

# Final Report

## **Liberal Education and Study Abroad:** Assessing Learning Outcomes to Improve Program Quality

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A project supported by the  
**Teagle Foundation**

Submitted by

**Great Lakes Colleges Association**  
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# INTRODUCTION

## Overview of the Problem and Project Goals

Study abroad, as a component of the academic curriculum within higher education, has increased nearly threefold in the past 20 years (Dwyer, 2004).<sup>1</sup> As a result, the types and number of program offerings have also become much more numerous and varied. Programs differ not only in location, but also in length, curricular focus, language of instruction, extra-curricular involvement, academic setting, student accommodations, and in many other ways. In addition, there are many types of providers of study abroad: foreign institutions offering direct enrollment to U.S. students, one-to-one exchange programs between U.S. and foreign institutions, programs run by individual institutions solely for their own students, large institutionally managed programs open to students from any institution, and hundreds of professionally managed programs run by for-profit study-abroad organizations. The ways in which programs differ have become so numerous and varied that it has become difficult for administrators and students to know which programs best suit particular academic or personal goals.

Answering the “which program is best” question requires an understanding of the reasons why students enroll in study-abroad programs. The reasons are legion: from a public policy perspective the rationale can be to better prepare people to compete in a global economy; from an educational perspective it can be to develop particular knowledge (e.g., language competence) or expertise (e.g., regional political dynamics); and from a student perspective it can be to prepare for life after college, develop new knowledge and expertise, and/or have an interesting adventure and break from regular college classes. Regardless of the rationale, study abroad has become a part of undergraduate education that students expect to experience. Additionally, more and more institutions are adopting study-abroad components as a requirement for graduation.

Because students, faculty, and administrators all value study abroad as a vital component of education, and resources expended continue to grow, institutions need effective ways to assess the educational outcomes associated with the programs their students choose. Although institutions routinely administer post-study-abroad evaluation instruments, the methods used are typically student reports of satisfaction with the experience. Little attention is paid to program design and specific learning outcomes; in particular, the relationship between program design and learning outcome is virtually unexplored.

Finally, what has been largely absent is an in-depth consideration of the relationship between liberal arts objectives – the framework for virtually all American higher

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<sup>1</sup> Dwyer, M. M. (2004), Charting the impact of study abroad. *International Educator*, 13 (1), 14-19.

education and the complete educational context for liberal arts colleges – and the learning that results from specific study-abroad programs.

The primary purpose of this project has been to develop a set of instruments that will allow an empirical analysis of the impact of different program characteristics and types on liberal arts learning goals using assessment methods which include, but are not limited to, student satisfaction and self report. More specifically, it was our goal to develop a process to evaluate the impact of study-abroad program design – the efficacy of specific program characteristics within various programs – by using a learning outcomes assessment instrument in combination with a detailed inventory of program characteristics, and then matching these program characteristics to the liberal education goals of our consortial colleges.

### **Defining Liberal Arts Goals for Study Abroad**

The initial task was to identify specific liberal education goals within our colleges as a basis for measuring student learning in study-abroad programs. Identifying such goals proved to be a challenging task that consumed much of the project's first year. Many of the goals identified by our institutions were vague, unclear, or in some cases non-existent. Ultimately, collecting and categorizing these goals helped us distill an initial set of defining goals to inform an instrument for measuring student learning.

The second stage of this task was to achieve some degree of agreement among the faculty and study-abroad advisers as to the accuracy and uniformity of the goals. The lead investigators invited three institutions – one from each consortium – to participate throughout the project. The three institutions collected teams of faculty and international study officers to meet with the project team and revise and refine the learning goals initially identified. The discussion and exchanges in this process were intense and informative, and they yielded considerable refinement and sharpening of the liberal education goals. The reformulated goals were then distributed among these three groups for review and verification. Minor additional feedback emerged regarding the goals in this process. These meetings and feedback iterations helped to refine the initial goals, at the same time they created a strong collaborative environment among the participating faculty and institutions that they represented.

At the conclusion of this step, the project team performed a web-based search of all academic goals related to study abroad. This search provided an abundance of literature on the topic of liberal educational goals and the objectives of study abroad. This collective information was then categorized based on the set of refined goals that had been developed in conjunction with the faculty teams. The comparison of educational goals from our project to those of many other colleges and universities helped our team view its own goals in broader perspective, resulting in a further strengthening of our goal statements.<sup>2</sup> The final set of goals was intended to represent

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<sup>2</sup> David Burrows, Provost, Lawrence University spearheaded this effort.

both the micro-view of our own liberal arts institutions as well as the macro-view of the larger liberal arts community:

Students should attain...

- I. The ability to reason by developing an understanding that:
  - A. Culture influences how one thinks and reasons.
  - B. There are differences between cultures that influence norms.
  - C. Without being judgmental, cultural similarities and differences can be analytically compared and contrasted.
  - D. Certain universals of human existence transcend cultural differences.
- II. Self-reflective insights which:
  - A. Allow one to understand that one's culture has shaped his/her values or beliefs.
  - B. Allow one to continue the development of his/her personal identity (values, beliefs, goals, etc.) based on a multicultural perspective.
- III. A capacity for effective action, which includes:
  - A. The skills to operate effectively in multicultural and intercultural situations.
  - B. The motivation to address issues of contemporary global concern.

