

**The Quest for Global Competence – Effects of Study Abroad Literature  
on Oregon State University Students**

by

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## AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: The Quest for Global Competence – Effects of study abroad literature on Oregon State University students, a study on how programs are chosen and the reflection of the educational institution's goals for students

Abstract approved: \_\_\_\_\_

William E. Loges

This thesis explores what effects study abroad literature, specifically promotional Websites, have on Oregon State University students when selecting a study abroad program and if the students' choices reflect OSU's International Degree and Education Abroad's (IDEA) goal of global competency for students.

To explore this, two online surveys were made; one for OSU students who have not yet studied abroad (Potential Students) but are interested in doing so, and another of OSU students who have studied abroad in the past five years (Returnees). Both surveys asked the student to review five study abroad program Websites and answer a variety of questions regarding each.

The relationship between the students who have not yet studied abroad and the purpose of the study is to examine how media – study abroad Websites – affect the students' choices of a study abroad program. Prospective Students' reactions to Websites will be compared to those of students who have studied abroad to examine if the expectations – set by the study abroad literature – met the expectations of the educational institution's goal of global competency.

The findings indicate that students' perspectives of study abroad Websites, vary significantly between those who have and have not studied abroad. Potential Students and Returnees responded to the Websites in almost opposite ways. Potential Students reacted to visual elements of the Websites more so than the information provided about the study abroad program when deciding likes and dislikes of a program. While the material reviewed was exactly the same for both participant populations, the perceived messages, the likes and dislikes, and the promotion of global competency was different in each population.

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## **I. Introduction**

Traditionally, education abroad allows students to experience and learn from other countries and cultures. Studying abroad orients U.S. students to the world, bringing them a global perspective when they return home (Hill, 1). Universities foster this type of learning through their international education programs when those programs lead to increased effectiveness in the intercultural and international arenas and collaboration across cultures. Through an international experience, students will improve and enhance their cultural and global competence in ways that will not only affect the individual students but also others with whom they choose to share their experience.

College students study abroad for a variety of reasons, such as to improve or learn a language, experience a new culture, to travel, to have fun, to gain a competitive international edge in the work force, to gain international experience, and to fulfill degree requirements. Every student has a different reason for choosing one program or another; the reason may be complex or fairly simple. While some might return home and report that they had the time of their lives, others may simply shrug and say it was just okay. Why is there such a divide? Could there be a reason behind students' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their international experience whether it was a four-week intensive language study or a full year of regular coursework?

Perhaps the answers to these questions are rooted in the beginning of the study abroad process, during the first steps when deciding to go abroad, the step of choosing what program in which to embark on the journey. Programs range from university sponsored (e.g., Oregon State University's Santander Program – an intensive language

study abroad program with other OSU students) to third-party companies that specialize in sending U.S. students to various countries (e.g. Academic Programs International – an independent study abroad organization that provides living, travel, educational, and cultural opportunities for U.S. students in countries worldwide).

No matter if a program is university sponsored or from a third-party company, all have study abroad literature. Different media are used to catch the attention and inform U.S. students of what each program has to offer. The media materials (e.g., brochures, pamphlets, catalogs, and Websites) are perhaps the first introduction to what a student may expect to experience on any given program.

The expectations that become enrooted in students' minds about what program they are about to embark on may hinder or help their experience. If expectations are not met a student may leave with disgruntled feelings towards the host country, culture and/or its people. However, if a student's expectations are met, even exceeded, a student may leave with a love for the host country, culture and its people as well as global competence.

In this thesis I will be exploring what effects study abroad literature, specifically promotional Websites, have on Oregon State University students when selecting a study abroad program and if the students' choices reflect OSU's International Degree and Education Abroad's (IDEA)<sup>1</sup> goal of global competency for students. According to IDEA, global competency refers to the understanding of cultural traditions that extend beyond the U.S., communication across cultures, and preparedness for learning, living, and working in the global community (Brennan and Cushner, 10). The knowledge sought is if U.S. students are affected by images and ideals that are represented in existing study abroad Websites and how that medium affects a student's choice of a study abroad

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<sup>1</sup> In this thesis IDEA will be referred to as an educational institution.

program and if the outcome meets the student's expectation and/or that of the educational institution's goal of global competency for students.

To explore this, two surveys will be made; one of students who have not yet studied abroad but are interested in doing so, and another of students who have already studied abroad in the past five years. The relationship between the students who have not yet studied abroad and the purpose of the study is to examine how media – study abroad Websites – affect the students' choices of a study abroad program. Prospective students' reactions to Websites will be compared to those of students who have studied abroad to examine if the expectations – set by the study abroad literature – met the expectations of the educational institution's goal of global competency.

## **II. Background/Literature Review**

As communication technology brings people all over the world closer together, the term globalization is on the forefront of people's minds. Globalization "refers to an increase in the scope and magnitude of human contact, with its subsequent escalation of interaction and interdependence" (Brennan and Cushner, 1). Although "globalization ultimately refers to the integration of economic institutions, much of this integration occurs through the channels of technology" (Kluver, 427).

In the twenty-first century the development of communication and transportation technology has linked almost every part of the globe. People are brought face-to-face faster than ever before (Chen and Starosta, 215). With the application of Facebook, Skype and YouTube, communication technology has transformed how information is shared and how people communicate. Today, "the flow of ideas and information increasingly transcends national boundaries" (Chen and Starosta, 215).

Globalization is a product of the progress of communication and transportation technologies. The technology has made the business world more accessible to global markets. "The trend toward a global economy is bringing people from different cultures together...[and] the interdependence among international economies reflects the important role that [global competency] plays now and will play increasingly in the next century" (Chen and Starosta, 215-216). However, "globalization is more than just McWorld or Westernization. It is about human interconnections that have assumed global proportions and transformed themselves" (Robertson, 3).

The Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program (2005) reports that promoting and democratizing undergraduate study abroad is the next step in the evolution of American higher education. In order to promote study abroad, especially programs that foster global competency, the influence of the choice and decisions to pursue one study abroad program over another is crucial. Many students' first glimpses of a study abroad program is through the study abroad literature offered through their university, so it is critical to understand that media as well. It is hypothesized that the choice of a study abroad program is substantially influenced by the expectations students accumulate through study abroad literature. More specifically it is believed that the likelihood that a student chooses a study abroad program is related to the first images and ideas received through program literature like Websites.

### **History of Globalization**

Globalization is not a new concept. Globalization traces back to “Marco Polo, Magellan, Drake, and Columbus, from the thirteenth century through the nineteenth century, where long voyages that took many years were undertaken to expand territory, trade, and colonize” (Rajasingham, 413). When those explorers returned, they described a shift in knowledge, a new *zeitgeist* – an all-encompassing body of unconscious knowledge peculiar to a particular time and place – in other words, global competence.

Historically globalization has been a human dynamic, which lay in the “interconnections that have slowly enveloped humans since the earliest times, as they globalized themselves” (Robertson, 3). As different pressures presented themselves to human societies (e.g., environmental pressures, the availability of resources, technology,

and population growth) those societies developed strategies to cope and branch out to other societies. This connection to other societies, people reaching out to others, is a “common factor in the history of globalization” (Robertson, 14).

Connection to other societies is a common factor in the history of globalization, but the remnants of history from different cultures causes differences between identities. “Many different kinds of history influence our understanding of who we are – as individuals, as family members, as members of cultural groups, and as citizens of a nation” (Martin and Nakayama, 119). When people participate in intercultural encounters, they are not equal because the development of a cultural identity is largely influenced by history. However, “regardless of whether we choose to recognize the foundations for many of our differences, these inequalities influence how we think about others and how we interact with them” (Martin and Nakayama, 129). The key to successful communication across cultures, as the people of a country globalize themselves, is to recognize those influences because “the more you know, the better you will be positioned to engage in successful intercultural interactions” (Martin and Nakayama, 129).

### **Importance of Global Competency**

According to Friedman (2006), recent advances in communication and transportation technologies have resulted in a world that is getting smaller, which has increased contact between people from diverse cultures. Life and work in the world today demands that “those who are striving to work together in various endeavors around the

globe develop understanding of and sensitivity to the views of others as well as a sense of connectedness that taps into common values and goals” (Brennan and Cushner, 2).

According to DeGarmo and Siemer (2009) globalization is shrinking the effects of distance and increases the interconnectedness of people, places and things, which is leaving educators to confront the issue of assisting students to adapt to the changing nature of the global landscape. Friedman (2006) states that by living in the “flat” world, which includes increased contact among cultures because of technology, U.S. students are no longer isolated from the effects of global issues as many challenges are transcending cultural, ethnic, and national boundaries. It is important for U.S. students to gain an understanding of globalization as those boundaries start to blur and gain global competence because those without the “knowledge and skills required to navigate and function within the global community will be socially, economically and politically disenfranchised” (DeGarmo and Siemer, 2-3).

In today’s world, global citizens must be able to communicate and collaborate with those whose attitudes, values, knowledge, and ways of doing things differ significantly from their own. Building bridges across cultural boundaries will require a high degree of flexibility, a tolerance for ambiguity, and an understanding of the role culture plays in shaping thinking and behavior. (Brennan and Cushner, 2)

### **Global Competency and Education**

Building those bridges is not necessarily a process one can jump start on one’s own. Education abroad can help develop and facilitate those skills in university students.

