to the STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math) has created a debate in which non-STEM fields are motivated to defend the importance of liberal arts and generalist education while labeling professional degrees as singularly "job focused" or vocational in nature (Roche, 2010).

However, what is missing from this ongoing debate is a clear understanding of what employability requires, especially as we prepare students for what is undeniably a global workplace. Skills that define students' employability include not only workplace skills (e.g., problem solving, decision making, conflict resolution) and academic knowledge (e.g., subject matter expertise), but also personal skills (e.g., initiative, integrity) and soft skills (e.g., communication, teamwork). For example, Yorke notes that employability is based on one's capability to gain initial employment, to maintain employment, and to obtain new employment as required. He writes that: "For the individual, employability depends on: their assets in terms of the knowledge, skills and attitudes they possess; the way they use and deploy those assets; the way they present them to employers, and crucially, the context (e.g. personal circumstances and labor market environment) within which they see work" (Yorke, 2006). Thus, employability requires the development of competencies that are formed within some context and

demands that they be applied in meaningful ways to develop knowledge, skills, and abilities. According to Yorke, these competencies are not only key to success but also necessary for the benefit of the organization, community, and global economy.

Clearly the goal of employability has benefits that will require rethinking the divide between academic, career, and global preparation for our students. While debate over the meaning and significance of employability may continue within academic circles, employers are clear on the importance of key skills for the next generations of employees hired into their organizations. For example, the Coalition for the Advancement of International Studies issued a report entitled "*Spanning the Gap: Toward a Better Business and Education Partnership for International Competence*." A key point within that report is that corporations are in need of globally competent employees to manage production and markets in their businesses as evidenced by 86% of corporations stating that they will need managers and employees with greater international knowledge in the decades ahead (CAFLIS, 1989).

Our response should not be further debate about employability and the importance of cultural competency as part of preparing students for being professionals and citizens of impact but how best can we achieve this critical goal. As Hillard and Pollard suggest, study abroad is uniquely suited to meet this need through a multitude of academic and experiential opportunities (Hillage and Pollard, 1998). Their argument is that study abroad programs that explore and analyze academic themes (social, political, economic, cultural, etc.) across nations and borders coupled with global internships through which students gain a critical understanding of their field of interest in an international setting and/or service-learning practicums which open their eyes to ethical conduct, social inequality and cultural conflicts are essential components of an effective and impactful global portfolio. These critical elements are essential for preparing students by giving them the tools they need to recognize, understand, and articulate how they have achieved a level of cultural competence in order to both function and have an impact within a diverse and complex world.

Having defined employability and cultural competency as essential, the question of how best to achieve these important goals remains. Across

the Pitt Business global program portfolio, we work to develop explicit and meaningful connections before, during, and after the learning abroad experience. We also provide an explicit link both thematically and structurally between departments of career services, academic advising, and study abroad. Our focal theme is that we take our students "*From the classroom, to the city, to the world*" as an explicit branding message that these components are not only essential but also inextricably linked to successful outcomes for our students. This integrated approach does not ignore or apologize for employability being our goal, but acknowledges that global and cultural competence as a component of employability is the return of value for the investment students (and their families) make in their education.

We also take active steps to help students articulate this value as well as engage in ongoing analytics around critical academic and career outcomes. Lastly, through an innovative technology platform, we support students in creating unique and individualized portfolios upon re-entry after an education abroad program to help them capture and articulate to employers the connection between what happens in the U.S. and their study abroad journey.

Whether we are looking at global experience via study abroad, curriculum content through the choice of an academic major, or professional development via internships, all aspects of the undergraduate education experience must work together to prepare the student to become a globally ready professional and world-savvy citizen. We diminish our students' abilities to understand, connect, and communicate the ways in which what is learned inside the classroom connects with what is experienced outside of the classroom when we focus on the divide and do not take a more integrated approach. We are reminded of how critical this integration will be for our students' future by Amartya Sen's pioneering work on human capabilities. He notes that "development is more than simply an account of economic and technological progress; true development is related to what people are able to do and be and so is deeply connected to values, to emotions, imagination, thought, and play, and to long-term human flourishing."