### **Review of Existing Instruments**

At the same time the review and development of liberal arts goals was taking place, other project team members undertook a review of existing study-abroad assessment instruments within the 42 consortial colleges. Instruments were collected from the study-abroad offices of the consortial colleges and examined for their focus (i.e. student satisfaction, program design, or learning outcomes) and classified into one of these three areas of focus. It was found that a vast majority of these instruments focused on student satisfaction, while very few focused on program design or student learning outcomes.

In the second year of the project, a more focused search of instruments was performed using web-based methods across the entire spectrum of institutional types; this search in turn led to a more complete review of study-abroad assessment instruments. Even at this broader level, the number of evaluative instruments that focused on student learning and/or program design was small. Given the comparatively recent emergence of study abroad as a critical component of a liberal education, and the acknowledged difficulty in assessing outcomes that are largely comprised of experiential learning, the scarcity of instruments focusing on learning or program design was not unexpected. The challenge for the project was thus to develop an assessment tool in an emerging area of evaluation.

The instruments and measures that were identified were again examined for their focus and categorized. As before, we found that many of the instruments focused on student satisfaction. Of those that did focus on learning outcomes and program design, many were of a hybrid design that included both student satisfaction and learning outcomes. One key challenge that emerged for the project team was that many of the instruments that focused on student learning used assessment techniques that relied on student self-report and opinion as opposed to behavior or judgment measures. The leaders of this project were committed to developing approaches to assessing student learning that included less subjective measures.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Development of the Instrument**

The task of developing a workable instrument to measure student learning based on the identified liberal arts learning goals and the review of other scales began in the latter part of the first year of the project and took about 11 months to complete. The following sections describe the process used to develop the components of the total instrument:

1. Demographic and prior experience information;
2. Self-report on the characteristics of and satisfaction with a study-abroad program;
3. A typology of key characteristics of study-abroad programs;
4. Scenarios requiring students to make intercultural judgments based on the study-abroad liberal arts learning goals as well as alternative choice statements to gauge the level of intercultural knowledge, comfort, or experience a student may have prior to the study-abroad experience.

The final instrument is included in Appendix B.

### **Demographic and Prior Experience Information**

Based on a review of assessment instruments used by colleges for study-abroad programs, questions were developed for basic demographics (gender, class, etc.), background (language study and proficiency), and interest in study abroad (reasons, prior involvement, and familiarity).

### **Self-Report on the Characteristics of and Satisfaction with a Study-abroad Program**

Also based on a review of assessment instruments used by colleges for study abroad, questions were developed to assess language development, aspects of the study-abroad program, and a self-assessment of the study-abroad experience and its impact.

## Typology of Key Characteristics of Study-abroad Programs

Difficulties arise in attempting to assess outcomes when there is “no precise language to differentiate or categorize the types of study-abroad experiences” that students are having (Engle & Engle, 2003, p. 1).<sup>3</sup> Though much literature exists on the history and increased popularity of study abroad, there is a scarcity of literature that addresses categorization or standardized language with regard to program types that might assist in the effort to evaluate data about study-abroad outcomes. Thus an apples and oranges problem exists in attempts to evaluate the outcomes of the various study-abroad programs in which our students take part.

In order to provide a more consistent framework for comparing study-abroad programs, a review of the literature analyzed discussions, descriptions, and characteristics of current and past study-abroad programs. The review examined proposed typologies and the associated program characteristics for the various program types. The literature review revealed a number of program characteristics that can be associated with most study-abroad programs.<sup>4</sup> While some of these characteristics might be better assessed by institutional administrators (e.g., aspects of the program management), for this instrument only the student-evaluated characteristics have been included.

## Liberal Arts Learning Outcomes

After having reviewed a number of instruments used to assess student learning for study abroad, we decided that our instrument would have two different types of items: choice alternatives and scenarios. The “choice alternatives” items are similar to those in most study-abroad research – they consist of student self-report about the program and its impact on their thinking and behavior. The “scenarios” items require students to actually make intercultural or international judgments by reading a brief story about a situation and then choosing the best response from among a number of alternatives. These scenarios are described in more detail in the Survey Description section, but they comprise the two main evaluative sections of the instrument.

These scales, consisting of 24 scenarios and 24 choice alternatives (three for each of the components of our three liberal arts goals) were developed through an expert feedback process as follows:

1. Initial scenarios and choice alternatives were developed<sup>5</sup> and revised;
2. These were reviewed and critiqued by an experienced study-abroad evaluator and researcher<sup>6</sup> and another set of revisions made, including the elimination of items and development of new ones in their place.

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<sup>3</sup> Engle, L. and Engle, J. (2003), Study Abroad Levels: Toward a Classification of Program Types. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, Volume IX, 1-20.

<sup>4</sup> This effort was spearheaded by Derek Vaughan of GLCA.

<sup>5</sup> Lead work on these items was done by Derek Vaughan with Richard Detweiler of GLCA.

