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A case study of Troika short-term study abroad program model in community colleges

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A case study of Troika short-term study abroad program model in community colleges

by

Jeremy L. Pickard

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Major: Education (Educational Leadership)

Program of Study Committee:
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Iowa State University

Ames, Iowa

2010

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DEDICATION

This dedication is to my wife

Renea Pickard

For the many days, evenings, and weekends you had to be a single mom while

I was in graduate school. You deserve half of this degree.

To my children

Abby, Dominick, and Camron

For whom I want to be an example. If you put your heart and mind to something,

with God's blessing, you can accomplish it.

To

Dr. Jeff Armstrong

Who allowed me to contribute to the international programs at Eastern Iowa Community

College District and saw my potential long before I realized any of it.

To

Dr. Larry Ebbers

Who encouraged me to earn my Master's and ultimately my Ph.D.

Without each of your contribution in my life this dissertation would not have been possible.

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ABSTRACT

This case study examined the phenomenon, through a basic interpretive approach, of 13 students who participated in a short-term study abroad program at a community college. Participants shared experiences from their programs that provided meaning to their lives and how that meaning has shaped their life socially, academically, professionally, and personally. The goal of the study was to describe their experiences of community college students who participate in a short-term study abroad program, describe how a short-term study abroad program at a community college impacts a student's life, understand how short-term study abroad programs in community colleges are moving toward the outcomes of long-term programs, and determine the impact this study will have on senior level administrators from Community Colleges for International Development and other government agencies affiliated with study abroad programs.

Data were collected from 13 participants via interviews, travel journals, trip reports, and photographs taken while the students were studying abroad. The themes identified in the data were: International experiences encourage participants to study abroad; student perception of faculty leading the study abroad program is key to study abroad participation; expanded worldview through human interaction; studying abroad produces a desire to travel internationally; participants earn intellectual, social, professional, and personal capital as a result of studying abroad.

These themes suggest that short-term study abroad programs that use the Troika model produced a significant impact on students who participate in them.

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

There is no substitute for experience, none at all. All the other paraphernalia of communication and of knowledge—words, label, concepts, symbols, theories, formulas, sciences—all are useful only because people already knew them experientially.

Abraham Maslow

Background

The year was 1989 and I was in the seventh grade. My family had made a decision to spend a year living in Puerto Rico. My siblings and I were attending a Spanish-speaking school located in the heart of the island. My home seemed a world away as my white skin introduced me as the gringo to my new classmates. I had never been in a situation where I didn't look like the majority of those around me. Back home, in rural Iowa, we were all White except for my Cambodian friend Sam. Upon entering the Puerto Rican classroom on my first day, I understood how he must have felt on numerous occasions.

One evening as I sat around our kitchen table reading letters my Sunday school class had sent from home, I became perplexed. How would I ever be able to put into words all the experiences I was having? Adam wanted to know what it was like down here. Stacy inquired about my time at school, and my neighbor Kara wanted to be sure I was having fun. I guess these were legitimate junior high school questions, but I was at a loss for words. Even if I did respond, would my words be enough to describe the sights, sounds, emotions, and feelings of living in another culture? It was in that moment that I realized everyone needed to take the opportunity to spend some time away from the United States and study abroad. My time in Puerto Rico allowed me to gain appreciation for different cultures and provided me with a perspective to understand my own.

In 1989 I did not have a single friend who had traveled to another country let alone lived in one. My experience was as unfamiliar to my Midwest junior high school friends as shoveling snow was to a Puerto Rican. To them my time in Puerto Rico was a novelty that few would have the opportunity to replicate.

Fast forward to present day. As I chat with one of my students about an upcoming study abroad program, I sense the same unfamiliarity with the idea that my seventh grade friends had with my experience in Puerto Rico. There is a common bond among individuals who step away from the familiarity of their own environment to spend time outside the United States. Those who have this experience understand what it is like to be in an unfamiliar place for an extended period of time. This bond never developed with my American classmates in 1989 and few of my students and colleagues at community colleges.

To grasp why studying abroad is such a novel idea to most community college students, one first needs to understand who they are. The profile of a “typical” community college student (if there is such a thing as typical in such a diverse populous) across the country, is a 28-year-old, part-time learner who holds a job (American Association of Community Colleges [AACC], 2009a). Of the over 11.8 million community students in America 60 percent are enrolled part-time, 56 percent are women, 40 percent are minorities, 84 percent are employed, and 42 percent are first generation to attend college (AACC, 2009a). Many of them are not working for enjoyment but out of a necessity to pay rent, put food on the table, and finance their education. Community college students need to work year round to fund the cost of their education and lifestyle. Even a younger full-time learner at a community college would have difficulty taking an extended period of time from work to study abroad.

Another factor one must consider is the number of single parents who attend community colleges. The AACC (2009a) has reported that 17 percent of community college students are single parents. This statistic does not consider the percentage of students who have dependents and are married. For a parent who is the primary caregiver of a child to be gone overseas for a semester is nearly impossible. No person would encourage parents to leave their child/children for a program of that length. However, a shorter term study abroad program of 2 weeks or less is something that could work into the lives of full-time parents.

As one considers the “typical” community college student, is there any wonder why a semester-long study abroad program is not meeting his or her needs. Community colleges must consider alternative methods of delivering similar content that produces the same result. This study will examine the experiences of 13 students who participated in short-term study abroad programs at community colleges to gain an understanding on the impact a program of this nature can have on this type of student. Clearly, the challenges of implementing study abroad opportunities places community colleges in a dilemma. The need for a broad global perspective is an increasingly acknowledged component in a student’s education, but there is so little time and money to support a traditional study abroad experience. Therefore, what is the solution?

Many community colleges have turned to short-term study abroad models as a solution. One such model is Community Colleges for International Development’s (CCID’s Troika study abroad programs. The Troika model is anything but ordinary, and its design is a significant departure from the traditional semester-long study abroad programs offered at most U.S. colleges and universities. As the name implies, Troika is the collaborative efforts of three colleges to produce one study abroad program. The three colleges provide

administrative support, faculty leadership, and student participation. Participants typically spend a couple of weeks abroad traveling, studying, attending seminars, taking field trips, and listening to presentations. The focus of each Troika is to globalize programs of study, curriculum, the student population, and/or the faculty of the community college.

Background of the Problem

In light of emerging needs to internationalize higher education, leaders have turned to study abroad programs to globalize curriculum, programs, the student body, and faculty. Traditional study abroad programs provide a degree of cross-cultural awareness and personal transformation for the participants but overall are very limited in whom they serve. Significant criticism of traditional study abroad programs exists in terms of their overall effectiveness in creating global citizens. Often, study abroad programs are not considered academic in nature but, rather, students are considered visitors from another country, or worse yet, mere vacationers under the code name “international study.” If these criticisms exist for semester-long programs, one can imagine the scrutiny short-term programs are falling under for their short time abroad.

This case study examines the experiences of community college students who participated in a short-term study abroad program at their community college. These study abroad programs were administered by CCID, which uses the Troika study abroad model. As a past leader of a CCID Troika study abroad program, I am familiar with these types of programs and how they operate. I observed, described, analyzed, and interpreted the participants’ experiences that transpired during the days spent studying abroad.

Little research has been compiled about the experiences of participants in community college short-term study abroad programs. For many community college students, the

opportunity to travel outside the borders of the United States is considered an unattainable novelty. Families and friends of students are often very supportive of traveling abroad because they see the benefits of such programs. The experience of a student participant affects not only their lives but also the lives of those around them.

The Research Problem

Much has been said and written concerning the perceived value of study abroad programs. Educators have vigorously debated the relevance of study abroad programs and agree there are polarized viewpoints on the issue. As the debate continues, there is a growing interest in studying abroad (NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 2008). Many colleges, especially community colleges, have moved from the traditional semester abroad to shorter trips. These short-term programs last fewer than 8 weeks and are often 10 days to 3 weeks long. These short-term programs allow more individuals, especially community college students, to study abroad. As short-term programs gain popularity, many wonder if they are as effective as their semester- or year-long counterparts. The differences between the programs are the amount of time spent abroad and the number of credits a participant earns during the program. During a short-term program students spend only a couple of weeks abroad and typically are taking only one course for two or three credits. A mid- to long-term program lasts 12 weeks to 1 year, and a student will earn an entire semester's or year's worth of credit toward a degree. The debate between the two groups has always been to ascertain if a short-term program can have a similar impact as a long-term.