Thus, we must remove any and all stigmas associated with the word "employability" in our discussions of undergraduate educational outcomes.

Regardless of one's academic major, each student will eventually be employed whether that is in the public, non-profit or private sector, or if they elect to become an entrepreneur or business owner. The better we become at providing an integrated set of academic, career, and global experiences for our students, the more we will add value to both their immediate educational experiences and their lifelong professional endeavors.

# CONTRIBUTORS

# Contributors

**Christine L. Anderson** is the Academic Director at the Learning Abroad Center. In her work at the University of Minnesota's Learning Abroad Center, Christine's main focus is on program development, faculty and staff training in the U.S. and abroad, and intercultural training and research. She received her Ph.D. in Comparative International Development Education at the UofM.

**Jennifer Browne** is the Associate Director of Student Life at Memorial University, providing leadership to a number of areas in the portfolio. For over fifteen years, she has worked in the area of career development in both community/non-profit and post-secondary settings including leading Career Development & Experiential Learning at Memorial University for the past decade. Her interest and passion for experiential learning has helped guide and increase the number of curricular and co-curricular experiential opportunities for Memorial students and alumni. She is currently Chair of the Canadian Education and Research Institute in Counselling (CERIC), which is dedicated to the advancement of education and research in the field of career counseling and career development in Canada. Jennifer is also one of the founding organizers of the International Experiential Learning Institute which has been held annually since 2013. She holds a B.A. and a M.Ed. in Post-Secondary Education from Memorial University, with a focus on Student Services.

**Liz Campanella** is the Director of Education Abroad at Villanova University. She completed her B.A. in History and Art History and her M.B.A. at Villanova University and brings more than twelve years of experience in the field of international education.

**Gina Canterucci** is the Assistant Director for Global Academic Planning at the Office of Global Programs at New York University, where she manages

the global academic internship program for students studying at NYU global academic centers. With a background in health science and international higher education, her experience includes teaching undergraduate courses, academic program and curriculum development, and academic advising. Gina earned her Ph.D. in 2015 in international higher education administration after completing her dissertation on higher education policy in South Africa and in the southern African region. She has presented her research at national and international conferences.

**John Christian** is President and CEO of CAPA The Global Education Network and has a longstanding history in the field of international education that spans over 30 years. He is a recognized leader and trainer and has been an active contributing member of the industry through several professional organizations including NAFSA, the Association of International Educators, and the Forum on Education Abroad. John began his career as a Foreign Student Advisor for The State University of New York, Oswego, in the Office of International Education. Following this, he participated in a post-graduate program in Beijing, China where he was also the Resident Director of SUNY Oswego's Beijing program. John holds an M.A. in Area Studies China from the University of London's School of Oriental and African Studies. At CAPA, John continues to evolve and support the field of international education and strives for new and innovative ways to enhance the student experience in academics, personal and professional development, and cultural exchange.

**Brittany Collins** is the Internship Coordinator and Adviser at the Hubbard Center for Student Engagement at DePauw University. She works with students to secure meaningful internships by reviewing application documents, connecting them to online resources, and educating them on the power of networking. She also oversees the internship credit process and allocation of internship grant funds. This is her first position in a center that focuses on off-campus study and career services. She is a big proponent of exploring new locations through study programs, internships and travel. Her short-term program in Poland during her senior year was her first experience outside of the United States, and it has motivated her to encourage underrepresented students not to rule out the possibility of studying abroad in college. She has an M.Sc. in Education from the Indiana

University-Higher Education and Student Affairs program. Prior to career services, she worked with underrepresented student support programs and the Indiana Commission for Higher Education.

**Trixie Cordova** is the Associate Director at Diversity Abroad. She oversees Diversity Abroad's Student Services, which includes DiversityAbroad.com resources and scholarships, the Campus Fellows program, and the Passport Tour, which brings Diversity Abroad to campuses across the U.S. She is also currently a member of NAFSA's Diversity & Inclusion in Education Abroad Sub-Committee. Trixie has her B.A. in Sociology from UC Berkely and an M.A. in International Educational Development with a concentration in Peace Education from Teachers' College, Columbia University.