<sup>6</sup> David Bachner of the Intercultural Management Institute, School of International Service, American University

3. A set of experienced interculturalists<sup>7</sup> from our consortial colleges reviewed the scales (scenarios and the alternatives) and provided written feedback, including their expert opinion on the accuracy of the scenarios and whether or not they reflected intercultural learning in the areas described by our liberal arts goals statements. After giving written feedback we convened telephone conference calls to discuss their comments and recommendations. Items were then revised.
4. The instrument in its then-revised form was administered on a pilot basis to students at one liberal arts college and feedback for revisions solicited.
5. A second round of review by interculturalists of the newly revised instrument was undertaken, with the final version the result of this multiple-stage review process.

By the middle of the project's second year we were ready to proceed with a larger test of the instrument, which took place in the fall semester of 2007.

In all, the final scales used in the instrument went through three expert reviews with feedback and revisions as well as two pilot administrations of the instruments.

### **Instrument Description**

The final instrument<sup>8</sup> (see Appendix B) is comprised of a pre-test/post-test survey combined with an inventory of program characteristics. The pre-test survey is to be taken prior to a student's study-abroad experience. It consists of three sections. The first section collects demographic and prior experience information. The second section consists of 24 scenarios with six alternative responses, and the final section is a set of 24 alternative choice statements to gauge the level of intercultural knowledge, comfort, or experience a student may have prior to the study-abroad experience.

The post-test, also in three sections, consists of a first section of self evaluative questions regarding language skills as well as a number of questions related to the student's study-abroad experience. The second and third sections are the same as those sections in the pre-test; thus a measure of gain can accurately be determined when comparing the pre- and post-surveys.

The inventory of program characteristics, to be completed along with the post-test, is a detailed list of study-abroad program characteristics from which students can select those characteristics that best describe the program in which (s)he participated. The inventory includes sections on program location, provider, length of program, time of year, orientation, language requirements, language of instruction, courses and curriculum, evaluation of student work, educational relationships, out-of-class interactions, housing arrangements, and post-experience debriefing. There may be other sections that can be added in the future, but this list addresses those currently viewed as most relevant in program design.

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<sup>7</sup> See Appendix A for a list of those involved.

<sup>8</sup> For more information on the instrument, contact Richard Detweiler ([detweiler@glca.org](mailto:detweiler@glca.org)) or Derek Vaughan ([vaughan@glca.org](mailto:vaughan@glca.org)) at GLCA – 734-661-2350.

## RESULTS OF PILOT TEST ADMINISTRATION

Our project's general purpose was to develop an instrument to assess the impact of study-abroad program characteristics on liberal arts learning goals. The purpose of this pilot administration was to learn, prior to a large-scale administration, whether the instrument developed is a reasonable and useful assessment tool. As such, the instrument was pilot tested in a cross-sectional form,<sup>9</sup> in which some respondents had not yet had a study-abroad experience and some had.

### Pilot Test Participants

A total of 270 students from four different institutions completed the instrument: 128 pre-study away and 142 who had recently completed a study away experience.

### Task Reasonableness

The most fundamental question is whether we designed a set of instruments that can be reasonably completed by participants. Administration was, according to the administrators, straightforward and did not require particular verbal guidance or instructions. The tasks requested, including the written instructions and the question alternatives provided, were reasonable, with less than one-third of one percent of the total number of responses not completed according to the instructions (e.g., an item with a non-response or multiple answers given where one was requested).

However, as a result of this pilot testing the instructions on a number of the items have now been revised to decrease the number of multiple responses to some items, particularly in the descriptions of program characteristics.

### Descriptive Results<sup>10</sup>

As noted above, the purpose of this project is to develop a useful instrument, not to come to conclusions about the effects of various types of program designs. It is nonetheless useful to carry out basic analyses to assure that complete longitudinal data, when it is collected, will provide a clear indication of the impact of the variable it seeks to measure, and the contribution of each measure to the goals of a liberal education.

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<sup>9</sup> The instruments were designed to be used longitudinally – that is, the same students would take the instruments both before and after a study-abroad experience. Such a longitudinal study, including an appropriate comparison group of students who do not study abroad, is required to reach confident conclusions about the impact of study abroad on liberal arts learning goals. For purposes of instrument development and testing – which is the focus of this project -- a cross sectional design is more time and cost efficient.

<sup>10</sup> For more information on these analyses contact Richard Detweiler or Derek Vaughan at the GLCA.

## *Pre-Study Abroad*

The reasons respondents cite most frequently for choosing to study abroad are:

Desire to learn another language or culture	90%
Professors recommend it	62%
Friends recommend it	62%
Advancing future job or profession	55%

The reasons respondents chose a particular study-abroad program were:

Want an experience in a different culture	82%
Recommendation by others	62%
Want to travel to this country	60%
Academic reasons	56%
Reputation of program	52%

The majority of respondents (greater than 50%) report that they have interacted with, studied, or otherwise been involved with people or activities related to other cultures, with the highest percentages for:

Viewed foreign films	98%
Socialized with students of different culture	96%
Eaten at ethnic restaurants	96%
Listened to music from other countries	91%
Listened to/watched world news	89%

The lowest percentages were for:

Had discussions about inter-group relations with a person of another culture	34%
Had guarded or cautious interactions with a person of a different culture	33%
Tense or hostile interactions with a person from a different culture	21%

The majority of respondents (greater than 50%) also report that they are knowledgeable about the following aspects of the country where they would be studying:

General customs	69%
Cultural practices	67%
History of the culture	64%
Religious practices	57%

They were least knowledgeable about:

Political system and events	45%
Educational system and practices	43%
Health practices and concerns	30%
Economic system	28%

## *Post-Study Abroad*

Forty one percent of the participants reported participating in a program run by their own school, 11% in another college's program, 11% by direct enrollment in a university abroad, and 31% in a program run by a study-abroad organization. The overwhelming majority (79%) participated in a semester long program; most (66%) had no language requirement though 43% of the programs used some or a lot of foreign language in instruction.