Those who hold fast to the semester- or year-long study abroad program model do not feel short-term programs are meeting the necessary outcomes. Supporters of a short-term program would agree an extended length of time would be ideal, but this commitment for the

majority of community college students just is not possible. Those critical of short-term programs do not believe short trips fully immerse students in a culture and produce a life-changing experience that alter the way participants view the world—specifically, their knowledge about another country and culture, their relationships with foreigners, and the perspective of a globally aware citizen.

Very little research has been done with participants of short-term study abroad programs in community colleges to see if this is truly the case. Because of this lack of research, it is hard to know how these programs are impacting participants. Study abroad funding agencies, such as Fulbright (Fulbright International Educational Exchange Program, 2009) and the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship (Institute of International Education, 2008a), do not award scholarships to applicants unless their time overseas is 4 weeks to 1 year. This is telling about how policy makers and funding agencies view short-term study abroad programs.

Purpose of the Study

This study examines the phenomenon of 13 students who participated in a CCID Troika short-term study abroad program at a community college. Participants were encouraged to share meaning from their trip and how that meaning shaped their lives socially, academically, professionally, and personally. For the purposes of this study, short-term study abroad programs are defined as fewer than 8 weeks. The programs the participants completed in this case study were 10–14 days in length and were coordinated by CCID, which uses the Troika model.

The meanings shared by the participants offer insights into the impact these program have on students and what they are gaining from the experiences. These newly acquired

insights provide researchers with information and an understanding of the significance of short-term study abroad programs. Many advocates for semester-long programs believe short-term study abroad programs are not significant learning experiences. Short-term advocates would agree that the longer one spends in a new culture or country the deeper the experience. It is challenging to measure whether duration is directly related to meaning, as the impact these experiences may not surface for years after the conclusion of the program. This study shows that short-term study abroad programs begin to move students toward the outcomes of mid- and long-term study abroad programs. No longer will experts in the field relate the duration of the program to a “true” or “shallow” cultural experience.

Another purpose of this study was to challenge the notion that the amount of institutional resources required to offer these programs is not producing a good return on the investment. There is a strong belief that the investment of institutional resources into short-term study abroad programs does impact the worldview of the students, faculty, and culture of the college. The investment in these programs allows faculty members and students to bring unique experiences to the college and the classroom. The experiences gained from the participation in short-term study abroad program can never be duplicated in the classroom. A 16-week course at the local community college cannot produce the same outcomes as spending 12–14 days abroad.

Finally, if community colleges recognize the value of short-term study abroad programs, they will be more inclined to invest in this arena. This investment would give more students and faculty exposure to international experiences including customs, culture, business, language, and international perspectives. These experiences will help produce a better-rounded community college graduate and enhance the global perspectives of the

faculty members who teach at these colleges. This will change the overall culture of the community colleges around the nation.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study are:

1. How do community college students describe their experiences in a short-term study abroad program?
2. How does a short-term study abroad program at a community college impact a student's life?
3. How do outcomes of short-term study abroad programs in community colleges moving towards the outcomes of long-term programs?
4. What impact will this study have on senior level administrators from Community Colleges for International Development and other government agencies affiliated with study abroad programs?

Theoretical Framework

Theoretical perspective is the philosophical stance lying behind a methodology (Crotty 2003). This perspective provides the researcher with a clear context for processing data and the rationale for how the data will be evaluated.

Another way to put it is to say that, whenever one examines a particular methodology, one discovers a complexus of assumptions buried within it. It is these assumptions that constitute one's theoretical perspective and they largely have to do with the world that the methodology envisages. Different ways of viewing the world shape different ways of researching the world. (Crotty, 2003, p. 66)

The researcher tradition that was utilized to guide this study was a basic interpretive approach. The goal of an interpretive study is to understand how participants order, classify, structure, and interpret their world and then use their interpretation as they live (Prasad, 2005). Merriam (2002) described this type of study as:

The researcher is interested in understanding how participants make meaning of a situation or phenomenon, this meaning is mediated through the researcher as instrument, the strategy is inductive, and the outcome is descriptive. In conducting a basic interpretive qualitative study, you seek to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved, or a combination of these. (p. 6)

Meanings, however, “are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting” (Crotty, 2003, p. 43). Thus, engaging participants through this study, determining how they made meaning of their experience in a short-term study abroad program at a community college.

Significance of the Study

This study explored how participants make meaning of their participation in short-term study abroad programs at community colleges. Meaning is defined by how the study abroad programs increase their awareness and global perspective and how it impacts them socially, academically, and professionally. The significance of this study is to learn the effects of such experiences on participants’ lives, the college culture, funding agencies, and the value of short-term study abroad programs.

Impact on the Culture of the College

This hot topic of globalization is being addressed by community colleges. Because of this, global initiatives are popping up throughout community colleges across the nation. The mission of community colleges has always been to serve their constituents who reside in their local communities. Today, having a global perspective is a requirement for meeting those needs. Local employers from all fields desire employees who have a global perspective and have the experience of working with a diverse group of people. Providing opportunities on a regular basis for students and faculty to study abroad produces a more globally aware culture within the college. The more faculty and students who participate in study abroad and return, the more of an impact their experiences will make on the culture of the institution. The effect of a cycle like this is demonstrated in Figure 1.

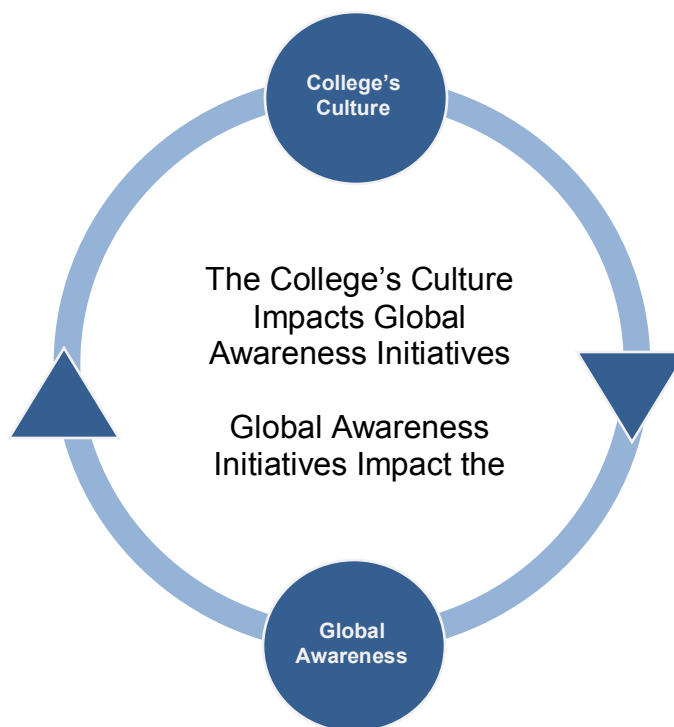


Figure 1. How the culture of the college impacts the global awareness of students, faculty, and staff and, in turn, how the global awareness initiatives impact the culture of the college.

Initiatives of Community Colleges

As colleges implement globalization initiatives, the goal is to have short-term study abroad programs included. One of the goals of this study is to show the significant impact these programs have on community colleges. As community college leaders embrace the impact the short-term programs are making, they will invest resources toward future

opportunities similar in nature. Once college administrators, faculty, and staff see the impact of these programs, more and more opportunities for community college students to study abroad will emerge.

Federal Scholarships and Awards

Currently federal dollars do not exist for short-term study abroad programs. A majority of the awards are granted only to semester- or year-long programs. As discussed earlier, it is impossible for most community college students to participate in long-term programs because of their commitments to their jobs and family. As this study demonstrates the relevance of short-term study abroad programs, policy makers will be more inclined to designate federal funding for these types of programs. This will open up additional opportunities for community college students to study abroad. The award dollars will reach more people because shorter-term programs are significantly cheaper than are long-term programs.

The findings from this study will help community colleges provide additional opportunities for study abroad programs. These additional opportunities will impact the culture of community colleges and meet the needs of the constituents they serve. In general, most community college students are deprived of the life-changing opportunity study abroad programs offer.

Context of the Study

This study will utilize CCID Troika study abroad programs. Each Troika partners three community colleges from across the United States to coordinate their efforts and resources into a study abroad program. Currently there are 13 community colleges participating in six different Troika programs with students and faculty members traveling to

six different countries. This study identified two student participants from each program by soliciting every student enrolled in a Troika program. Students who were interested in participating in the case study were allowed to be part of the study.

Definitions

Internationalization: Centered on “the development of understanding, consideration and respect for others, their beliefs, values and cultures” (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004). Internationalization is an instrument that produces a well-rounded citizen with a global perspective. Cambridge and Thompson (2004) also claimed internationalization to be a “progressive view of education . . . concerned with the moral development in the individual . . . [and] the formation of positive attitudes towards peace, international understanding and responsible world citizenship” (p. 164).