Students who study abroad, whose international program or university fosters global competence as a goal, fully reap the benefits of being able to build bridges. The opportunity of studying abroad allows students to “broaden their cultural knowledge, develop a global perspective, and increase their understanding of the value of multicultural education through interaction with children, other professionals, and adults from varying cultural backgrounds,” (Brennan and Cushner, 6).

As we grow increasingly aware of the global interdependence of people and cultures, we confront ever shifting cultural, ecological, economic, and technological realities that define the shrinking world of the twenty-first century. The development of new ways of living in the world together is pivotal to further human progress; we must learn how to see things through the eyes of others and add their knowledge to our personal repertoires.

Such a global mindset can result only from competent communication among peoples from diverse cultures. (Chen & Starosta, 215)

According to Oregon State University’s IDEA program, studying abroad is a scholarly pursuit with a goal to enhance your language skills, gain global competence, and make the world your classroom (“Education Abroad”). Students who gain global competency through their respective study abroad experiences will be seen as culturally competent and will be able to participate and prepare others for living and working in the global community.

Education must...reflect the diversity of the world and prepare [students] with the cooperative skills that they will require later in life. It must promote a dialogue that brings together people from different national

cultures and religious backgrounds...It must enable people to examine their own societies and traditions critically. It should prepare them [students] to regard themselves as humans before all other identification. It should enable them to understand what it is like to be someone different from himself or herself. To that end, education must provide students with knowledge of other cultures; it should enable them to learn other languages, to understand the histories of [others]. (Robertson, 264-265)

In a study of U.S. student-teachers who completed their practicum abroad it was found that global competency comes about with a significant experiential component where the learner, in this case a student-teacher, is situated in another culture for an extended period of time (Brennan and Cushner, 2007). Global competency is the “understanding of cultural traditions that extend beyond the borders of the U.S., communication across cultures, and preparedness for learning, living, and working in the global community” (Brennan and Cushner, 10). Universities are adding a global dimension to their international education programs that fosters this type of learning that leads to increased effectiveness in the intercultural and international arenas and collaboration across cultures. Through an international experience students will improve and enhance their cultural and global competence in ways that will not only affect the individual students but also others with whom they choose to share their experience.

In another study of students and the effect a student’s goals regarding a study abroad program has on actual outcomes, it was found that a student’s goals to study abroad significantly predicted the development of cross-cultural skills and global understanding (Kitsantas, 2004). Most importantly, it was shown that if students reported

that their goals were to develop their cross-cultural skills, those students would report the highest development of cross-cultural skills and global understanding, followed by those who reported goals to become more knowledgeable in their subject area. Minimal or no gains in cross-cultural skills or global understanding were found for students whose goals were generally to socialize. By being able to identify why a student is going abroad the educational institution will be able to assess if students are likely to meet their goal of global competency.

### **Components of Global Competency**

According to Martin and Nakayama (2007) there are four basic components of global competency: motivation, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. Those dimensions of global competency are presumed to be stepping-stones up to it according to Martin and Kakayama. U.S. students may or may not accomplish all those steps during their international experience. One of the most important things a student can do to be successful in study abroad is for the student to be aware of what he or she hopes to gain from the experience (Paige et al., 2). If a student approaches her international experience with little aspirations to accomplish anything she may not get to all the stepping-stones of global competency. However, if the educational institution prepares U.S. students to meet the challenge of cultural diversity in a global perspective the better chance the U.S. student will set goals and aspire to them during her study abroad (Brennan and Cushner, 154).

The first component of global competency, motivation, refers to the “desire to make a commitment in relationships, to learn about the self and others, and to remain

flexible” (Martin and Nakayama, 435). When U.S. students “are not motivated to reach across cultural divides, we suffer from distorted perception and a lack of personal growth” (Martin and Nakayama, 437). This leads to the next step in global competence, knowledge. Knowledge is comprised of cognitive aspects of oneself – the quality of knowing one's strength and weaknesses, knowing others, and about various aspects of communication (Martin and Nakayama, 438). With motivation and knowledge U.S. students will be better able to respect, communicate, and understand other people and cultures. The third step towards global competency, attitude, refers to a student's mental mindset. “Many attitudes contribute to [global competency] including tolerance for ambiguity, empathy, and nonjudgmentalism” (Martin and Nakayama, 439). The fourth, and final, steps are behaviors and skills. Being able to perform behaviors applicable to the culture one is in is a valuable skill to possess. According to Martin and Nakayama (2007) it is important to be aware of different levels of behaviors and to be able to implement and adapt them in culture-specific ways.

Global competency happens in many contexts; an important aspect of being competent is being able to exhibit or adapt and understand the context in which communication occurs. Educational institutions need to encourage students to work, live and learn together with people different from themselves, without being discouraged by those differences, to develop global competency in modern society.

In order to be able to live in a global community a student needs to gain cultural awareness. Cultural awareness contributes to living in a global community because it involves the individual's “own prejudices and biases towards individuals who are different and, consequently, is a process of becoming appreciative of and sensitive to the

values, beliefs, lifestyles, practices and problem-solving strategies of that individual's culture" (Koskinen and Tossavainen, 371). Face-to-face encounters with people of another culture will also help with understanding the host culture and its people, making one able to live in a global community.

Learning in a global community requires cultural knowledge. A student can gain cultural knowledge through his or her study abroad program by "obtaining a sound understanding of the various world-views of different cultural and ethnic groups" (Koskinen and Tossavainen, 371). A student who is aware of others' world-views will be better able to communicate and relate to other students because he understands their (the other students') world-views.

Working in a global community requires that a student have cultural desire. Cultural desire relates back to the stepping-stone of motivation. A student has to *want to* rather than *have to* work with culturally diverse peoples. "It is implicit in cultural desire that students truly strive to learn about culture and difference" (Koskinen and Tossavainen, 371).

All three factors: living, learning, and working in a global community help foster global competency. Successful global competency through studying abroad is a function through which students can become self-aware and nourish a personality in which students "are aware of their multiple identities and are able to maintain a multicultural coexistence in order to develop a global civic culture" (Chen & Starosta, 217). Through the experience a U.S student, who may have only known the U.S. culture, is transformed into a multicultural person. Chen and Starosta (2008) quote Belay (1993) that "this transformation is achieved through symmetrical interdependence that enables persons to

demonstrate ‘tolerance for differences and mutual respect among cultures as a mark of enlightened national and global citizenship’ in individual, social, business, and political institution levels” (217). It is suggested that as a student is further immersed in a culture outside of his own he acquires a greater degree of cultural awareness and self- awareness, which provides the building blocks towards global competency.

As Hill (1991) states “education abroad allows Americans to benefit from the experiences of other nations and cultures. In addition, study abroad serves to orient Americans to the larger world, bringing [them] an acquired broader perspective” (1). In order to get U.S. students to that point it is necessary to strive to understand how and if study abroad literature helps or hinders a student’s choice of a program and if that program aides in the global competence the educational institution strives for.

### **III. Methodology**

All of the research for this project was done in the U.S. after returning from studying abroad in Spain during the 2007-2008 academic year. The topic for this thesis was conceived after learning of U.S. students who felt that their expectations were not being met during their international experience as was “promised” through the way their respective study abroad program was presented to them (e.g. promotional materials).

The study protocol and survey language was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB application number 4369).<sup>2</sup> I proposed two surveys of Oregon State University students with the intent to investigate effects that study abroad literature has on OSU students when selecting a study abroad program and if the students’ choices reflect OSU’s International Degree and Education Abroad (IDEA) goal of global competency for students.

#### **Participant Population**

OSU students, adults over the age of 18 years old, who have expressed an interest in studying abroad, and students who have completed a program of study abroad were invited to complete a questionnaire online. Participants are OSU students who have demonstrated high interest in studying abroad, and/or are about to study abroad, or who have studied abroad in the past five years. It was preferable to have participants with an interest in studying abroad for the *quality* of the online surveys. Quality refers to the degree of insight a participant may put into their responses during the online survey.

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<sup>2</sup> International Review Board application can be found in Appendix A

Potential participants were approached and recruited by the researcher and contacted initially by email through IDEA's listservs.<sup>3</sup> Initial contact with participants included requests for the forwarding of the recruitment information on to other OSU students that the initial contacts think might be interested, resulting in a potential snowball sample.

There were no individual identifiers (e.g. name, student identification number) asked for before, during, or after the online survey. A participant will only be identified in this project as an OSU student who took either the online survey for a) potential students to/have interest in study abroad (hereafter referred to as the Potential Students Survey) or b) students who will have studied abroad in the past five years (hereafter referred to as the Returnees Survey).

## **Research Context**

Participants who decided to take an online survey took one of two online surveys depending on their status (i.e. Potential Student or Returnee). The survey site SurveyMonkey hosted the questionnaire. All students were asked a variety of questions, depending on which online survey they took, about study abroad materials or about their personal study abroad experience. Both surveys were anonymous and lasted approximately 30 minutes to complete (including time to review the online literature about study abroad programs). Both surveys asked the student to review five study abroad program Websites and answer a variety of questions regarding each Website.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> International Review Board Recruitment Materials can be found in Appendix C

<sup>4</sup> List of the Web addresses for each Website can be found in Appendix D

The Websites reviewed were for IE3 Global Internships (IE3), Academic Programs International (API), Oregon Abroad, AHA International (AHA), and the Santander Study Abroad Program (Santander). IE3 and Oregon Abroad are both programs offered through the Oregon University System International Programs. Santander is a program offered through OSU's Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures in cooperation with the Office of International Education. AHA is an academic program for the University of Oregon that is sponsored by OSU. A sponsored program means that OSU students will receive a form of academic credit by using this program. API is an independent study abroad organization sponsored by OSU.