Course instruction was characterized as including:

Disciplinary content	78%
Country-specific information	63%
Intercultural information	57%
Professional instruction	14%

The average percentage of time spent on each of the following activities was:

Personal/recreational/sightseeing	35%
Classroom	31%
Course related visits/travel	15%
Fieldwork/internships	8%

Sixty one percent of the classes were predominately American, and the majority (52%) of classes were held at a local university. Fifty percent reported a high level of interaction with native citizens outside of class time.

In their study-abroad experience, participants were most likely to have (on a seven point scale, where 1 means "not at all" and 7 means "a great extent"):

Tried new foods	6.1
Attended cultural events	5.8
Learned a new skill	5.3
Traveled alone	5.3

They were least likely to have:

Participated in a faculty-directed practicum	3.8
Attended religious/spiritual ceremonies	3.4
Preferred to stay with Americans	3.4
Participated in service learning	3.1

The following parts of the study-abroad experience were judged most important (on a seven point scale, with 1 meaning "not very worthwhile" and 7 meaning "very worthwhile"):

Immersion	6.8
Excursions to various parts of the country	6.8
Independent travel	6.8

The least important were reported to be:	
Living in a dorm	5.3
Coursework	5.1

Finally, study abroad was seen to contribute most (on a seven point scale, with 1 meaning “not at all” and 7 meaning “a great deal”) to:

Personal development	6.7
More positive view of the host country	5.7

The least important contributions were:

Establish an emphasis in own field of study	4.7
Reconsider career goals	4.4

Students report that (on a seven point scale, with 1 meaning “not at all” and 7 meaning “a great deal”) they now most often:

Have improved global awareness	6.4
Plan to travel	6.3
Think often about study-abroad experiences	6.3

Finally, seventy-two percent have communicated with someone from the host country since returning.

## **Validity**

The fundamental question of this study is whether we are measuring what we think we are measuring – in this case, are we measuring aspects of liberal arts educational goals that are related to study abroad. There are a number of ways to assess validity: content validity, criterion validity, and predictive validity.

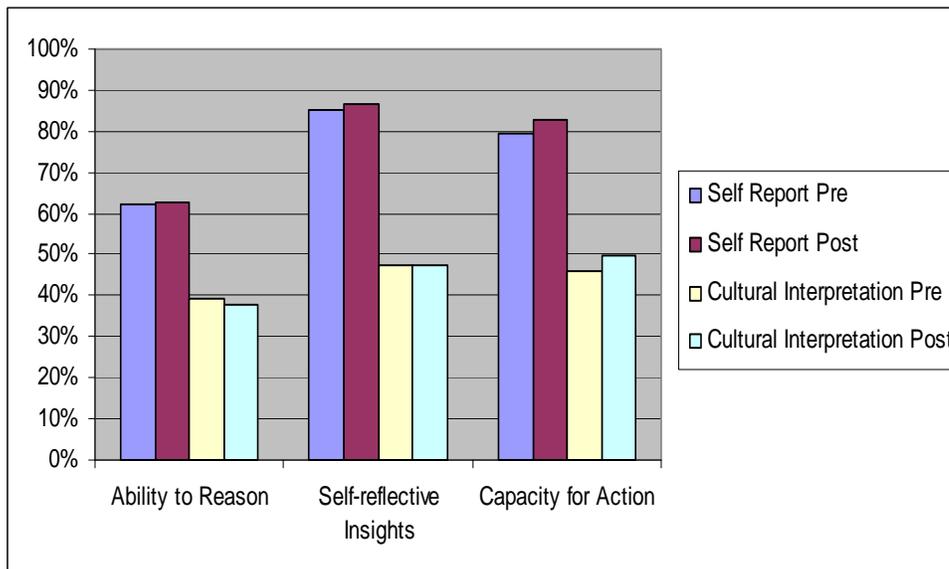
### *Content Validity*

As described in the method section, particular care was taken in the development of the items designed to measure liberal arts learning objectives within the context of study abroad. Items (scenarios and the choice alternatives) were developed based on reviews of ideas presented in the intercultural literature; these were then reviewed by successive panels of faculty with intercultural expertise and experience in liberal arts education. As such, the final items were judged by these experts to have validity based on their content.

### *Criterion Validity*

Two different means of assessing liberal arts learning outcomes were developed: one involving scenarios and the other choice-alternative self-reports. There were significant

correlations between these measurement approaches on two of the three broad areas of liberal arts learning: on the development of thinking ( $r=.157, p<.01$ ) and on the capacity for effective action ( $r=.125, p<.05$ ); on self reflective insights there was not a significant correlation. It is interesting and important to note that, in general, correlations among the many self-report questions by post-returnees tended to be positive – that is, for example, a person who indicated that s/he had a very positive study-abroad experience also reported that learning related to liberal arts goals had improved (e.g., cultural reasoning, cultural self insight, intercultural abilities). However, students’ ability to actually demonstrate these same liberal arts learning goals through the judgments they make was generally low. This pattern can be seen in the following table, in which the tall bars represent the pre- and post-measures on the choice-alternative self report items and the lower bars the pre- and post-measures on the scenario judgments (in both cases, the results are expressed as a percentage of a “perfect” score, whether that be a rating of 7 on a seven point scale or choosing the best intercultural response).