International education: For the purpose of this study, international education is defined as any type of experience that is conducted outside the home country and sponsored by an education institution (Kitsantas, 2004).

Study abroad: Defined as all education programs that take place outside the geographical boundaries of the country of origin (Kitsantas, 2004), these programs vary among institutions. For this study a distinction between long-, mid-, and short-term programs is made. This dissertation focuses on the short-term study abroad programs in community colleges.

Long-term study abroad program: Programs of an “academic or calendar year” (Institute of International Education, 2008b, p. 2).

Mid-term study abroad program: Programs of “one or two quarters, or one semester” (Institute of International Education, 2008b, p. 2).

Short-term study abroad program: Programs of “summer, January term, or 8 weeks or less during the academic year” (Institute of International Education, 2008b, p. 2).

Community Colleges for International Development (CCID): In the United States, the consortium CCID helps coordinate and support the international development activities of over 90 community colleges nationwide in a number of international locations. Created in 1976, CCID has a combined enrollment of more than 800,000 students in its member institutions, which include those colleges offering more than 375 programs in technical or vocational subjects plus university-parallel and community service programs. CCID member colleges deliver technical training, consult on projects, create international student and faculty exchanges, host international visitors, and conduct international conferences and seminars. By joining CCID, community college presidents make a formal commitment for themselves and their institutions to international development programs that benefit other countries as well as their own employees (Community Colleges for International Development [CCID], 2007c).

Troika study abroad model: The dictionary defines the noun Troika (troi-kuh) as “any group of three persons, nations, etc., acting equally in unison to exert influence, control, or the like” (Ask.com, 2009). The programming model is nicknamed "Troika" because a minimum of three CCID colleges collaborate on each international program. The primary objective of this model is to provide community college students with greater access to study abroad opportunities.

Summary

In this study, I identify the experiences of students who participated in a short-term study abroad program. Their experiences helped provide insight into the people, places,

events, and experiences of study abroad programs and how these experiences play an important role in the mission of the community college. This study contributes to higher education by informing community college leaders, international education directors, faculty, advisors, and students about the experiences of community college students who participated in a short-term study abroad programs.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the literature pertaining to study abroad programs in community colleges. This chapter is divided into the following major sections: an overview of the U.S. community college system, the history of internationalism in higher education, how the community college mission and education abroad intertwine, the current state of study abroad programs, study abroad typologies, the community college student and barriers they face when trying to study abroad, institutional barriers facing study abroad programs, and outcomes of international programs. Exploring international programs, including study abroad programs, and how they relate to community colleges provides the foundation of knowledge for the topic under study.

In Chapter 3, I describe in detail the methodological approach used in this study. This chapter reviews the epistemology framing the study, the methodology utilized, the methods, goodness and trustworthiness in qualitative research, and researcher positionality. The methods and procedures described in this chapter are the guidelines for how data were collected for the study.

The fourth chapter identifies and describes in detail the cases studied. Chapter 4 concludes by identifying the five themes of the study that are supported through quotes from interviews, excerpts of travel journals and trip reports, and photos taken during the program.

The fifth and final chapter of the dissertation provides my reflections, conclusions, recommendations for practice, recommendations for future research, and policy implications of the study.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Today, the defense of U.S. interests, the effective management of global issues, and even an understanding of our Nation's diversity require ever-greater contact with, and understanding of, people and cultures beyond our borders.

President William J. Clinton

This chapter focuses on the review of literature pertaining to study abroad programs in community colleges. The literature helps provide a framework for establishing the importance of this study and for comparison of results and finds from previous related research (Creswell, 2009). Marshall and Rossman (2006) stated that the literature review accomplishes several purposes. The first is to share with the reader the results of other studies that are closely related to this study. The researcher should relate the study to a larger, ongoing dialogue in the literature while filling in gaps and providing a need. Finally, the literature review extends the knowledge of prior studies.

For this purpose, I have provided an overview of the community college system to establish how the concept of internationalization and globalization emerged within these institutions. A brief history on how community colleges began to embrace a global perspective during a time when critics considered this to be mission creep is detailed. I will then identify the current state of study abroad programs and how it parallels the community college's mission. This review will also define study abroad and identify the major models of these programs. Finally, I will examine the impact study abroad has on individuals and institutions of higher education particularly in community colleges.

Overview of the U.S. Community College System

To better understand globalization and the community colleges, a brief look at their short history is required. Originating in the United States, junior colleges were formed near

the turn of the 20th century. These colleges were limited in the course offerings and locations. Junior colleges were considered more of an extension of high school rather than equal to the first two years of university studies.

The Truman Commission of 1947 formalized the term “community college” to replace junior college. This name change reflected a truer mission and goal of these 2-year institutions. In reality, the mission of a junior college didn’t change with the name. The mission of a junior college was centered on its community, and the Truman Commission wanted its name to reflect this mission (Levin, 2001). The very nature of this naming has contributed to the notion that globalization in community colleges is not necessary. This name change took the public and local communities some time to adopt, and community colleges underwent staggering growth and change.

The maturation of America’s community colleges was reflected both physically, as they grew in numbers, and instructionally, as their mission began to evolve. At the beginning of the 1960s, 390 community colleges existed to serve just over 500,000 students (Phillipe, 1995). Today there are 1,195 community colleges serving over 11.5 million students (AACC, 2008). This rapid growth is a tribute to the role community colleges play in our nation’s higher education system and how they have evolved to meet the needs of those they serve.

As the student population skyrocketed in the 1970s, community colleges’ employees, courses, and facilities had to keep pace. More students meant more programs, more courses, more faculty, and support staff, and administration worked out the bureaucracy of these institutions. This growth allowed community colleges to move from their temporary facilities into permanent structures. At some stage in the growth of the late 20th century, the mission of the community colleges evolved as well. Throughout the 1970s the comprehensive

mission reached its full bloom as the group of students attending community colleges became increasingly diverse. This comprehensive mission included university transfer, vocational and community education, and remedial and developmental course offerings.

The mission of community colleges has been to serve the underserved and to expand access to higher education and training service to all students throughout our nation. Historically, community colleges have prided themselves in serving the local community and meeting the needs of their students. Some suggest, however, that incorporating internationalism into the mission of community colleges creates a dual purpose that cannot be achieved.

During the end of the 1970s and beginning of the 1980s, stakeholders in community colleges began to question the wisdom of the expanded mission. By adopting an “open door” enrollment policy, many students underprepared for college took advantage of higher education. Internal and external stakeholders witnessed the impact these students had on institutional performance and the use of resources.

In 1983, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative For Educational Reform*, a report by President Ronald Reagan’s National Commission on Excellence in Education, was released. Its publication is considered a landmark event in modern American educational history. Among other things, the report contributed to the ever-growing (and still present) sense that American schools are failing miserably, and it touched off a wave of local, state, and federal reform efforts. During this era many challenged the teaching and learning process of U.S. colleges and wondered why a gradual move away from traditional academic skills was prevalent. The “lack of academic skill” was believed to be affecting the slowing of the economy during this decade.

As gains were made to improve the rigor in the classroom, studying abroad in community college was not an institutional priority. However, community colleges couldn't ignore where the world was heading as it entered the technology boom of the 1990s. Almost overnight, people had the ability to connect with one another through the World Wide Web. The exponential growth of information available and the transfer of data have been staggering. The pump was being primed for community colleges to open their locally focused mission to include an international perspective.

History of Internationalism in Institutions of Higher Education

Internationalism in higher education is as old as higher education itself. One of the most important components of the learning experience was rooted in gaining knowledge through international studies. Educational pilgrimages can be traced back thousands of years as one finds the earliest higher education students traveling from one learning center to another. The purpose of these journeys was to acquire knowledge previously unknown in their part of the world (Hess, 1982). The investment of time and energy by students produced an education incapable of replication within a classroom.

Each specific country's learning center had its own niche of knowledge. The experts at the learning center would share their understanding of their research with the traveling student. For example, the University at Takshasila in India acquired such a reputation that students were willing to travel several thousand miles to learn, study, and become scholars. Most travel was done by foot or animal, and the amount of endurance it took to make the trip spoke of the importance and academic desire of those who embarked on trips of this nature. It remained one of the premier learning centers until the first century AD (Arunachalam, 1969).