The first Website each student was asked to review was for IE3. IE3 was used as a test site to get the students accustomed to the format and the types of questions that were to be asked. When reviewing the results it was found that the majority of the students were most responsive to the IE3 site. More questions were answered and more detailed answers were given to the open-ended questions. The reason for this could be because IE3 was the first Website reviewed and the students may have been more eager to answer the questions. However the data from the IE3 Website cannot be used because IE3 is an internship program for students. For this thesis, study abroad programs are the focus.

### **Data Collection**

Data were obtained from two online surveys. Data were collected between July 8, 2009 and August 7, 2009. Both surveys were officially closed on August 14, 2009.

Thirty-six OSU students took the Returnees Survey and twenty-seven OSU students took the Potential Students Survey.

All students were asked for their consent to participate in the survey by either selecting “yes” or “no” after a brief explanation of what the survey was, what it was for, and how long it would take. One student withdrew from the Returnees Survey after the initial question asking if he or she would like to participate (this student is not a part of the total 36 who completed the survey). One student withdrew from the Potential Students Survey after the initial question asking if he or she would like to participate (this student is not a part of the total 27 who completed the survey).

Of the students who consented to participate in either the Potential Students or Returnees survey all OSU students claimed to have done one study abroad program during a single period of time except for one student who took the Returnees Survey. One student who took the Returnees Survey went abroad three separate times. Two of the abroad experiences were through study abroad programs and the third experience was an international internship. Although the most recent international experience for this OSU student was an internship, this student’s responses were still calculated in the results because the majority of the student’s international experience was through studying abroad.

The Potential Students Survey<sup>5</sup> consisted of 27 Likert-type questions concerning each student’s opinion of how each study abroad program Website presented the message that students who attended that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S., improve their ability to communicate across cultures, and be prepared to live, learn

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<sup>5</sup> Copies of both the Potential Students Survey and the Returnees Survey can be found in the Appendix E and F

and work in the global community. The Potential Students Survey consisted of 21 open-ended questions such as: what is your interest in studying abroad, is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression on you (positive or negative), if so, please describe it.

The Returnees Survey consisted of 32 Likert-type questions concerning the students' opinion about the study abroad program they participated in as well as their opinions on the same Websites that the Potential Students Survey asked about. The Returnees Survey consisted of 26 open-ended questions just like those in the Potential Students Survey as well as questions about the students' study abroad program.

## IV. Analysis

To determine if a study abroad program met the educational institution's goal of global competence, responses of the participants were analyzed under the context of IDEA's definition of global competency. The definition refers to the understanding of cultural traditions that extend beyond the U.S., communication across cultures, and preparedness for learning, living, and working in the global community.

The Likert-type questions compared each Website to the different aspects of global competency. Each student was asked to respond to a scale from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5) for each aspect of global competency (i.e., understand culture beyond the U.S., ability to communicate across cultures, ability to work in the global community, ability to learn in the global community, and the ability to live in the global community). Once the responses were collected the data were combined and tables were made to determine the average response.<sup>6</sup>

The open-ended responses for each Website were analyzed to find similarities and differences between the Websites themselves and the participants (i.e., between the Potential Students and the Returnees). The open-ended questions asked for the students' personal opinions about the Websites. Open-ended questions ranged from likes and dislikes of a Website to anything that may have made a strong impression on the student that they wish to comment on.<sup>7</sup> For both the Potential Students Survey and the Returnees Survey the responses were reviewed for "likes" of each Website, reasons for liking a Website, and message portrayed through the Website material (in the student's opinion). Those responses were then reviewed to find similarities within each response category.

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<sup>6</sup> See section IX for tables and figures

<sup>7</sup> See Appendices E and F for surveys

For example, Potential Students “likes” of a Website ranged from the photos displayed to the information provided; those responses were analyzed to find the most common response. From that data, charts were created to demonstrate the most common responses. For the Returnees Survey an additional chart was made to demonstrate the most common responses to why a Returnee chose the program he or she went on.

## V. Results

Potential Students and Returnees responded to the Websites in almost opposite ways. While the material reviewed was exactly the same for both participant populations, the perceived messages, the likes and dislikes, and the promotion of global competency was different in each population.

Returnees rated the study abroad Websites less successful in promoting global competency than the Potential Students (see Tables 1-4).<sup>8</sup> In every table the Returnees rank each aspect of global competency lower for each Website than the Potential Students.

Both the Returnees and the Potential Students ranked the Websites fairly successful in portraying the aspects of global competency that a student will experience through the program (see Table 5). Oregon Abroad was the most successful out of all four Websites to convey global competency through its Website. A Returnee felt that the message Oregon Abroad is sending students through the Website about the experience they would have is that a student “would grow and have a diverse educational experience.” A Potential Student said that the message Oregon Abroad is portraying through the Website is that “education isn't always about school work, it's about learning who you are as a person. Oregon Abroad can help you achieve education of both kinds.”

Potential Students reacted to visual elements of the Websites more so than the information provided about the study abroad program when deciding likes and dislikes of a program (see Figure 1). Returnees were the exact opposite. Returnees reacted to the

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<sup>8</sup> Complete list of all tables and figures in section IX

information provided on the Websites more so than the visual elements about the study abroad program when deciding likes and dislikes of a program (see Figure 2).

A Returnee reviewing the API Website, responding to the question “Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it” stated that “I liked how the website got right to the point and stated information that would be beneficial.” A Potential Student, reviewing the API Website and responding to the same question said, “I like the map and the scrolling pictures - it is very visually appealing.” Responses such as these were found throughout all of the Websites reviewed, creating a sharp divide on what Potential Students and Returnees looked for in study abroad Websites.

When asked to write an open-ended response to the question “What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience a student may receive through this study abroad program?” the responses varied between the Returnees and Potential Students populations with each Website reviewed. However, there were common themes as to what types of messages were perceived in all of the Websites. Overall, Potential Students felt that all of the Websites promoted a *worthwhile experience* above all else (see Figure 3). Worthwhile experience was not defined in the open-ended responses. Returnees felt that all of the Websites promoted a message to “experience a new culture” above all else (see Figure 4).

## **API**

Regarding the API Website, a Returnee felt that the message was that students who wish "to participate through this program will be able to meet their personal goals as

well as their academic requirements.” Another Returnee felt that the message of the API Website was that an API program would be “fun and [a] sight-seeing [opportunity].” A Potential Student felt that the message portrayed with API was “that I will extend my borders... in that I will become more aware of different cultures, different ideas, that I will experience new things and learn some valuable life lessons.”

### **Oregon Abroad**

Regarding the Oregon Abroad Website, a Returnee said that the program conveyed the message that “Education is a journey. Go somewhere and broaden your experiences.” Likewise, a Potential Student commented that the Website had a message that “Education isn't always about school work, it's about learning who you are as a person. Oregon Abroad can help you achieve education of both kinds.”

### **AHA**

A Returnee directly quoted the Website to express what he thought the message of the site is: “Quoted directly from the website, ‘AHA International offers students opportunities to develop intercultural competence through international experience and education.’” One Potential Student commented that the message of AHA is that an AHA program would be a “Fun learning experience. [However] Didn't seems [sic] to have a feeling of depth or emotion to the site.” Another Potential Student said that the message was “Similar to API, except this one is about global perspective - a broader focus - than API (personal growth).”

## **Santander**

A Returnee commented that “The website itself is bare but the brochures give an nice [sic], inviting description of the program location. This program kind of promises an inviting, warm, and culturally rich educational setting.” On the Santander Website there is the option to download a PDF of the brochure used to promote the program. Another Returnee commented that the message being promoted through the Website was that there is “Not any really, except that you will be by the ocean.” A Potential Student commented that “The website isn't that exciting, so it seems to me they don't find their program fun which could rub off on people.” Another Potential Student also echoed that statement, “It really doesn't look as though they're trying to send any message at all. Of course, this is an index page; the brochure and the other linked pages probably do a better job explaining why someone should be interested in this program. Still, it might be wise to work harder at drawing students in on the first page.”

When Returnees were asked why they chose the study abroad program they did the top three reasons found were 1) Earning academic credit, 2) To learn a language, and 3) Friend/family suggestion (see Figure 5). When considering study abroad programs the majority of Returnees reported that they looked at both Websites and brochures for information about the programs. If Returnees reported just one or the other, Websites were the most reviewed for information (see Figure 6). When asked what the Returnees remembered most about the study abroad literature, the majority of Returnees reported remembering the photos provided in the study abroad literature above all else (see Figure 6). This reinforces the earlier findings that Potential Students respond to visual elements more so than the information provided. At the time of selection of their respective study

abroad programs the Returnees had not yet gone abroad so they did not know what to expect from a program. They looked to the visual elements provided to see if they would enjoy the program.

Reviewing their respective study abroad program's literature, Returnees' top three expectations about their time abroad would be that they would 1) Gain foreign language skills, 2) Experience a new culture, and 3) Gain a global perspective (see Figure 7).