Since most research on study abroad’s impacts to date has been self-report data, this is a particularly significant observation based on this pilot data. Whether these two different approaches to assessing liberal arts learning are measuring the same or different concepts cannot be concluded until a full, longitudinal-design, study involving a larger sample of students is completed.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>11</sup> The fact that two of the more noteworthy findings reported here are that there is little difference between the answers students give before going and after returning from study abroad, and that the cultural scenarios offer a much less auspicious portrait of what students have gained than do the self-report questions is both interesting and troubling. If a full study supports these findings – which it may not – it is possible that the explanation could lie in something as simple as the nature of post-experience debriefings which should focus on cultural learning or on the integration of study abroad insights into other courses after students return.

### Predictive Validity

As a pilot study designed to test the research instrument, as opposed to drawing conclusions about study-abroad programs and their relationship to liberal arts learning, we have no conclusive ability to look at the relationship between program characteristics and student experience and liberal arts learning. However, analyses of the data shown in the table above suggests that the biggest liberal arts impact may be on the “capacity for action” dimension of liberal arts learning, with a significant effect ( $t(268)=2.22, p<.03$ ) for the self-report items and a marginal effect ( $t(268)=1.74, p<.09$ ) for the scenarios. However, as noted in the previous section, these trends are much stronger for self reporting of impact than for demonstration of effect on judgment. Definitive conclusions on this issue, as well as on program characteristics related to liberal arts impact, will have to await a full, longitudinal design, study involving a larger sample of students.

## **DISCUSSION**

The pilot implementation of these instruments and the results of the data analyses indicate that the instruments developed have potential value when used to assess the impact of study-abroad program characteristics on liberal arts learning outcomes. As described above, conclusions about program design can only be confidently made when the instruments are applied in a longitudinal design with an appropriate comparison group of students who do not have a study-abroad experience. By measuring gains – more specifically the degree of gains – for students participating in various programs (as compared to those who don’t study abroad), relative gains can then be statistically related to characteristics of the study-abroad program. With a large enough data set, it will be possible to identify the characteristics best suited for certain types of gains; specifically those related to liberal arts learning. In order to accomplish this degree of analysis, a large-scale data collection will be necessary.

### Anticipated Benefits

The results of this project offer important benefits for study-abroad programs, students, our member colleges, and liberal education in general. One benefit to our institutions is the encouragement of the use of assessment instruments. Our experience in this project suggests that the leaders and faculty at our institutions want to work as our partners in projects like this, not only to develop the ideas, but also to better understand the impact of study abroad on the achievement of liberal learning goals. We are pleased to have strengthened our collaborative processes as we have completed this project.

Other benefits concern the resource challenge of nearly every college given the full array of programs they wish to support. Because the study-abroad field is robust and

competitive and residential liberal arts colleges have distinctive learning goals for their students, it is important to help institutions to design or to choose programs that meet those goals. The product of this project will hopefully help our institutions adopt a higher standard with respect to study-abroad programs than some current offerings in the study-abroad marketplace represent.

By the same token, individual students need to make wise, effective choices. We expect the results of this project will eventually lead to better information being available to help study-abroad professionals assist students in making more effective choices about how to invest scarce funds in study abroad. By informing their choice with the information this instrument will produce, institutions can help students choose study-abroad programs most likely to help them succeed in completing their institutional goals.

# APPENDIX A

## List of Faculty Experts

We would like to specially thank the following people for their help and assistance in developing the Instrument

David Bachner, American University  
Corrine Lim-Kessler, Monmouth College  
Emily Chan, Colorado College  
Paul Orogun, Lake Forest College

Lorna Jarvis, Hope College  
Carol Harvey, Denison University  
Bingham Nelson, Earlham College

## List of Campus Teams

### Beloit Campus Team

Elizabeth Brewer (Chair)  
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Asst. Professor  
Religious Studies

Scott Lyngass  
Asst. Professor  
Modern Languages and  
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Barbara Spencer  
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Ken Keffer  
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Assistant Professor of Spanish

Amos Tubb  
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Ian Wilson  
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Centre-in-Strasbourg program

Travis Pinnix  
Centre-in-Merida program

### DePauw Campus Team

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Affairs and Director of  
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Terri Bonebright  
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Professor of Sociology and  
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Assessment

Brett O'Bannon  
Assistant Professor of Political  
Science Political Science

Jim Rambo  
Professor of Modern Languages  
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and Chair of the Modern  
Languages Department

## List of Institutions Participating in Pilot Studies

Centre College, Danville, KY

St Olaf College, Northfield, MN

Colorado College, Colorado Springs, CO

DePauw University, Greencastle, IN

## APPENDIX B\*

SAMPLE

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\* For questions regarding the instrument or information on receiving a copy of the instrument, please contact Richard Detweiler ([detweiler@glca.org](mailto:detweiler@glca.org)) or Derek Vaughan ([vaughan@glca.org](mailto:vaughan@glca.org)) at GLCA – 734-661-2350.