As transportation methods improved, so did the availability of studying abroad. The automobile, train, and commercial airplane carriers reduced the danger and time it took to travel abroad. Both World Wars, for better or worse, stimulated international contacts throughout our planet. Thousands of men and women had been to Europe and the Far East experiencing new cultures and learning new languages while serving our country. For this generation, traveling international, and study abroad were within their reach.

In 1944 after World War II, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, or G.I. Bill of Rights, was signed into law by President Roosevelt. The result of the G.I. Bill was that the government paid for a veteran's entire education, which encouraged many veteran students to attend universities and colleges across the country. In turn, the rapid growth forced many colleges to expand enrollment and facilities and to hire additional staff, administrators, and faculty. The G.I. Bill is considered one of the most significant pieces of social legislation of the 20th century for its redeeming effects on both the national economy and its beneficiaries. The G.I.s who attended the community college impacted the institution's international awareness because of the experiences they brought to the classroom. These were the same students who had been overseas and experienced other cultures and languages and now were changing the culture of the universities and community colleges they attended. These servicemen had international experience and brought it with them to the classroom.

Despite the influx of war veterans attending community colleges, these North American education institutions do not have a rich history or the image of a global focus (Levin, 2001). It is odd to even consider community colleges leading higher education in international studies, study abroad, or faculty exchange programs. The very word

“community” in the community college name suggests a focus on a local region and not one of global emphasis.

However, in the 1990s a rise in public and government emphasis on a global economy forced community colleges to consider how they could contribute globally. These external influencers required community colleges to produce a more globally aware workforce who possessed specific skills that were required for employment. Employees in the private sector needed community colleges to provide work-based training that contained outcomes of global awareness (Freedman, 2005b). Community colleges could no longer prepare workers only for local positions without considering the impact of a global economy.

The emphasis on a global economy has developed and remains one of the greatest challenges community colleges will face. The community college system was founded with a mission of serving a specific geographic region in a specific community and rarely considered its impact globally. It will be interesting to observe how community colleges change as they embrace globalization and evolve in their role of preparing future generations to compete in a global economy. It is troubling to consider the impact of community colleges if they become stagnant in their global perspective.

In their article entitled “Community College International Education: Looking Back to Forecast the Future,” Raby and Valeau (2007) described international education in community colleges in four phases of maturation:

- Recognition phase: 1967–1984
- Expansion and publication phase: 1980–1990
- Augmentation phase: 1990–2000
- Institutional phase: 2000–2008

By understanding the historical foundations of global education in community colleges, administrators, faculty, staff, and scholars can transform international education into an integral component of the community college (Raby & Valeau 2007).

Recognition Phase: 1967–1984: During the latter part of the 1960s, policy makers and administrators began to recognize community colleges as possible vessels for international education. Colleges opened study abroad offices, faculty began to lead community college students on study abroad programs, and associations such as CCID were formed. These initial efforts paved the way for the exponential growth which followed.

Expansion and Publication Phase: 1980–1990: The second phase ushered in an increased adoption and documentation of international education in community colleges. Published reports recognizing the international illiteracy within community college students brought a heightened awareness to the shortcomings. Community colleges began to receive grants specifically for developing international curriculum, programs, and courses designed to heighten students' global awareness. Once the curriculum, programs, and courses were implemented, the benefits of international education were documented and improved. The promising practices of international programs within community colleges were duplicated as more and more institutions became more globally aware.

Augmentation Phase: 1990–2000: During the 1990s community colleges dramatically increased their efforts to enhance existing international programs. Faculty infused international education into the curriculum, new study abroad programs seemed to sprout up daily, and community colleges intensified the recruitment of international students. In 1992 two surveys were performed by the American Council of Education and the Stanley

Foundation. Their purpose was to document the progress of community colleges in internationalizing their institutions. The findings of the survey were:

- 70 percent had international contacts
- 50 percent conducted international business, were internationalizing the curriculum, or had study abroad programs
- 30 percent had international sister city relations
- 15 percent belonged to international consortia. (American Council on International and Intercultural Education and Stanley Foundation, 1994, 1996)

The progress during the last two decades has been impressive. Community colleges are finally catching up to their university counterparts in this field

Institutional Phase: 2000–2008: During this phase internationalizing the community college became institutionalized. Mission statements reflected the importance of educating a global citizen and state and national education policies pushed the development of these programs. International students became the fourth largest service sector in the United States as study abroad programs in community colleges rose 126 percent, the largest growth in any higher education sector (Institute of International Education, 2004). .

The pieces of the puzzle are now in place for community colleges to take great strides in international education. The burden of seeing these programs to fruition will depend on the support of the institutions' leadership. Students are eager to become competent global citizens, and it is the responsibility of community colleges to assist them in achieving this outcome.

Education Abroad and the Community College Mission

The initial conception of community colleges was based on the idea of educating local students who would eventually work and live in the community. The very word “community” in community college does not suggest a global mission but a desire to serve its local constituents. Currently, community colleges are at a defining moment as they evaluate their role and function in preparing the next generation of students to live and work locally within a global economy (Raby, 2008).

Since the 1980s our world has become increasingly more complex and interdependent with the rest of the world. Community college leaders have recognized this trend and are taking steps to broaden the definition of “community.” Colleges recognize this new mission must provide relevant global awareness to the students and communities they serve. The well educated person should have a learning competency and engagement that transcends time, place, and culture (AACC, 2006). To stay relevant, community colleges must offer programs and services that support a more international view and active engagement on the part of faculty, businesses, and community leaders (AACC, 2006).

The pressure on institutions from external forces driving change in community colleges has been building for at least a decade and comes from a variety of sources. One major social force is the increasing diversity and changing demographic characteristics of the students, which has put pressure on the colleges to evolve into multicultural institutions (Yee, 1998)(Yee, 1998). The colleges’ traditional mission to prepare the workforce increasingly means that the colleges have to provide the means for their graduates to work competently and successfully in business and professional environments. Competition from the growing private education sector, particularly in the area of distance learning, means that community

colleges have had to increase and diversify their funding sources and their links with business, industry, and government agencies.

State legislatures have exerted pressure on community colleges to be accountable for students' academic performance (by mandating the use of standardized tests, for example) and for expenditures of public funds. Finally, funding from public sources has dropped, forcing community colleges to seek sources of private investment, to develop new financial aid programs, and to revise fee structures (Yee, 1998)(Yee, 1998).

There are internal forces driving change in community colleges as well. Yee (1998) suggested that there is pressure to re-examine traditional academic values, including teaching practices, because of the need for flexibility and adaptability in students who will be dealing with continuous change in their working environments. Faculty relationships with students remain a major intangible factor in students' college experiences. The importance of this factor has focused attention on faculty's ability to adapt to new technologies and incorporate them into curriculum design and teaching practices. It may also mean that the continuing predominance of part-time faculty on many community college campuses and the growing use of distance learning will make formation of supportive student–faculty relationships more difficult.

The community college mission has always emphasized direct learning experiences that teach social and cognitive skill to their students. Study abroad programs support this mission. Recently, the AACC and ACCT 2006 Joint Statement reiterated this connection: “rededication to global education is required that will inspire and shape new educational strategies initiated to promote the shared goals of global connectedness and understanding” (AACC, 2006, ¶ 7). Community colleges that do not offer education abroad are not meeting

their mandate, which is to prepare students for their future roles in a global economy, where, in the 21st century, international literacy is a basic skill that employers require and employees must possess (Raby 2008).

Current State of Study Abroad Programs

Most colleges understand the importance of the life-changing experiences produced by study abroad programs. Walk the halls of your local 4-year institution and notice the variety of flyers, posters, and monitor screens advertising study abroad opportunities. On a local university's website there were over 180 study abroad programs available to students. The problem is these opportunities are limited for, if not absent from, community colleges.

Even though community colleges educate 45 percent of our nation's undergraduates, they provide only 2.5 percent of the students who study abroad. This number is fewer than 5,000 students annually. Statistics show that less than 0.01 percent of all community college students take advantage of the opportunity to study abroad (Brennan, 2006).

What has caused this glaring shortfall in community college education? To be honest, no one really knows. There has been so little research done in this area that it's hard to pinpoint the problem or problems. The well-known author of *The World is Flat*, Thomas Freedman, has written several books, articles, and short films because of his research abroad. His insights and thought-provoking material have called America to wake up to the world around us (Freedman, 2005a). The United States is rapidly falling behind, and we need to discover firsthand why (Freedman, 2006).

In the past decade, the number of students studying abroad for credit each year has grown from 84,000 to more than 220,000, and the number is poised to grow at an even faster rate in the coming years (Institute of International Education, 2008b). American students

recognize the importance—indeed, the necessity—of an education that is global in scope (NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 2008). The overwhelming majority of community colleges students studying abroad (73 percent) are on short-term programs (Koh, 2005). The most recent report published by the Institute of International Education (2008) clearly shows a growing trend towards short-term programs (Table 1).