Overall, Returnees felt that their expectations were met (see Figure 8). For the Returnees that responded "no" and "yes and no" to the question "Did your specific program turn out to be what you expected?" a theme emerged in the open-ended responses. Returnees who were not satisfied with their study abroad program said it was because the program failed to integrate the U.S. students in the host culture, there was a lack of professionalism within the program, and in general the program was not what was expected. A Returnee said that his expectations were and were not met because "I wasn't able to develop my language skills as much as I wanted because the environment included more English speakers than Spanish." Another Returnee said, "Overall I was disappointed with the professionalism and lack of organization. And I was really disappointed in their effort to integrate us into the culture and language – it was very American." A Returnee also mentioned the lack of professionalism in the program when responding to the question if his expectations were met, "No, the program turned out to be less professional than I expected." Another Returnee commented that the experience was not expected, "most of the classes I took were social science based, which is not what I was expecting or really wanted."

## **VI. Discussion**

This study was initiated to better understand choices a university student makes when considering a study abroad program from information presented from study abroad Websites and if that choice reflected the educational institution's goal of global competency. While an educational institution can find study abroad returnees to share their personal stories about their overall transformation while studying abroad, we know little about the choices students make when it comes to choosing a study abroad program, particularly the media materials (e.g., brochures, pamphlets, catalogs, and Websites) behind those choices. According to Clarke et al. (2009), the lack of supporting evidence is common and that has limited educators' understanding of students and their study abroad program choices (178). This study's aim was to extend understanding of what effects study abroad literature, specifically promotional Websites, has on university students when selecting a study abroad program and if the students' choices reflect global competency.

The findings indicate that students' perspectives of study abroad literature, in this case Websites, vary significantly between those who have and have not studied abroad. The differences between the Potential Students and the Returnees could be because Returnees know what they individually like and dislike about a study abroad program after having experienced one. Returnees have knowledge of what global competency means since they have experienced the different aspects of it and have knowledge of what they want to get out of an abroad experience and how to achieve that so they look to the information provided rather than relying on the visual elements to give them the

information they are seeking. Potential Students do not know what to expect going into an experience abroad and may react to the visual elements more so than the information because they do not know what to look for in a program. Thus, Potential Students base what they think they will experience on what they saw (i.e., photos, interactive maps, layout) versus what they read.

Educational institutions cannot rely on the literature to ensure that students will gain global competency through the program they chose, for they could have chosen it based on false expectations garnered through the study abroad literature not based on what actual outcomes the program entails. Thus, “educators should work to promote a global perspective because there are not other options for...students in the future. They will need a global perspective in order to work, relate to others, achieve and grow” (Achterberg, 18).

### **Limitations and Future Research**

U.S students need to achieve global competence in order to compete in modern society as technology continues to unite people worldwide. Mindful of such necessity, this study investigated if study abroad literature has an impact on the choice an OSU student makes when considering different study abroad programs and if the reasons behind the choice turned out to be fruitful. This study presents a starting point for educational institutions’ understanding of global competency, study abroad programs, and study abroad literature among Oregon State University students and their choices to go abroad. Although those starting points provide a base of understanding, study abroad programs are not the only pedagogical tools for providing global competency among U.S.

students, specifically OSU students. Overseas internships, intercultural courses, and cross-cultural interactions at the home university can be further investigated as methods of establishing global competency.

The data for this study were collected through one educational institution, OSU, and study abroad program Websites whose study abroad programs are recognized by OSU. A recognized program is one in which a student will earn a form of OSU academic credit through the program. The choices of students at other educational institutions may be dissimilar because they may be exposed to different expectations and programs of study. A more complete understanding of choices that lead to global competency would contrast students who were (a) subjected to different cultures during their time abroad, (b) to various lengths of time abroad, and (c) to different study-abroad literature (such as brochures and pamphlets).

Koskinen and Tossavainen (2003) report that previous research shows that “length of the international experience is significantly associated with its long-term impact. Longer visits allow for longer immersion into the host culture, resulting in a lasting influence” (370). Kauffmann et al. (1992) also state that the extent to which a student is immersed in the host culture is a key element in determining the degree to which she is affected. Kauffmann et al. (1992) consider the maturity level of the student affects the level of immersion the student will experience as well. According to Kim (2005), a lack of openness and curiosity toward a host culture would weaken students' adaptive capacity and would serve as self-imposed psychological barriers against their own adaptation.

Prior education before going abroad may influence how a student reacts to his experience abroad and what he gains from it. “Included in such activities are the schooling and training in, and the media exposure to, the host language and culture, and the direct and indirect experiences in dealing with members of the host-society, as well as their prior cross-cultural adaptation experiences in general” (Kim, 389). Also, according to Kim (2005), students’ preparedness and willingness to participate in the host society is often influenced by the level of positive expectations toward the host society (389).

A study abroad program may or may not lead to global competency; it can be assumed that a student may develop in different ways during her time abroad or will expect to acquire different things (other than skills related to global competency) during a study abroad program. Although global competency is important in the success of U.S. students in the global economy, other areas of personal growth may be sought after and/or developed during a study abroad program regardless of the study abroad literature used by a prospective student.

It is worth noting that this study is not fully controlled because of factors that may or may not have happened during a student’s time abroad or intent to study abroad. Financial, social, and cultural factors that may contribute to a student’s choice of a study abroad program were not studied in this study. This research contributes to a base understanding of how study abroad Websites can contribute or do contribute to program choice and global competency for U.S. students.

## **VII. Conclusion**

As communication and transportation technologies continue to advance we will continue to live in a rapidly changing environment leading to a flat world with increased diversity both domestically and internationally. In the context of this emerging global society, global competency is becoming an essential part of human life. The skill of global competency is indispensable and our growing global society will come to demand that university students gain and enhance these skills in their repertoires. Educational institutions must include goals of global competency for students in order to work towards the achievement of this goal. The aspects of global competence should be diffused through a higher educational institution's framework (i.e. courses) to ensure that students will be better able to integrate and adapt to the global society in this contemporary age. If the U.S. educational institutional mindset evolves to encompass living, working and learning in a global community and to take a global perspective in defining students' education, the U.S. educational system can significantly impact the global community by providing global citizens.

As educational institutions hope that global competency is a product of studying abroad, in many instances an educational institution cannot have a say in how a study abroad program presents itself through its study abroad literature. For many U.S. students, their first glimpse of studying abroad is through study abroad literature. They might be led to that literature by their home educational institution or find it on their own. From the literature obtained through the student's home educational institution a student may gain false assumptions about what their study abroad experience will be.

Students should not go abroad with false expectations. An educational institution can take steps to educate the students prior to departure. According to Hill (1991) educators and leaders in the study abroad arena should challenge students to confront their expectations and be realistic about what they hope to accomplish during their time abroad or through their study abroad program. For educators, Emert and Pearson (2007) suggest to implement:

sessions on intercultural knowledge and processes to help them [students]...[with] learning, inclusion of intercultural communication and other cultural adjustment skill training as part of pre-departure orientations, development and delivery of curricular and other programming for use while abroad to help students better understand and reflect on the intercultural learning that is taking place, and provision of reentry programming for students to help them reflect on and ultimately apply the intercultural learning that occurred while abroad. (73)

There are a wide variety of study abroad programs available for U.S. students to choose from when they elect to study abroad. With each program a variety of study abroad materials are presented to catch the attention of U.S. students. Students respond to different stimuli when selecting a study abroad program such as the visual elements or the information provided so the message about the abroad experience varies among individual students.

An experience abroad will change a person. Whether a student's reason to study abroad was to improve or learn a language, experience a new culture, to travel, to have fun, to gain a competitive international edge in the work force, to gain international

experience, or to fulfill degree requirements it is important that the experience abroad was a satisfying one. It needs to be a satisfying one so once the student returns to the U.S. he can educate others on the importance of understanding cultural traditions that extend beyond the U.S., communicating across cultures, and of being prepared for learning, living, and working in the global community.

It is important to assure that U.S. students who choose to go abroad have the correct tools to be successful in the culture they will be immersed in so the change is a positive and satisfying one. The tool that student's need is knowledge – knowledge of the culture they are to be immersed in so they will not go in with false expectations and assumptions that everything will be like it is in the U.S. To instill intercultural knowledge in students educational institutions have to establish pre-departure orientations in a variety of formats, (e.g. in-person, online, and printed materials) to reach, and meet the needs of, students and to prepare them to work towards global competency.

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## IX. Tables and Figures

Table 1: Average responses for potential and returnee students for the API Website (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree).

Item	Cultural traditions	Cross cultural communication	Live in global community	Learn in global community	Work in global community
Potential	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.2	3.8
Returnees	3.7	4.0	3.9	3.9	3.6
<b>All</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.7</b>

Table 2: Average responses for potential and returnee students for the Oregon Abroad Website (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree).

Item	Cultural traditions	Cross cultural communication	Live in global community	Learn in global community	Work in global community
Potential	4.3	4.2	4.0	4.2	3.7
Returnees	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.4	4.3
<b>All</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.0</b>

Table 3: Average responses for potential and returnee students for the AHA Website (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree).

Item	Cultural traditions	Cross cultural communication	Live in global community	Learn in global community	Work in global community
Potential	4.4	4.3	4.3	4.0	4.1
Returnees	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
<b>All</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.1</b>

Table 4: Average responses for potential and returnee students for the Santander Website (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree).

Item	Cultural traditions	Cross cultural communication	Live in global community	Learn in global community	Work in global community
Potential	3.9	4.0	4.0	3.9	3.6
Returnees	3.7	3.8	3.5	3.5	3.3
<b>All</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.7</b>	<b>3.4</b>

Table 5: Average scores for all Websites in for each global competency item. (1=Strongly disagree, 5=Strongly agree).