# **Student Learning Outcomes from Study Abroad**

## **Pre-Test**

of the

**Tri-Consortial Research Project on**

**Liberal Education and Study Abroad:  
Assessing Learning Outcomes to Improve Program Quality**

The “Student Learning Outcomes from Study Abroad” (SLOSA) survey has been developed through a tri-consortial effort of the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA), the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM), and the Associated Colleges of the South (ACS). The primary purpose of the SLOSA is to examine the nature and extent of learning that has occurred as a result of a student’s study-abroad experience.

Teagle Tri-Consortial Project  
GLCA – ACM – ACS  
Ann Arbor, Chicago, and Atlanta

Revised 1-27-08

### Demographic Information

1. Age: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Gender: \_\_\_ Male \_\_\_ Female
3. Grew up mainly: \_\_\_ Rural \_\_\_ Suburban \_\_\_ Urban

### Foreign Language

4. Is English your first language? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No
5. How many semesters of college/university instruction have you completed in this language? \_\_\_\_\_
6. What is your assessment of your language proficiency prior to study abroad?  
No proficiency-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Native proficiency

### Study Abroad Interest

7. Why have you chosen to study abroad? (Check all that Apply)
  - a. \_\_\_ Advancement in future job or profession
  - b. \_\_\_ Family members recommended it
  - c. \_\_\_ Friends recommended it
  - d. \_\_\_ Professors recommended it
  - e. \_\_\_ Academic advisor recommended it
  - f. \_\_\_ Desire to get away from something in personal, family, or college life
  - g. \_\_\_ Desire to learn another language or culture
  - h. \_\_\_ Desire to keep up with family or friends who have been abroad
  - i. \_\_\_ Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

### Prior Study Abroad Experiences

#### **Interests and involvements**

8. Have you ever been abroad? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No  
If yes, where: \_\_\_\_\_ and for how long: \_\_\_\_\_?
9. Have you done any of the following? (Check all that Apply)
  - a. \_\_\_ Studied with someone from a different cultural background?
  - b. \_\_\_ Socialized with students from a different cultural background?
  - c. \_\_\_ Viewed foreign films?
  - d. \_\_\_ Eaten at a variety of ethnic restaurants?
  - e. \_\_\_ Attended religious services of a faith other than my own?

#### **Familiarity with Site of Study**

10. How knowledgeable are you about the following areas with regard to your site of study?  
(Check all that Apply)
  - a. \_\_\_ cultural practices of the people?
  - b. \_\_\_ history of the culture?
20. Have you corresponded with anyone from your host country? \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No  
If yes, how often: \_\_\_\_\_?

**In the following section, please read the paragraph and then check the statement that most closely matches your opinion.**

21. Two executives, one from Japan the other from the United States, both working in a foreign office, were discussing how to host an important dignitary visiting from the local country. The Japanese man insisted the group must go out to a luxury restaurant for dinner. The American thought it would be best to give the visitor some privacy after work and give him some unscheduled time. Both men were insistent upon their plan and neither would agree with the other. Whose plan would be best in this situation?
- a) \_\_\_ Both were equally good.
  - b) \_\_\_ The Japanese man's plan is best.
  - c) \_\_\_ It would depend on the customs of the local country.
  - d) \_\_\_ The American man's plan is best.
  - e) \_\_\_ Neither was a good idea.
  - f) \_\_\_ Need more information to decide.
22. Bjutu, an exchange student from Zimbabwe, was living with the Campbell family in central Ohio in the United States. One Saturday Bjutu and the Campbells went to the local mall to shop and hang out. Eventually they all went their separate ways but had decided to meet back at the entrance by 5 p.m. to go to dinner and then a movie. At 5 p.m., everyone was back except for Bjutu. It was not until 5:35 that Bjutu finally arrived back at the meeting place. The Campbells were terse. How might you expect Bjutu to react to the Campbell family?
- a) \_\_\_ He would be upset that he had to return before seeing everything.
  - b) \_\_\_ He might apologize and provide a good reason why he was late.
  - c) \_\_\_ He might be very thankful that the Campbells brought him to the mall.
  - d) \_\_\_ I do not understand his culture well enough to say.
  - e) \_\_\_ He would act normally, as if nothing had happened.
  - f) \_\_\_ He would be embarrassed and not speak to the Campbells.
23. In the country of Nepal, poor families often sell their daughters into indentured servitude for monthly payments to the family. The girls are taken from their families and they often work for years. The girls get no payment and usually work long hours in conditions that many say amounts to slavery. During their servitude, they forgo any education and work continuously until the contract has been terminated by the parent or the proprietor who purchased their services. Which of the following best describes your position on this issue?
- a) \_\_\_ If the parents and proprietor agree to the arrangement then it is completely acceptable.
  - b) \_\_\_ This is a violation of child labor practices and have long been condemned by civilized society.
  - c) \_\_\_ Since the culture of Nepal has condoned this practice for centuries, I see little reason to interfere.
  - d) \_\_\_ If the girls are not being physically abused, and payment is being made for their services, there is little harm in this arrangement.
  - e) \_\_\_ I would need to know more about the culture to condemn or condone this practice.
  - f) \_\_\_ Although this may be a cultural issue, the girls should be protected based upon common human rights.