**Diana Cvitan** is the Director of Global Learning and Partnerships at Fairleigh Dickinson University and oversees the University's international education programs and global partnerships activities. She joined FDU in 2001, coming from a career in international marketing in the travel industry. Diana's experience includes campus internationalization, faculty/staff development, student engagement, fellowship advising, grants management, assessment and evaluation, partnership development, global learning pedagogy and curricular integration, and she was a major contributor in the redesign of FDU's Core Curriculum. She has recently presented at national and international conferences on the topics of global learning, global competencies, and culturally relevant pedagogy. Her research area focuses on Global Competencies and Employability and she is currently pursuing her doctorate at the University of Bath, U.K.

**Rebecca Dordel** is a career coach in the College of Biological Sciences at the University of Minnesota. Her main focus is supporting students who are exploring industry careers and graduate school in the life sciences.

**Maritheresa Frain** is the Executive Vice President for Study Abroad at CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchanges and is responsible for sending over 11,000 university and high school students abroad each year. She has more than 25 years of experience in international education having worked for universities in Spain, Russia, Greece, Portugal, and Switzerland. Maritheresa oversees the academic quality of all of CIEE´s international

study abroad programs in 63 cities, including research projects in language acquisition and intercultural skill development. She serves on The Forum Council and presents regularly on program management, access to study abroad, and experiential learning abroad. She completed her undergraduate work in International Politics at The Pennsylvania State University and received her M.A. and Ph.D. in International Relations at Georgetown University. She is fluent in English, Spanish, and Portuguese with proficiency in French and Russian.

**Adriane van Gils-Pierce** was the Director of Study Abroad and Away Programs at Clark University from 2005 to 2017 and worked in international education, career services, academic advising, and community engagement since joining Clark in 1996. As Associate Director of the LEEP Center, she also held administrative responsibilities related to the daily management of the Center. At Clark, Adriane chaired the Study Abroad Faculty Advisory Committee; served on the International Travel Crisis Response Committee and the Transfer Credit Evaluation Committee. Adriane has presented in numerous sessions and workshops at national conferences, consults with universities internationally; and contributes to articles and chapters on topics relating to international education.

**Becky Hall** is the Director - Career Services Administration, University of Minnesota where she provides project management and leadership for coordinated career initiatives at the University of Minnesota, including graduate outcomes measurement, vendor selection and contract processing, program development, and event management. She partners with colleagues across the University of Minnesota system, including significant work with Global Programs and Strategy Alliance (GPS), Institutional Research, and Student Affairs. Becky has been with the University for nearly 20 years. Her experience in career development includes roles as Assistant Department Director, Career Counselor, and Consultant with an emphasis on working with clients in the technology, engineering, and healthcare industries.

**Constance (Connie) Whitehead Hanks** has been in the field of international education since 1986. She worked at Clark University for 17 years, first serving as Assistant Director of the International Programs Office advising international students on immigration issues and cross-cultural transi-

tions, and most recently as Associate Director of the Study Abroad Office. Organizational changes in higher education, and more specifically at Clark University, compelled Connie to look more carefully at how international education impacts students' skill sets and post-graduation endeavors within the context of today's rapidly changing workforce. Connie has also volunteered with the YMCA of Central Massachusetts for several decades, helping to facilitate global exchange opportunities for youth and young adults in Argentina, Scotland, Poland, and Sri Lanka.

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through People, Knowledge and Relationships (with Forte-Trummel and Bing); and, the forthcoming books entitled Mentoring in Medical and Health Care Professions (with South-Paul) and Mentoring Diverse Leaders: Creating Change for People, Processes and Paradigms (McGraw-Hill) with Stacy Blake-Beard. Dr. Murrell serves as a consultant in the areas of mentoring, leadership development, and workforce/supplier diversity. She has received numerous recognitions including the Mayor's Citizen Service Award which proclaimed August 12th to be "Dr. Audrey Murrell Day" within the city of Pittsburgh. Audrey's community service activities include having served on and chaired a number of non-profit and community boards.

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