Item	Cultural traditions	Cross cultural communication	Live in global community	Learn in global community	Work in global community
API	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.0	3.7
Ore. Abroad	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.3	4.0
AHA	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1	4.1
Santander	3.8	3.9	3.7	3.7	3.4
<b>All</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>3.8</b>

Figure 1: Potential Students

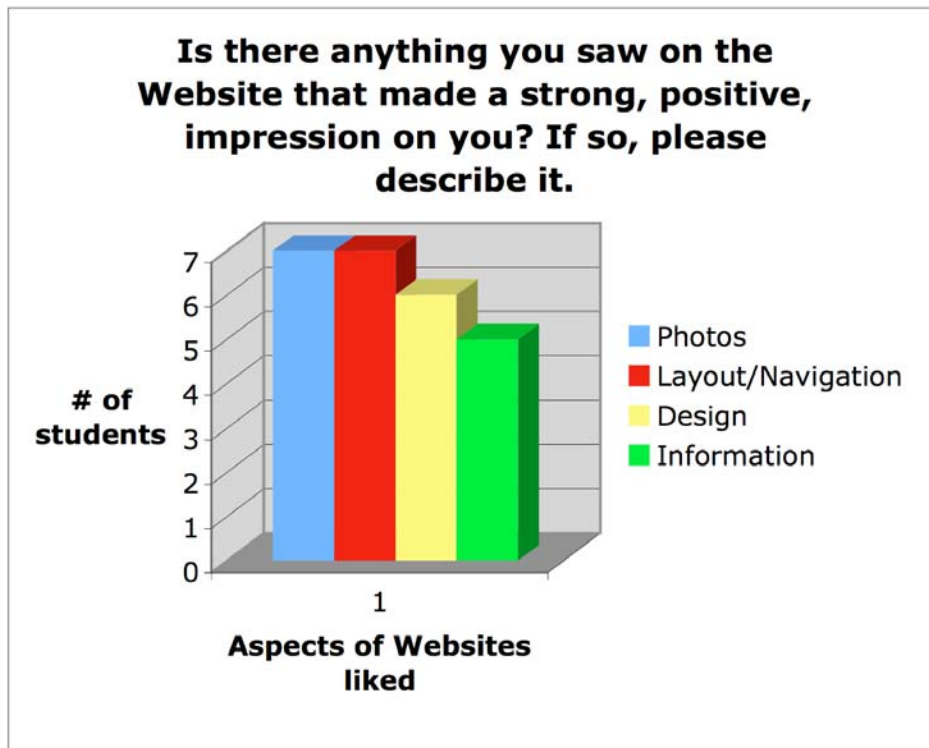


Figure 2: Returnees

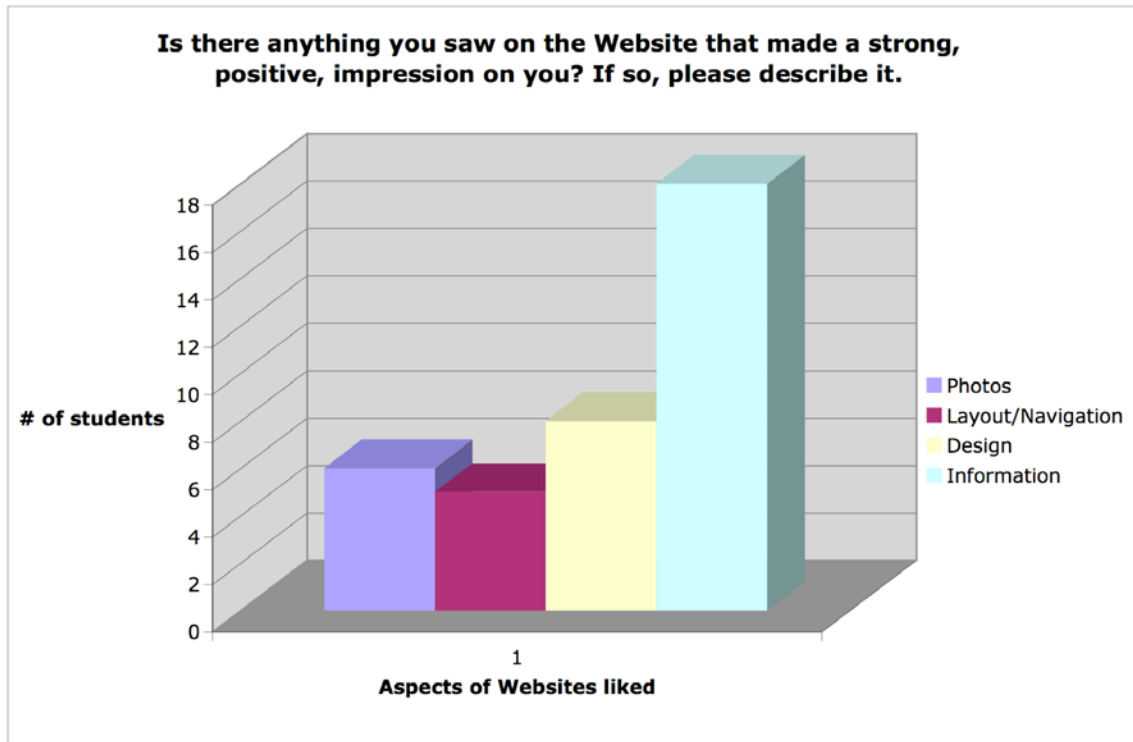


Figure 3: Potential Students

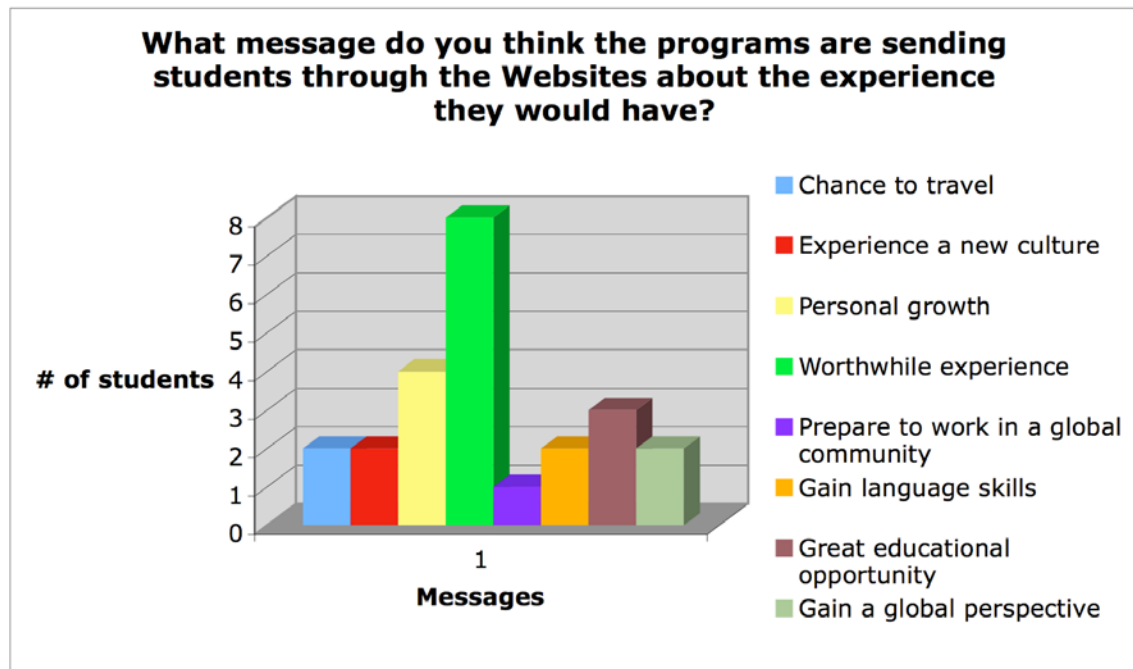


Figure 4: Returnees

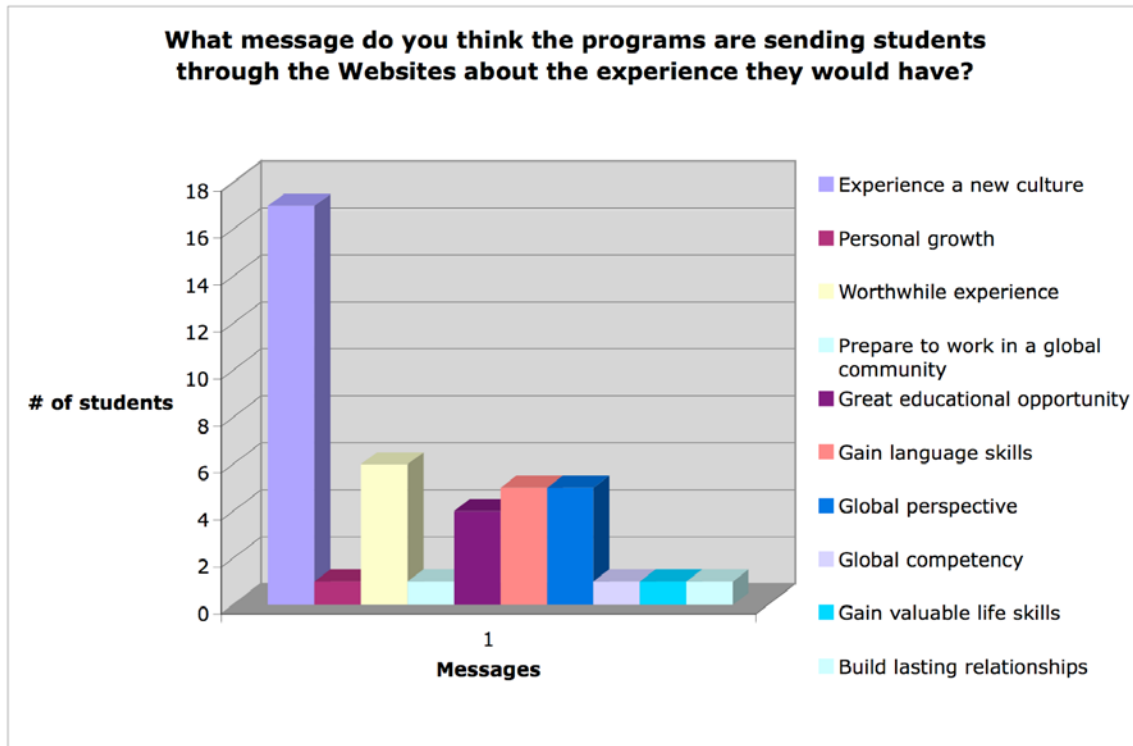


Figure 5: Returnees

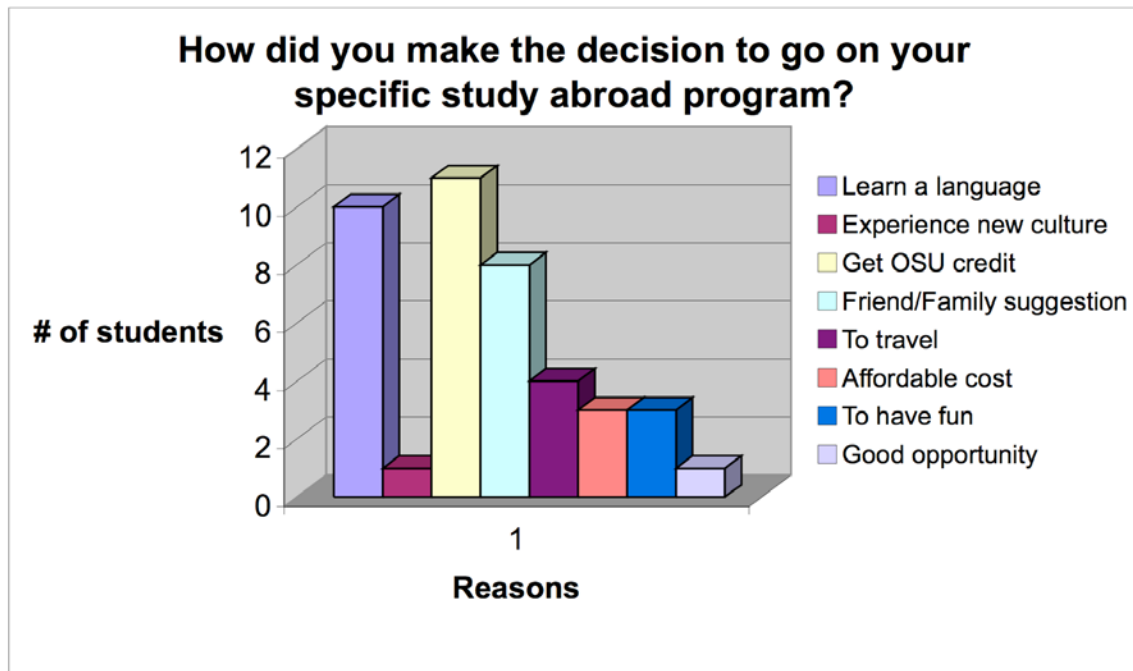


Figure 6: Returnees

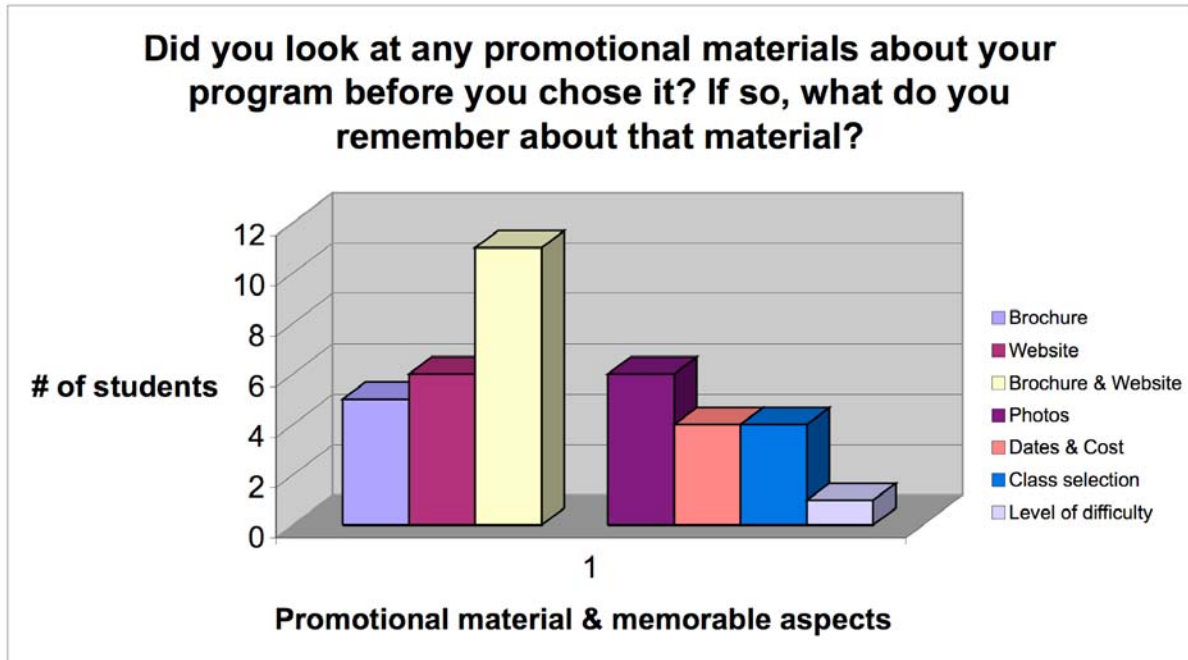


Figure 7: Returnees

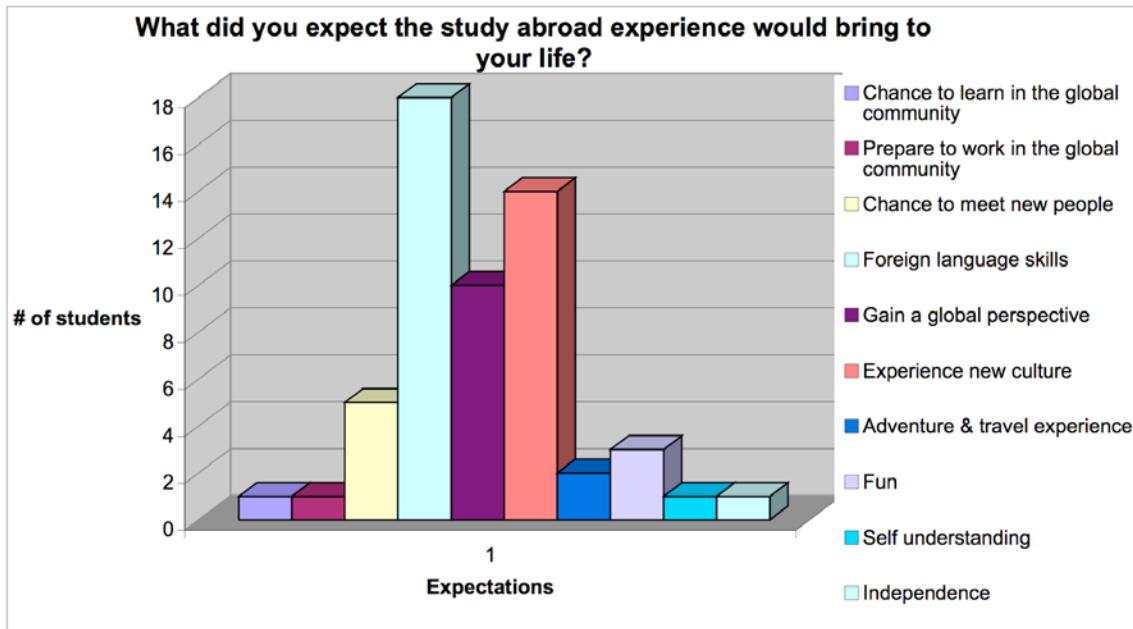
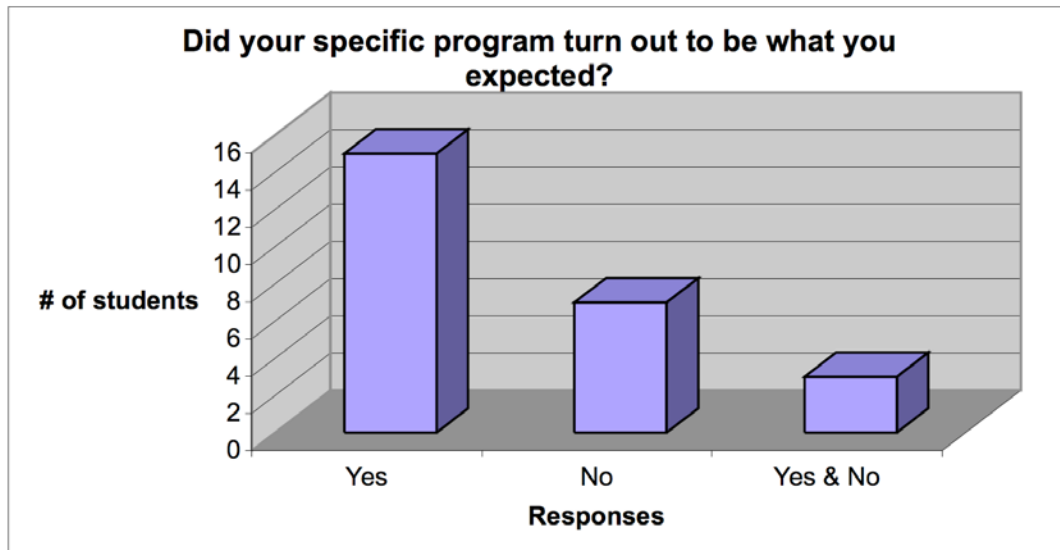