24. Imagine you have been hired by an employer who has offices worldwide. You are initially assigned to work in the domestic division of the corporation. You work with several college friends and enjoy the comfortable environment of the office. After having spent six months training and working in the domestic division, you are notified you will be transferred to the international division on the other side of town. In your new position, you will work with a multicultural group composed of colleagues from various nations around the world. Which statement do you think would best describe your reaction?
- a) \_\_\_ I would be excited for the opportunity to work with a group of culturally diverse people.
  - b) \_\_\_ I would agree to go but might find it difficult to work with a culturally different group of people.
  - c) \_\_\_ I would likely try to find a job working with people more like myself.
  - d) \_\_\_ I would approach my employer and ask that I not be transferred, that I am happy where I am.
  - e) \_\_\_ I would be both excited for the new opportunity and sad to leave my friends and family.
  - f) \_\_\_ I would give the new position a chance, but if I was too uncomfortable I would find another job.
25. There are many global issues requiring attention in the near and distant future. These include global warming, terrorism, world economic policies, poverty, immigration, human rights abuses, renewable energy production, etc. Which statement below best characterizes your current actions to become involved in the resolution of one of these issues?
- a) \_\_\_ I am actively involved in several groups whose purpose is addressing similar issues.
  - b) \_\_\_ I would like to become involved in addressing global concerns, but I am not yet sure how.
  - c) \_\_\_ There is really nothing any one person can do at this point.
  - d) \_\_\_ I am involved with a group that sometimes works to address these issues.
  - e) \_\_\_ I may become involved at some point in the future, but not at this time.
  - f) \_\_\_ I have been investigating or exploring ways in which I can help, individually or through a group, to address certain global issues, but have not decided to take any action.

**For the following statements, please circle the number to indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.**

45. I make judgments about other people's customs based on historical and political context.  
Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree
46. It is important to become multi-culturally competent.  
Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree
47. I am very comfortable with having business dealings with people from other cultures.  
Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree
48. Every person bears responsibility for the well-being of people throughout the world.  
Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree
49. International conflicts are most often caused by differences in cultural views.  
Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree

# **Inventory of Study Abroad Program Characteristics**

of the

**Tri-Consortial Research Project on**

**Liberal Education and Study Abroad:  
Assessing Learning Outcomes to Improve Program Quality**

The “Study Abroad Program Characteristics” (SAPC) inventory has been developed through a tri-consortial effort of the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA), the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM), and the Associated Colleges of the South (ACS). The primary purpose of the SAPC is to collect information about the various study abroad programs in which students participate.

Teagle Tri-Consortial Project  
GLCA – ACM – ACS  
Ann Arbor, Chicago, and Atlanta

Revised 1-27-08

**Please indicate the response that most closely matches your study abroad experience.**

**Location:**

Please indicate the location of your study abroad experience:

\_\_\_\_\_ City(ies) \_\_\_\_\_ Country(ies)

**1. Program Provider:**

Please indicate the name or type of study abroad program in which you participated

- Your home institution's program
- Another U.S. institution's program
- Direct enrollment in a foreign institution
- Program of a study-abroad organization (e.g. IES, SIT, Arcadia, IFSA-Butler, CIEE, etc.)
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Length of Program:**

Please indicate the length of your study abroad program.

- 3 weeks or less       1 semester (2 quarters)
- 3 – 6 weeks       2 semester / academic year (3 quarters)
- 6-10 weeks (1 quarter)     Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Language of Instruction:**

What was the predominant language of instruction used during your study abroad experience?

- English – 80% or more
- Native language – 80% or more
- Mix – both English and Native language

**7. Courses and Curriculum:**

a. What was the area of content for the courses you took while on study abroad? (Check all that apply)

- Disciplines (sciences, humanities, social sciences, math, etc)
- Professions (business, music, education, engineering, etc)
- Intercultural (courses related to cultures, customs, etc.)
- National (courses specifically focused on the history, religion, economy, etc. of your study abroad site)

e. Describe the secondary instructor (professor you saw second most) for your coursework.

- American or person from an American college / university
- Native of study abroad site
- Both - specify approximate percentages: \_\_\_\_\_ American    \_\_\_\_\_ Native of study abroad site
- Other, please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Educational Relationships:**

Please indicate which of the following educational relationships *best* describes your study abroad program.

(Chose only one)

- I attended a local college/university for all of my courses in my program.
- I attended a local college/university for part of my courses (less than ¾) in my program
- I attended a local college/university for only one course in my program
- I did not attend a local college/university, but had access to their educational resources (library, computer labs, etc.)
- My program was separate from any local college/university

**12. Post Experience Debriefing:**

a. Did you have a post experience processing for your study abroad program?  Yes       No

i. If Yes, how many hours total was the orientation? \_\_\_\_\_

# **Student Learning Outcomes from Study Abroad**

## **Post Test**

of the

**Tri-Consortial Research Project on**

**Liberal Education and Study Abroad:  
Assessing Learning Outcomes to Improve Program Quality**

The “Student Learning Outcomes from Study Abroad” (SLOSA) survey has been developed through a tri-consortial effort of the Great Lakes Colleges Association (GLCA), the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM), and the Associated Colleges of the South (ACS). The primary purpose of the SLOSA is to examine the nature and extent of learning that has occurred as a result of a student’s study-abroad experience.