Table 1.

Duration of Study Abroad, 2005/2006 and 2006/2007

Duration	2005/2006 % of total	2006/2007 % of total
Short-term (summer, January term, or 8 weeks or less during the academic year)	52.8	55.4
Mid-length (one or two quarters, or one semester)	41.7	40.2
Long-term (academic or calendar year)	5.5	4.4

Source: Institute of International Education (2008b).

In 2005 the congressionally and federally appointed Lincoln Commission issued recommendations that set an ambitious goal of sending 1 million American students to study abroad annually by 2015 . The goal of this legislation piece is to provide accessible, quality study abroad programs around the globe. Members of Congress are uniting around that vision as the House of Representatives passed the Senator Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act. As this bill awaits consideration in the Senate, study abroad advocates are hopeful this piece of legislation will signify the tipping point in the history of international education in higher education.

AACC also has recognized the importance of global education because it has adopted global and intercultural education as one of its strategic action areas. This strategic action states that AACC will assist community colleges in “promoting global awareness, and responsibility, intercultural understanding and engagement among students, faculty, staff, and decision makers” (AACC, 2009b). AACC also has the desire to enhance the recognition of the community college role in global education among key constituencies, nationally, and internationally (AACC, 2009b). One of the ways this will be accomplished is through study abroad programs.

Defining Study Abroad

In an address from the White House, President George W. Bush (2001) stated, “By studying foreign cultures and languages and living abroad, we gain a better understanding of the many similarities that we share and learn to respect our differences.” A full understanding of our similarities cannot be grasped within the walls of classrooms. Only a full submersion, regardless of the duration, into a foreign culture can provide the understanding desired.

The *Briefing Book for the Bipartisan Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program* defines study abroad as “an educational program for undergraduate or graduate study, work, research, or an internship that is conducted outside the United States and that awards academic credit to postsecondary students” (Lincoln Fellowships Commission, 2004, p.A-2). This definition limits study abroad to credit-bearing courses or experiences that can be counted toward degree requirements. The process of approving and awarding academic credit for study abroad is a critical quality control mechanism; the review and approval process activates institutional standards for learning, rigor, and assessment of value. An additional benefit of credit-bearing status for study abroad

is that it permits students with financial aid to apply those funds toward their study abroad endeavors (Lincoln Fellowships Commission, 2004, p. C-1).

Study Abroad Typologies

The array of study abroad options as well as the time spend abroad is significant. Programs can last up to a year or be as short as 10 days. With such diversity in the way study abroad programs are offered, an examination of the three most common types is in order.

Long-Term Study Abroad Programs

This typology of study abroad is when students take a fully loaded course of study in a college or university for an entire year (Gray, Murdock, & Stebbins, 2002). This course of study could include an internship, teaching assignment, or community service. The important component is the student is still receiving credit toward a degree back in the United States. Often these programs are arranged for individual students. As Table 1 demonstrates, of the three types of study abroad programs, the lowest percentage of students choose this type. Typically, the students who embark on a year trip are graduate students in pursuit of a research topic.

Mid-Term Study Abroad Programs

This typology is what most people think of when the topic of study abroad is aroused. One often hears of colleges and universities that require students to participate in a mid-term program. Many colleges use a January or May term to help fill this requirement. Like long-term study abroad programs, mid-term programs can be individually arranged, but some colleges and universities have had success in sending groups to partner institutions. As Table 1 demonstrates, the overall percentage of mid-term study abroad participants continues to fall as our final typology grows in popularity.

Short-Term Study Abroad Programs

Short-term study abroad programs are the only typology experiencing percentage growth in the overall number of participants. According to the Institute of International Education (2008b) more students choose these types of programs than either of the other two combined. This category includes trips taken for the purpose of attending seminars; gathering information; improving linguistic fluency; and regional, cultural, and area studies. These trips often introduce students to aspects of another country's system in order to give them the opportunity to expand their views beyond the U.S. perspective (Gray et al., 2002). Most trips take place during the summer or spring break, last 1 to 6 weeks, and are organized in conjunction with departmental activities.

The Troika Model

One short-term study abroad program model currently being used by community colleges is the Troika model. The dictionary defines Troika as, "any group of three persons, nations, etc., acting equally in unison to exert influence, control, or the like" (Ask.com, 2009). Many community colleges do not have either the financial or human resources to offer a full-blown study abroad program within their institution. And as noted previously, a traditional semester-long study abroad would not meet the needs of most community college students. Troika partners three community colleges to share the work, resources, and students required for a study abroad program.

The primary objective of the Troika model is to provide community college students with greater access to study abroad opportunities. By design, therefore, the programming model (a) lowers barriers commonly encountered by students and (b) places a premium on sustainability. Because of this the Troika study abroad model was developed to cater

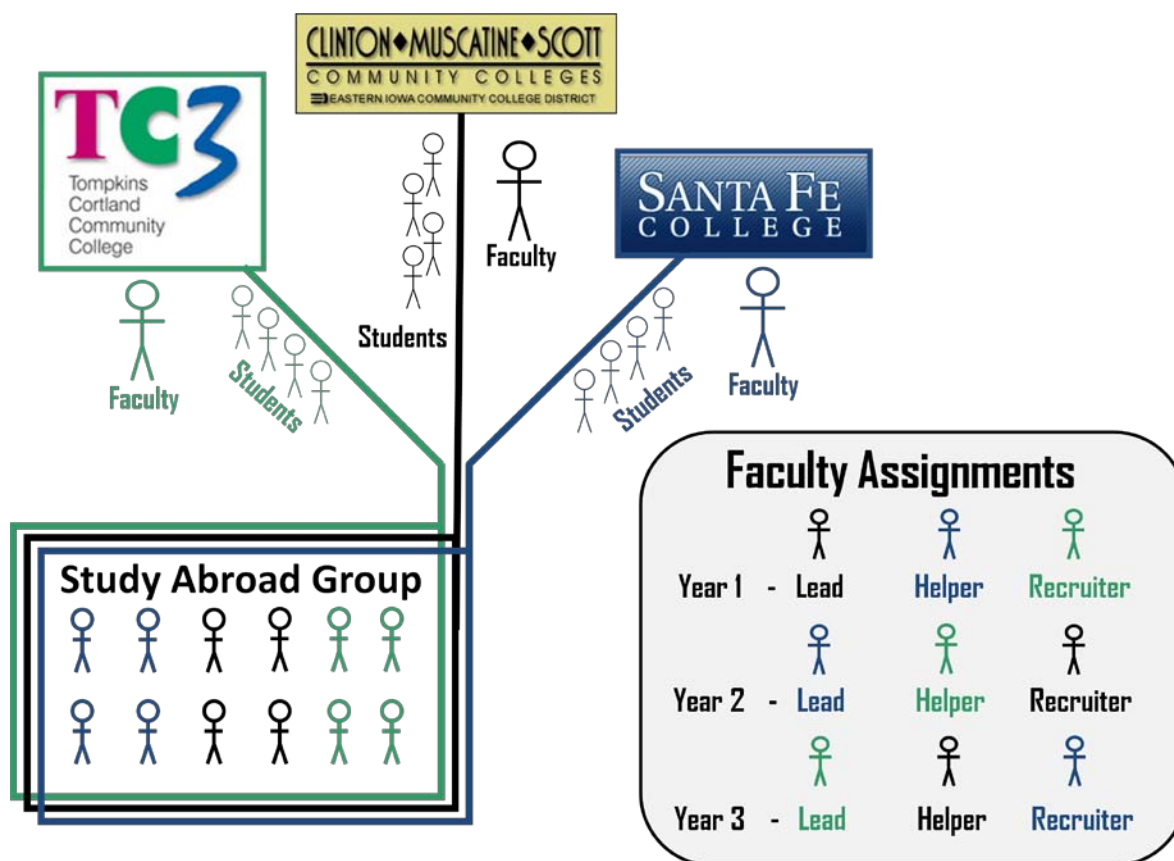


Figure 2. A conceptual model of how Community Colleges for International Development Troika study abroad model operates.

specifically to community colleges and to the needs of their students (Brennan, 2006, p. 32). Figure 2 is a visual concept of how the Troika study abroad model operates.