Figure 8: Returnees



## **VIII. Appendices**

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**Institutional Review Board • Office of Research Integrity**

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<http://oregonstate.edu/research/ori/humansubjects.htm>

**Date:** June 30, 2009

**NOTIFICATION OF EXEMPTION**

**To:** William E. Loges  
Sociology

**From:** Wayne A. Kradjan, Chair  
Institutional Review Board

**Re:** 4369 - The Quest for Global Competence - Effects of Study Abroad Literature on Oregon State University Students, a Study on How Programs are Chosen and the Reflection of the Educational Institution's Goals for Students (Student Researcher: Katrina R. Machorro)

The above referenced proposal was reviewed by the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has determined that your research project qualifies for an exemption under 45CFR46.101(b)

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, UNLESS:  
(i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; AND  
(ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Further review of this research is not required and you may proceed with the research described in the protocol.

**Please note that amendments to this protocol that impact the requirements for review must be reviewed prior to initiating the change.** Please contact the IRB Office if you have questions about planned amendments.

To ensure that changes to this research project have not altered the review category<sup>1</sup>, you will receive a brief annual inquiry regarding the status of this project.

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<sup>1</sup> Review categories include exempt, expedited, and full board.

## PROTOCOL

**Project Title: The Quest for Global Competence — Effects of study abroad literature on Oregon State University students, a study of how programs are chosen and the reflection of the educational institution's goals for students.**

**Principal Investigator: William E. Loges, Department of Sociology**

**Student Investigator: Katrina R. Machorro, International Degree Program**

### **1. BRIEF DESCRIPTION**

The objective of this study is to investigate effects that *study abroad literature* has on Oregon State University students when selecting a study abroad program and if the students' choices reflects OSU's Department of International Program's goals of *global competency* for students. Study abroad literature refers to the existing promotional materials available online such as Websites of study abroad programs. According to OSU's Department of International Programs global competency refers to the understanding of cultural traditions that extend beyond the U.S., communication across cultures, and preparedness for learning, living, and working in the global community. Global competency has not formally been measured before. The knowledge sought is if OSU students are affected by images/ideals that are represented in existing study abroad literature. The results/outcomes of this study are intended to be used in a student thesis required to complete Oregon State University's International Degree Program. The researchers are studying this because the researchers want to examine how media affect students' choices of a study abroad program and if the outcome meets the students' expectation and/or that of the educational institution's goal of global competency for students.

The relationship between the students who have not yet studied abroad and the purpose of the study is to examine how media – study abroad literature – affects the students' choices of a study abroad program. The relationship between the students who have studied abroad and the purpose of the study is to examine if the outcomes of their respective study abroad program met their expectations – influenced by the study abroad literature – and/or that of the educational institution's goal of global competency.

### **2. BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

The use of existing literature, i.e. study abroad literature and previous studies, in this study will assist the researchers in their examination of how media may affect students' choices of a study abroad program and if the outcome meets the students' expectation and/or that of the educational institutions' goal of global competency for students.

In a study of U.S student-teachers who completed their practicum abroad it was found that global competency comes about with a significant experiential component where the learner, in this case a student-teacher, is situated in another culture for an extended period of time.<sup>1</sup> Global competency is the understanding of cultural traditions that extend beyond the borders of the U.S, communication across cultures, and preparedness for learning, living, and working in the global community. Universities are adding a global dimension to their international education programs that fosters the type of learning that leads to increased effectiveness in the intercultural and international arenas and collaboration across cultures.

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<sup>1</sup> Cushner, Kenneth; Brennan, Sharon. 2007. Intercultural Student Teaching: A Bridge to Global Competence. Rowman & Littlefield Education, Lanham, Maryland, USA.

Through an international experience students will improve and enhance their cultural and global competence in ways that will not only affect the individual students but also others with whom they choose to share their experience.

In another study of students and the role of a student's goals regarding a study abroad program has on actual outcomes, it was found that a student's goals to study abroad significantly predicted the development of cross-cultural skills and global understanding.<sup>2</sup> Most importantly, it was shown that if students reported that their goals were to develop their cross-cultural skills, those students would report the highest development of cross-cultural skills and global understanding, followed by those who reported goals to become more knowledgeable in their subject area. Minimal or no gains in cross-cultural skills or global understanding were found for students whose goals were generally to socialize. By being able to identify why a student is going abroad the educational institution will be able to assess if students are meeting their goal of global competency.

### **3. METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

OSU students who have expressed an interest in studying abroad, and students who have completed a program of study abroad will be invited to complete a questionnaire online. The survey site SurveyMonkey will host the questionnaire.

Potential participants will be approached by the researchers and contacted initially by e-mail through OSU's International Degree and Education Abroad listservs. Participants are OSU students who have demonstrated high interest in studying abroad, and/or are about to study abroad, or who will have studied abroad in the past five years. It is preferable to have participants with an interest in studying abroad for the *quality* of the online surveys. Quality refers to the degree of insight a participant may put into their responses during the online survey.

There will be no individual identifiers (e.g. name, student identification number) asked for before, during, or after the online survey. A participant will only be identified as an OSU student who took either the online survey for a) potential students to/have interest in study abroad or b) students who will have studied abroad in the past five years.

Participants who decide to take an online survey will go through this procedure:

1. Take one of two online surveys depending on their status (i.e. have studied abroad in the past five years or have an interest in studying abroad).
2. Be asked a variety of questions, depending on which online survey they take, about study abroad materials or about their study abroad experience: why do students choose to go overseas to study, what do you see when you look at the study abroad materials, and what study abroad program did you go on and why, how did you make the decision to go on your specific study abroad program, etc.
3. The online survey will be anonymous.
4. Each survey will take approximately 30 minutes to complete (including time to review the online literature about study abroad programs).

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<sup>2</sup> Kitsantas, Anastasia. "Studying Abroad: The role of college students' goals on the development of cross-cultural skills and global understanding." *College Student Journal* 38.3 (Sep. 2004): 441-452. Academic Search Premier. EBSCO. The Valley Library, Corvallis, OR. 5 June 2009.

To determine if a study abroad program meets the educational institution's goal of global competence, the responses of the participants will be analyzed under the context of OSU's Department of International Programs definition of global competency. The definition refers to the understanding of cultural traditions that extend beyond the U.S., communication across cultures, and preparedness for learning, living, and working in the global community

#### **4. RISKS/BENEFITS ASSESMENT**

- **Risks** – There is minimal risk to participants involved in this research. Some questions, particularly regarding their personal experiences, may make participants uncomfortable. Participants will have the option to decline/skip questions that the researchers ask through the online survey, and the researchers will not disclose any information the participant requests to be held confidential.
- **Benefits** – While there may not be direct benefits to the participants, the researchers hope is that the International Degree Program thesis project will benefit other students who are interested in studying abroad by being able to identify what study abroad programs, through the study abroad literature, will assist them in reaching the educational institutions goal of global competency.
- **Conclusion** – The benefits of the research are the completion of the International Degree Program thesis project and the contribution of general knowledge of study abroad programs for future students, which will outweigh the risks in this study. The mechanism for contributing to general knowledge will be by submitting the manuscript for publication, which will be available to future students in the International Programs office.

#### **5. PARTICIPANT POPULATION**

Approximately 500 OSU students will be reached through the OSU International Degree and Education Abroad listservs. It is possible that up to 500 surveys could be returned. The participant population will consist of OSU students, adults over the age of 18 years old. Both student populations, those who are interested in studying abroad or who have studied abroad in the past five years, will be reached through the listservs and asked to answer one of two online surveys. One online survey will be for students interested in studying abroad but have not yet done so, and the other online survey will be for study abroad returnees (students who will have studied abroad in the past five years). Gender and ethnicity are not restricted. The researchers will recruit participants thorough OSU's International Degree and Education Abroad listservs.

Identification of participants will begin with OSU's International Degree and Education Abroad listservs. Initial contact with participants will include requests for the forwarding of the recruitment information on to other OSU students that the initial contacts think might be interested, resulting in a potential snowball sample.

The ideal participant will be interested in studying abroad or will have studied abroad in the past five years and be affiliated with the International Degree Program, which indicates commitment to international experience. However, the study participants need not be affiliated with the International Degree Program to participate in the study. Study participants do need to be OSU students to participate in the study.

Participants in this study will not be identified in the researchers' International Degree Program thesis or in any other report produced from the online surveys; any reference that may lead to the identification of the participant by readers will be excluded.