Teagle Tri-Consortial Project  
GLCA – ACM – ACS  
Ann Arbor, Chicago, and Atlanta

Revised 1-27-08

**In the following section, please circle the number that most accurately describes your status.**

**Foreign Language Skills**

1. What is your assessment of your language proficiency after returning from study abroad?  
No proficiency-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Native proficiency

**Study Abroad Experiences** To what extent did any of the following apply to your study abroad experience?

2. Participated in faculty directed practicum  
Not at all-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-A great extent
3. Tried new foods  
Not at all-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-A great extent
4. Regularly spent time / hung out with people from your host country?  
Not at all-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-A great extent

**Self-Assessment** To what extent were the following parts of your study abroad experience worthwhile?

5. Coursework at your host institution?  
Not Very Worthwhile-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Very Worthwhile 8- Not Applicable
6. Living in a student dorm?  
Not Very Worthwhile-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Very Worthwhile 8- Not Applicable
7. Immersion in another culture?  
Not Very Worthwhile-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-Very Worthwhile 8- Not Applicable

**To what extent did study abroad help in the following areas?**

8. Confirm or make you reconsider your career goals?  
Not at all-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-A great deal
9. Helped you to establish an emphasis in your current field of study?  
Not at all-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-A great deal
10. In comparison to your courses at your home institution, your program was (chose 1 from each column)
- |   |            |   |
|---|------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> More difficult | <b>And</b> | <input type="checkbox"/> Required more study time                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> About the same |            | <input type="checkbox"/> Required about the same amount of study time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less difficult |            | <input type="checkbox"/> Required less study time                     |

**Post Study Abroad Experiences** Please circle the number that most closely matches your opinion.

11. I think about specific events from my Study Abroad experience (how often)  
Not at all-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-A great deal
12. I reflect generally on my Study Abroad experience (how often)  
Not at all-1 2 3 4 5 6 7-A great deal

**In the following section, please read the paragraph and then check the statement that most closely matches your opinion.**

13. You are enrolled in a campus class on criminology. One day the professor lectures on capital punishment (CP) and its effects as a deterrent to crime in a number of countries including the U.S. The professor cites several recent studies showing that the use of CP lowers violent crime rates. In one example the professor cited the low use of illegal drugs in Singapore where the punishment for drug use is death by hanging. Several students object to this information and, though they cannot cite a specific study, are certain that cultural differences and not CP impact the overall crime rates. What do you think about this topic?
- a) \_\_\_ The professor has cited specific studies and holds a PhD in criminology; he is likely right.
  - b) \_\_\_ The professor is likely just manipulating the data to prove his point, because it is too difficult to compare crime rates across different cultures.
  - c) \_\_\_ I prefer to do further research myself and decide based on my findings.
  - d) \_\_\_ Since culture impacts crime, it is difficult to separate these two issues.
  - e) \_\_\_ It is possible that the professor and students are both right, but hard to know.
  - f) \_\_\_ Regardless of ones cultural beliefs, capital punishment is wrong.
14. In the country of Nepal, poor families often sell their daughters into indentured servitude for monthly payments to the family. The girls are taken from their families and they often work for years. The girls get no payment and usually work long hours in conditions that many say amounts to slavery. During their servitude, they forgo any education and work continuously until the contract has been terminated by the parent or the proprietor who purchased their services. Which of the following best describes your position on this issue?
- a) \_\_\_ If the parents and proprietor agree to the arrangement then it is completely acceptable.
  - b) \_\_\_ This is a violation of child labor practices and have long been condemned by civilized society.
  - c) \_\_\_ Since the culture of Nepal has condoned this practice for centuries, I see little reason to interfere.
  - d) \_\_\_ If the girls are not being physically abused, and payment is being made for their services, there is little harm in this arrangement.
  - e) \_\_\_ I would need to know more about the culture to condemn or condone this practice.
  - f) \_\_\_ Although this may be a cultural issue, the girls should be protected based upon common human rights.
15. You are looking for a restaurant in a major city in a Middle Eastern country. You pass a woman and ask her for directions. The woman turns and walks away without saying anything. Which of the following is most likely?
- a) \_\_\_ The woman may have been unable to understand you.
  - b) \_\_\_ The woman does not like Americans.
  - c) \_\_\_ The woman was afraid.
  - d) \_\_\_ It is inappropriate for a woman to talk with a stranger.
  - e) \_\_\_ Do not know.
  - f) \_\_\_ Need more information about the culture to answer.

**For the following statements, please circle the number to indicate your level of agreement with each of the following statements.**

16. I make judgments about other people's customs based on historical and political context.  
Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree
17. I rarely think about the ways that cultural norms influence the behavior of people.  
Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree

18. It is difficult to make comparisons between cultures since one's own cultural perspective tends to influence his/her thinking.

Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree

19. Any individual, regardless of his or her beliefs, should be allowed to live wherever he or she wants in the world.

Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree

20. All college students upon graduation should be able to interact with people from diverse cultures.

Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree

21. It is important to be personally involved in solutions to major global challenges.

Completely Disagree - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 - Completely Agree

SAMPLE