Identifying the participants. The initial phase of a Troika is identifying which three community colleges will participate in the program. Often many colleges are interested, but it isn't feasible for certain colleges to participate. Administrators, international education directors, and faculty must be passionate about seeing study abroad programs come to fruition. This is where many of the interested colleges begin to withdraw as prospective partners. Because the faculty member will be doing the majority of the work, he or she must

be passionate about the program, willing to work with others, and have the commitment required.

Memorandum of understanding. After the three community colleges and faculty members have been identified, a memorandum of understanding is drafted for the presidents to sign. This memorandum is an official document among the three community colleges pledging their partnership and commitment to the program for a 3-year period. By signing the memorandum, the college agrees to release a faculty member to participate in the program, provide financial support for the faculty member's trip, pay the faculty member for the load of the course, offer four \$750 scholarships per year for students studying abroad, and register four students to participate. Signing a contractual document validates the presidents' support of the faculty and students who will be participating in the program.

Faculty involvement. Because the duration of the program is 3 years, the role of the faculty changes depending on the assignment for the year. At the beginning of the program the faculty designates the role of lead faculty member, program shadow/assistant, and a recruiter. Each of the three faculty members will hold each position during the study abroad program.

The lead faculty member is responsible for the oversight of the program. His or her college will assign the study abroad program to his or her teaching load for the semester when the trip will be taken. The college has no expenses for the faculty this year because fees have been built into the students' contribution to cover the lead faculty member's trip. The lead member will coordinate the group, finalize accommodations within country, teach the pre-trip curriculum, and adjust the final agenda. This faculty member is truly the lead during this year.

The lead faculty member always needs a helping hand as he or she prepares the study abroad experience. The program shadow/assistant's role is to assist the lead when necessary. The primary work load of the course rests on the lead instructor; however, the task of the shadow/assistant is to aid the lead in developing the pre-trip curriculum, setting the agenda, and traveling with the group. According to the memorandum of understanding, the community college employing the shadow/assistant faculty member is responsible for covering his or her trip expenses. However, no teaching load will be given to the shadow/assistant during this year.

During this year the recruiter has little responsibility with the course or the trip compared to the other two years. The recruiter's primary job is to recruit a minimum of four students to participate in the program. In many of the Troika programs, faculty members do not travel with the group. However, this is an option if funding is available through the faculty member's college.

Outcomes and objectives. After the memorandum has been signed by all three presidents, faculty begin to create outcomes and objectives for the program. The primary objectives are discussed previously under *The Necessity of Study Abroad Programs* section. These objectives and outcomes can be accomplished through a variety of avenues. Typically, the program or department who is leading the program coordinates the objectives to complement degrees program students will receive. Currently there are Troikas in nursing, agriculture, sustainable energy, and international marketing (CCID, 2008).

Program itinerary and agenda. The focus of the program is to meet the objectives and outcomes of the course within a specific field of study. A scouting trip is taken by the three faculty members who will be leading the program at least 1 year prior to the study

abroad. On this trip, the costs, accommodations, itinerary, and agenda are set. There activities while in country are specifically designed to achieve the outcomes of the course.

Course work. Because all Troika participants receive credit toward a college degree, the program is academic in nature. Before the trip students spend time reading, researching, and studying the history, customs, and current issues within the country. While on the trip, students keep a journal of their experiences and present a paper and/or make a verbal presentation upon the completion of the program.

The Troika model has made it possible for many community colleges to offer vibrant study abroad programs they could not have provided on their own. Requiring only four students per college lowers the typical required class size and increases the probability that the classes will not be canceled. However, this does not eliminate all barriers community college students face as they prepare to study abroad.

The Community College Student and the Barriers to Study Abroad

The Community College Student

Community colleges educate a significant percentage of today's nontraditional students. These students are adult learners (25 years and older) and/or are part-time students. Many students fitting this profile work and manage family responsibilities while attending college. They often have not traveled far from their local communities. These students represent our primary target market for accessible study abroad programming.

Students want shorter programs, namely, ones lasting a summer or even a few weeks. Besides giving students what they want, short-term programs provide some international exposure to students who otherwise might have none. Participants in short-term, faculty-led

study abroad programs discover that obtaining a passport is easy, traveling to a foreign land is something they can do, and navigating a different culture and country is possible.

Financial Barrier

Community college students are more likely to come from lower-income households. Twenty-nine percent of community college students have incomes of less than \$20,000, and 42.9 percent of student incomes are less than \$30,000 (Bailey & Morest, 2006). A study abroad program can cost up to \$16,000 for a semester experience. This price tag eliminates most students who have limited income. Michael Brennan, the creator of Troika, Marshall McDonald, a faculty in a Troika study abroad, and Adam Fynaardt, a student participant in Troika, all agreed that finances is the number one barrier preventing community college students from studying abroad (M. Brennan, personal communication, April 11, 2007; M. McDonald, personal communication, April 9, 2007; A. Fynaardt, personal communication, April 6, 2007).

Work Responsibilities

Because many community college students are forced to work while attending school, they are not employed in professional positions with significant vacation time. These jobs are hourly with wages between \$8 and \$12 per hour. Because they are in lower-level positions, many do not have the benefit of vacation time. When they work, they get paid, and taking time off places a financial strain on their budget.

Family Responsibilities

Another barrier to participation in study abroad programs in community colleges is students' family responsibilities. Thirty-two percent of community college students have dependent children (Bailey & Morest, 2006). If they are single parents, like many are, they

will need to make arrangements for extended child care while they are away. Many students do not have the financial support needed to study internationally.

Proximity to Home

Community colleges are so successful because of their proximity to their students. Students feel comfortable staying in their community while they earn their college degree. Studying abroad challenges students to leave their comfort zone. Overcoming this fear of being out of their element is something that will need to be accomplished.

Institutional Barriers Facing Study Abroad Programs

Students are not the only group identified as facing barriers in the study abroad arena. Many institutions are faced with obstacles that prevent or limit their offerings of study abroad programs. The following describes a few of these barriers.

Course Enrollment

The community colleges that provide the most opportunities for study abroad programs are typically larger in size. They have more resources and a larger student population to fill the course. Many colleges require a minimum number of students to be enrolled in a class before they will offer it. Smaller institutions can't get the number of students required. Many schools offer a study abroad course; however, it never runs because of low enrollment (Iowa Lakes Community College, personal communication, March 19, 2007).

Administration Support

Another reason many colleges don't offer study abroad programs is lack of administrative support. This lack of support stems from a variety of concerns such as liability, cost versus benefit, and personal indifference toward these types of programs. If the

administration decides not to make study abroad a priority, there will be no opportunities for students.

Faculty Involvement

The support of administration is not enough to make a study abroad program feasible. The faculty behind the course is of equal, if not greater, importance. “They run it, lead it, and improve it. It really is faculty driven” (M. Brennan, personal communication, April 11, 2007). Assigning faculty members to lead this type of course isn’t recommended. They must be passionate, self-motivated, and willing to put in the extra effort required for study abroad to be successful. As more and more full-time faculty are replaced with part-time instructors, addressing this barrier is becoming ever more critical.

Just one of these barriers can stifle any community college study abroad program. If the administration is not supportive, faculty are not willing to execute the challenging task of developing and leading, and students do not register for the course, study abroad programs face extinction. Addressing these barriers is essential to healthy study abroad programs in community colleges.

Outcomes of International Programs

Despite having several barriers to overcome prior to implementing a study abroad program, there are many quality outcomes of such programs. Below are a few of the outcomes of international programs, specifically, study abroad programs at community colleges.

Student Outcomes

Student impact on worldview. Most Americans have a very limited worldview. The closest some Americans get to international exposure is to eat at a Mexican or Chinese

restaurant. Traveling to and living in another country for any length of time assists students in embracing the world. Ninety-eight percent of study abroad returnees state that studying abroad helped them understand other cultures, as well as their own. Because of this understanding, 94 percent of students reported that the experience continues to influence interactions with people from different cultures (Institute for the International Education of Students [IIES], 2004).

Impact on personal growth. Personal growth happens when a person steps away from the familiar and into the unknown. Leaving one's country provides an opportunity for an unfamiliar culture to become familiar. Ninety-seven percent of students who study abroad feel that the experience made them more mature, and 96 percent feel study abroad increased their self-confidence (IIES, 2004).

Impact on career. Community colleges are known for their ability to prepare people to enter the work force. Utilizing study abroad programs opens doors to new career options many students would never have considered. Seventy-six percent of returnees say that the skills learned while abroad influenced their career path. Sixty-two percent of returnees say studying abroad ignited a new career interest they pursued after graduation (IIES, 2004).