## **6. SUBJECT IDENTIFICATION AND RECRUITMENT**

The researchers will identify potential participants thorough OSU's International Degree and Education Abroad listservs. Potential participants will be recruited by e-mail through OSU's International Degree and Education Abroad listservs.

## **7. COMPENSATION**

There will be no compensation for participants.

## **8. INFORMED CONSENT PROCESS**

The research involved in this study has no more than minimal risk to the subjects. A waiver of informed consent will not adversely affect the rights and welfare of the subjects involved. Due to the nature of the research, online surveys, the research could not practicably be carried out without the waiver. When an e-mail is sent out through the OSU International Degree and Education Abroad listservs, with the online survey links attached, participants will be told of the goal of the study and that they will not be paid for their participation. Aggregate results of the surveys will not be available to the participants however the final written thesis will be submitted for publication, which will be available to all students in the International Programs office.

## **9. ANONYMITY OR CONFIDENTIALITY**

Through the online surveys the participant remains anonymous. The researchers will not include any information that may identify the participant in the thesis project other than as an OSU student. In the event a participant contacts the principal investigator or student researcher no individual identifiers will be recorded.

All notes and other materials related to a participant will remain in the custody of the researchers until three years after the study has been closed. These materials will be stored securely, in password-protected computer files on the principal investigator's on-campus desktop computer, in the locked office located at 403B Strand Agricultural Hall.

The researchers will keep all research material collected in connection with the online surveys until September 2012. All computer files will be deleted or erased and paper notes destroyed at that time.

## RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

### Scripts:

- International Degree and Education Abroad listservs announcement:

Subject Line: Studying abroad: Survey invitation from OSU

Hello,

My name is Katrina Machorro and I am conducting research for a student thesis for the International Degree Program. The study's objective is to investigate effects that study abroad literature has on Oregon State University students when selecting a study abroad program and if the students' choices reflect the educational institution's goals of global competency. I am studying this because I want to examine how media affect students' choices of a study abroad program and if the outcome meets the students' expectation and/or the educational institution's goal of global competency for students.

I am looking for students who have studied abroad in the past five years or who are interested in studying abroad. Participation in this study will consist of an online survey; the survey will take 30 minutes to complete for one time only. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and if you choose to take the survey you are free to skip questions you do not wish to answer and end your participation at any time.

This study is not designed to benefit you directly, but I hope that in the future the results will contribute to the general knowledge of study abroad programs for future students. After publication the thesis will be available to students in the International Programs office.

The survey is anonymous and no individually identifiable information will be collected. Choosing or not choosing to take the survey will not impact your subscription to the listserv.

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact: William E. Loges, 541-737-9855, [bill.loges@oregonstate.edu](mailto:bill.loges@oregonstate.edu) and/or Katrina R. Machorro, 503-360-5470, [machorrk@onid.orst.edu](mailto:machorrk@onid.orst.edu). If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Protections Administrator, at 541-737-4933 or by email at [IRB@oregonstate.edu](mailto:IRB@oregonstate.edu).

If you know someone who would like to take part in this study please forward this information on to him or her.

Thank you for your assistance!

Katrina Machorro

### Surveys:

- PDF documents of SurveyMonkey surveys attached.

### **C. List of Web addresses for Websites used in surveys**

- <http://ie3global.ous.edu/>
- <http://www.academicintl.com/>
- <http://oregonabroad.ous.edu/>
- <http://www.ahastudyabroad.org/>
- <http://oregonstate.edu/cla/santander/index.html>

# Potential Students to Study Abroad

## 1. Default Section

The study's objective is to investigate effects that study abroad literature has on Oregon State University students when selecting a study abroad program and if the students' choices reflect the educational institution's goals of global competency for students. The researchers want to examine how media affect students' choices of a study abroad program and if the outcome meets the students' expectation and/or the educational institution's goal of global competency for students.

This survey will take 30 minutes to complete for one time only. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and if you choose to take the survey you are free to skip questions you do not wish to answer and end your participation at any time. You will not be compensated for your participation.

This study is not designed to benefit you directly, but the researchers hope that in the future the results will contribute to the general knowledge of study abroad programs for future students. After publication the thesis will be available to students in the International Programs office.

The survey is anonymous and no individually identifiable information will be collected. Choosing or not choosing to take the survey will not impact your subscription to the listserv.

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact: William E. Loges, 001-541-737-9855, [bill.loges@oregonstate.edu](mailto:bill.loges@oregonstate.edu) and/or Katrina R. Machorro, 001-503-360-5470, [machorrk@onid.orst.edu](mailto:machorrk@onid.orst.edu). If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Protections Administrator, at 001-541-737-4933 or by email at [IRB@oregonstate.edu](mailto:IRB@oregonstate.edu).

- \* 1. Do you agree to take part in this survey? Deciding to not take the survey will not impact you in any way.

☐ Yes.

☐ No. (Exit the survey.)

- \* 2. Please indicate whether you participated in a study abroad program or an internship abroad.

☐ Study abroad program

☐ Internship

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

2.

3. Why are you interested in studying abroad?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

3.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://ie3global.ous.edu/>

4. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

5. What message do you think IE3 is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

6. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

7. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience you may receive through this study abroad program?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

4.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://www.academicintl.com/>

8. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

9. What message do you think Academic Programs International (API) is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

10. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

11. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience you may receive through this study abroad program?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

5.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://oregonabroad.ous.edu/>

12. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

13. What message do you think Oregon Abroad is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

14. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

15. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience you may receive through this study abroad program?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

6.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://www.ahastudyabroad.org/>

16. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

17. What message do you think AHA is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

18. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	jn	jn	jn	jn	jn

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

19. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience you may receive through this study abroad program?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

7.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://oregonstate.edu/cla/santander/index.html>

20. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

21. What message do you think the Santander Program is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

Potential Students to Study Abroad

22. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

23. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience you may receive through this study abroad program?

## Potential Students to Study Abroad

8.

Thank you for participating in the survey!

# Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

## 1. Default Section

The study's objective is to investigate effects that study abroad literature has on Oregon State University students when selecting a study abroad program and if the students' choices reflect the educational institution's goals of global competency for students. The researchers want to examine how media affect students' choices of a study abroad program and if the outcome meets the students' expectation and/or the educational institution's goal of global competency for students.

This survey will take 30 minutes to complete for one time only. Participation in this survey is completely voluntary and if you choose to take the survey you are free to skip questions you do not wish to answer and end your participation at any time. You will not be compensated for your participation.

This study is not designed to benefit you directly, but the researchers hope that in the future the results will contribute to the general knowledge of study abroad programs for future students. After publication the thesis will be available to students in the International Programs office.

The survey is anonymous and no individually identifiable information will be collected. Choosing or not choosing to take the survey will not impact your subscription to the listserv.

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact: William E. Loges, 001-541-737-9855, [bill.loges@oregonstate.edu](mailto:bill.loges@oregonstate.edu) and/or Katrina R. Machorro, 001-503-360-5470, [machorrk@onid.orst.edu](mailto:machorrk@onid.orst.edu). If you have questions about your rights as a participant, please contact the Oregon State University Institutional Review Board (IRB) Human Protections Administrator, at 001-541-737-4933 or by email at [IRB@oregonstate.edu](mailto:IRB@oregonstate.edu).

1. Do you agree to take part in this survey? Deciding to not take the survey will not impact you in any way.

☐ Yes

☐ No. (Exit the survey.)

2. Please indicated whether you participated in a study abroad program or internship abroad.

☐ Study abroad program

☐ Internship

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

2.

3. Where did you study abroad?

4. How did you make the decision to go on your specific study abroad program?

5. Did you look at any promotional material about your program, such as a Website or brochure, before you chose it? If so, what do you remember about that material?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

3.

6. What did you expect the study abroad experience would bring to your life?

7. Did your specific program turn out to be what you expected?

8. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree that studying abroad had the following influences on you:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree	
Increased my understanding of cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prepared me to communicate across cultures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prepared me for learning in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prepared me for living in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prepared me for working in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any other thoughts about this?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

4.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://ie3global.ous.edu/>

9. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

10. What message do you think IE3 is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

11. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

12. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience a student may receive through this study abroad program?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

5.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://www.academicintl.com/>

13. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

14. What message do you think Academic Programs International (API) is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

15. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

16. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience a student may receive through this study abroad program?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

6.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://oregonabroad.ous.edu/>

17. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

18. What message do you think Oregon Abroad is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

19. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

20. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience a student may receive through this study abroad program?

# Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

7.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://www.ahastudyabroad.org/>

21. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

22. What message do you think AHA is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

23. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ	jñ

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

24. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience a student may receive through this study abroad program?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

8.

Please open a new Internet browser tab or window to view the following Web site (copy and paste the Web address).

Please take your time to analyze the content provided on the Web site. The knowledge you gain from analyzing the Web site will be used to answer the rest of the survey questions.

<http://oregonstate.edu/cla/santander/index.html>

25. Is there anything you saw on the Website that made a strong impression (positive or negative) on you? If so, please describe it.

26. What message do you think the Santander Program is sending students through this Website about the experience they would have in this program?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

27. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about the program described in the Website you just visited:

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
Students who attend that program would understand cultural traditions beyond the U.S.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would improve their ability to communicate across cultures.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to live in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to learn in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Students who attend that program would be better prepared to work in the global community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any other thoughts about this program's Website?

28. What message do you think is being portrayed about the experience a student may receive through this study abroad program?

## Study abroad returnees from the past 5 years

9.

Thank you for participating in this survey!