Institutional Outcomes

Impact in the classroom. The stimulus for many overseas assignments for community college faculty is to provide an experience that they may bring back to their own classroom through stories and artifacts (Stoessel, 2002). Instructors are able to immediately bring new elements into their classroom as a result of their international experience. In a study conducted by Armstrong (2005), time overseas provided a wealth of institutional material,

anecdotes, and comparative perspectives that no amount of “book learning” could have provided. There is no substitute beyond a certain point for international experience.

Self-respect and self-confidence. Every faculty member craves the respect of his or her colleagues. This idea is also coupled with the notion that other department members and college administrators considered overseas participants risk takers. This consideration confers upon those who travel abroad an unexpected benefit as a result of the overseas assignment. Even the conditions under which a faculty member traveled abroad determines the increment added to professional prestige. Several instructors have identified a component of colleague jealousy as a result of their international experience (Armstrong, 2005). This notoriety can serve a faculty well as they are more invigorated teachers, employees, and workers.

Expanded worldview. Numerous authors have offered a variety of definitions of worldview. For example, Thomas Friedman (2006) asserted that “a worldview is a set of presuppositions (or assumptions) which we hold (consciously or subconsciously) about the basic makeup of our world” (p. 28). Therefore, an expanded worldview is the application of those presuppositions about the basic makeup of the world to an actual experience, which often changes that original worldview (Armstrong, 2005). The evolution of one’s worldview is amplified when he or she is removed from the familiar surroundings of family and home and placed in a new environment. Immersion in another culture, especially one in the developing world, raises one’s level of sensitivity, tolerance, and empathy for the problems of others.

Professional development for faculty. Every year institutions of higher education designate a portion of their budget to professional development. Study abroad programs

provide leadership opportunities that cannot be found in other venues. These trips rejuvenate a passion surrounding the faculty's subject matter that most professional development does not. Compared to studying abroad, conferences and workshops lack the ability to rejuvenate the passion and teaching that are desperately needed in higher education classrooms today. This resurrected passion for teaching and learning affects the culture, coworkers, and students of the institution.

The outcomes identified by community colleges are not much different than those identified by universities and colleges whose students participate in mid- and long-term programs. The Forum on Education Abroad (2008) has developed the document *Standards of Good Practice for Education* which provides guidelines for following student learning and development outcomes for long-term programs. They recommend that,

each organization state their educational objectives that foster student learning and development, and have established, and regularly utilizes, internal and external review processes for assuring that its programs accomplish these objectives: (a) Inter-Cultural Understanding: The organization fosters inter-cultural understanding; (b) Language and Communication: The organization encourages the development of language and/or inter-cultural communication skills; (c) Academic Growth: The program provides academic learning opportunities appropriate to the program's mission; (d) Student Development: The program provides opportunities that encourage student development (e.g., leadership skills, service orientation, maturity, tolerance for ambiguity; Forum on Education Abroad, 2008, p. 3).

The objectives of mid- and long-term study abroad programs are in line with the outcomes of short-term programs. The challenge facing developers of short-term programs is providing

enough academic rigor and cultural exposure in 2 weeks to move students toward the objectives of mid- and long-term study abroad programs.

Summary

Study abroad programs have a long, rich history within education. Since the conception of postsecondary education, students have been traveling from one institution of learning to the next in pursuit of deeper knowledge in their field. Because community colleges are still very young their experiences with study abroad has been limited. The demographics of the students they serve have also played a role in the slow development of these opportunities. Funding agencies were also slow to embrace community colleges who needed federal grant dollars to begin programs. Some would even say this stifled their progression by not offering funding for programs which could meet the needs of community college students. As administrators, faculty, and staff have begun to develop new study abroad models that are better suited for the students they serve, participation has increased.

As community colleges began to embrace a more international perspective, the mission of these institutions has been morphing. Maintaining a locally focused mission while moving toward a global perspective has been at times a tumultuous process for community colleges. However, stakeholders in the colleges are demanding the gradual shift as the global economy invades all business sectors.

One of the solutions community colleges have turned to in order to producing a globally savvy citizen, employee, transfer student, and graduate is short-term study abroad programs. These programs immerse community college students into a culture for 10 days to 4 weeks and provide an incredible opportunity for the participants. The impact of study abroad programs is evident throughout many aspects of community colleges. As the culture

of these colleges continues to embrace a global perspective, study abroad programs will play a greater role in this transformation.

CHAPTER 3. METHODS

In this study, I identified the experiences of students who participated in a short-term study abroad program. Their experiences helped provide insight into the people, places, events, and experiences of study abroad programs and how these experiences play an important role in the mission of the community college. This chapter provides information on the methodological approach used, philosophical assumptions, case study research approach, research design, information on the participants, how the data were collected and analyzed, goodness and trustworthiness criteria, and delimitations and limitations of the study.

Methodological Approach

The methodology approach chosen for this study is a qualitative approach. This methodology allowed me to achieve the purpose of the study by telling the stories of the participants. These stories were rich descriptions of the participants' experience about a particular phenomenon within a specific case.

It is important to explain the importance of qualitative research and how this study utilized this methodology. The key to understanding qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals as they interact within their environment (Merriam, 2002). Taylor and Bogdan (1998) stated that qualitative methodology “refers in the broadest sense to research that produces descriptive data—people’s own written or spoken words and observable behavior” (p. 7). Merriam (2002) went on to state that

the world, or reality, is not the fixed, single agreed upon, or measurable phenomenon that is assumed that is assumed to be positivist, quantitative research. Instead, there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that

change over time. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding what those interpretations are at a particular point in time and in a particular context. (pp. 3-4)

Because of the fluid nature of qualitative research there is no uniform set of techniques or procedures for collecting and analyzing data (Prasad, 2005). However, there are commonly accepted procedures to ensure quality in qualitative research. This study utilized Merriam's (2002, p. 23) guide for assessing the quality of a research project.

In this section the components of the methods for this research project are presented. Each qualitative research project has four basic elements: epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology, and methods (Crotty, 2003). These elements are unique to each study and are used to guide the researcher through the development of the research question to the writing of the conclusions.

First, the epistemology stance, which explains how knowledge is gained by the participants, is presented. The second component of chapter 3 is the theoretical perspective behind the epistemology. The third section is an explanation of the methodology used in the study. Finally, the methods used in this research project are described in detail.

Philosophical Assumption

The qualitative paradigm most appropriate for this particular research project is constructivism. A constructionist epistemological perspective is "the view that all knowledge, and therefore all meaningful reality as such, is contingent upon human practices, being constructed in and out of interaction between human beings and their world, and developed and transmitted within an essentially social context" (Crotty, 2003, p. 42). According to Schwandt (1998), "In this sense, constructivism means that human beings do not find or discover knowledge so much as construct or make it" (p. 237). This active

engagement with others within specific contexts produces, or allows one to construct, the knowledge on which to draw. Moustakas (1994) clarified the concept of constructionism further, stating that:

knowledge of objects resides in the subjective sources of self. . . . Because all knowledge and experience are connected to phenomena, things in consciousness that appear in the surrounding world, inevitably a unity must exist between ourselves as knowers and the things or objects that we come to know and depend upon. (p. 44)

Constructivist researchers in particular strive to understand the contextual underpinnings of a given situation from which individuals are constructing knowledge. Greene (2000) described the first task of the researcher as understanding “people’s constructions of meanings in the context being studied, because it is these constructions that constitute social realities and underlie all human action” (p. 986).

Because of this, the researcher plays an essential role in the building of knowledge as he or she interacts with the participants. The researcher’s and participants’ knowledge building is dependent upon the connectedness and interaction of both parties. Guba and Lincoln (1989) stated, “Epistemologically, the constructivist paradigm denies the possibility of subject-object dualism, suggesting instead that the findings of a study exist precisely because there is an interaction between observer and observed that literally creates what emerges from the inquiry” (p. 44).

According to Guba and Lincoln (1998), in the constructivist view “realities are apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature...and dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding these constructions” (p. 206). This project

adhered to this definition by examining the interaction of humans through observations, informal interviews, the review of participants' journals, and photos of their experience. It was essential to utilize all the mentioned data collection methods listed above to connect with the participants who hold the constructions to the topic under investigation.

Constructionism was appropriate for the study because I was able to understand, through dialogue with participants, how they made meaning of their participation in short-term study abroad programs at a community college. As the participants engaged in the activities of the study abroad program, meaning was constantly developed. It is through this interplay that meaning is born (Crotty, 2003). The outcome of the study describes what meaning has been constructed through the experiences.

Research Approach

Qualitative researchers are driven by the desire to understand how participants experience and make meaning of reality. This reality is marinated in the complexities involved in a given phenomenon that cannot be understood through quantitative methodologies. This is especially true when the phenomenon is context dependent. Furthermore, if little is known about a phenomenon, qualitative methodologies provide the means for in-depth exploration and for discovering relevant variables that can be used in future quantitative studies (Berg, 2004; Marshall & Rossman, 1994).

Case studies are used in a variety of situations to help understand group, organization, social, political, and related phenomena (Yin, 2009). Cronbach (1982), for example, stated that "all social scientists are engaged in case studies" because by their very nature observations "take meaning from their time and place, and from the conceptions held by

those who pose the questions and decide how to tabulate” (p. 75). Merriam (1988) elaborated on this concept by describing case studies as

a basic design that can accommodate a variety of disciplinary perspectives, as well as philosophical perspectives on the nature of research itself. A case study can test theory or build theory, incorporate random or purposive sampling, and include quantitative and qualitative data. (p. 2)

At the heart of a case study is a researcher’s desire to understand real life events in a holistic and meaningful way. The common ground for a case study among all these diverse fields is the desire to understand complex social phenomena (Yin, 2009).

Case study research represents a holistic approach to examining a phenomenon; a case study is an in-depth investigation of a single instance. Unlike other methods that carve up a whole situation into smaller parts, the case study tends to maintain the integrity of the whole with its myriad of interrelationships (Sommer & Sommer, 1997, p. 193).

Because of its diverse applicability, many fields such as psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, social work, business, education, nursing, and community planning, have utilized the case study methodology. Case studies are rooted in qualitative methodologies designed to gather information about a particular setting or person. The scientific benefit of case studies lies in their ability to open the way for discoveries, insights, or hypotheses. Additional benefits include the ability of case studies to test or contribute to theoretical frameworks and to provide comprehensive descriptions. These in-depth descriptions are not considered sampling units that cannot be generalized to additional populations. The generalization of a case study occurs to the theoretical propositions when

the case has been grounded in a strong theoretical framework (Berg, 2004, Lincoln & Guba, 1985, Yin, 2009).

Positionality Statement

Merriam (2002) recommended a “critical self-reflection” by the researcher regarding assumptions, worldview, biases, theoretical orientation, and relationship to the study that may affect the investigation. By letting those who read this project know the positionality of the researcher it helps them understand the biases they may have as a researcher. A reflectivity statement serves to situate the researcher’s biases, personal interests, and geographic and historical influences upon her/his work (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Before my seventh grade year, my parents decided to move the family to Puerto Rico. During his time abroad my brother, sister, and I enrolled in a local Puerto Rican school. Aside from an English class all courses were taught entirely in Spanish. All students wore either a plaid skirt or green pants with a polo shirt as was the school uniform requirement. The only “White” kids in the school were members of my family. We were the three non-Hispanics in the K–12 system and were commonly referred to as the gringos. The Pickard family had left the comforts of our small rural Iowa town where everyone thought, looked, and acted like them for a world they knew little about. Needless to say our time abroad changed our lives forever and for the better.

Because of my time in Puerto Rico I have a bias toward study abroad programs. I believe every student should spend time, no matter the duration, studying abroad. Growth happens exponentially when students are away from the comforts of their own culture and home. The understanding of languages, customs, and cultures experienced abroad cannot be

simulated in a classroom. Studying abroad challenges individuals to rethink the world and brings a clear perspective concerning their own culture.

The rural community in southeast Iowa where I grew up is fairly conservative. My graduating class consisted of 44 students and only 4 of them were non-White. It wasn't that I didn't know about people who were ethnically and culturally different, but there were very few with whom to interact. The opportunity to interact and engage those who were different was not something that had to be done on a regular basis. Leaving the familiar part of the world, where I was in the majority, for Puerto Rico, where I became the minority, helped me gain a better perspective on life. I began to understand how some people in society are treated simply because they are different.

Another part of the positionality to the project is my socioeconomic status. I identify as a middle-class American citizen based on Zweig's (2004) definition. I also believe that most of the participants in this study were in a comparable socioeconomic class, which made it easier to relate to them. Participants also felt comfortable with me and sharing their insights with me.

The next positionality component ties me closely with the case of this research project. I currently serve as Eastern Iowa Community College District's International Education Director (IED). This position allows me to sit at the IED meetings at all CCID annual conferences and summer institutes. I am also the primary developer and one of the faculty members who has led a CCID Troika study abroad program to Ukraine. Because of my active role I have recruited students to the program and been responsible for assigning a final grade based on their participation and course work. I am one of three faculty members

who travel with the group to Ukraine to help oversee the program. During this study I did not participate in the Ukraine study abroad program.

In summary, I am a proponent of study abroad programs no matter their duration. For the purpose of this study I have strived to remain as neutral as possible through all aspects. Being aware of my positionality helped me remain true to the themes of the study.

Research Design

All types of research incorporate some sort of research design. This design attempts to connect the data back to the purpose of the study, the initial research questions, and ultimately morph them into the conclusions. Yin (2009) stated, “A research design is a logical plan for getting from here to there, where here may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and there is some set of conclusions (answers) about these questions” (p. 26). Others have called the research design a “blueprint” (Philliber, Schwab, & Samsloss, 1980) or a “logical model of proof” (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). Whatever the term, the researcher using the design must be the guiding compass of the research endeavor. A carpenter would never build a house without a blueprint nor would a professor teach a course without a syllabus. In the same way, a researcher should not attempt a case study without a research design. Those researchers who hold true to their design ultimately produce a deeper product upon the conclusion of the project.

Components of Research Design

For a case study, Yin (2009) recommended five components of a research design:

- Research questions
- Study propositions
- Unit of analysis

- Linking the data to the propositions
- Criteria for interpreting the findings

Research Questions

The first component sets the foundation for the study. The research question(s) are one of the initial ways to determine if a case study methodology is the right fit for the project. A solid case study research question should be a “how” and/or “why” type of question. These two types of questions are best suited for the case study methodology.

Using the literature review to narrow the research questions was helpful. Throughout the literature review I analyzed studies similar to the proposed case study (Yin, 2009). The recommendations and idea for further study sections of already completed studies served as influences for the research questions.

Study Proposition

The “how” and “why” questions do not direct the researcher toward what to study. Each proposition guides the project in the direction of what should be examined within the case study (Yin, 2009). As more and more propositions are considered, one begins to see where to look for relevant evidence to answer the research questions.

The Unit of Analysis

The third component of a solid research design is to identify the unit of analysis. This step identifies the “case” of the case study. This could be a single individual, group, organization, decision, process, or an event, just to name a few. No matter what the “case” under investigation is, it must be clearly identified when developing the research design.

The unit of analysis used for this study is the CCID Troika study abroad programs. CCID is a nonprofit consortium of member colleges worldwide whose mission is to provide

opportunities for building global relationships that strengthen educational programs and promote economic development. This means their activities and programs are broad, deep, and focused on global education issues as they relate primarily to 2-year colleges (CCID, 2007d).

The CCID consortium is composed of approximately 140 colleges. Of that number about 80 percent are from the U.S. and 20 percent are located in countries on five continents (Australia, Asia, Africa, Europe, and Central and South America; CCID, 2007c). For the member colleges (and their students, faculty and community) CCID provides a wide range of programming to assist community colleges to be the best they can in the global economy. CCID provides multiple methods to share global knowledge with the member colleges, from conferences and special training programs to professional development opportunities. The CCID consortium is managed by a board of directors composed of member college presidents. These presidents are the men and women who engage their communities as they help produce economic growth in the neighborhoods they serve (CCID, 2007d).

The CCID consortium has developed a programming model for short-term study abroad that is “president-driven and faculty-led.” The programming model is nicknamed “Troika” because a minimum of three CCID colleges collaborate on each international program. The primary objective of this model is to provide community college students with greater access to study abroad opportunities (CCID, 2007a).

The Troika programs have seen a gradual increase in participation over the years. In 2006, 84 students and faculty participated in four programs. In 2008, 95 students and 20 faculty from 15 colleges participated in six Troika programs. Participating colleges are seeing benefits such as:

- Making educational, personal, and professional growth available to students;
- Creating international professional development opportunities for faculty;
- Providing CCID member colleges a viable and cost-effective means to sustain programs;
- Strengthening the consortium as a whole by expanding its capacity as a provider of knowledge-based services; and
- Positioning community colleges as the local gateways to global education (CCID, 2007a).

To benefit from CCID's Troika model, participating member colleges must commit to developing a credit course that is linked to the study abroad program content. The faculty who develop this course must meet the requirements of the state and college prior to its offering. Once the course has been developed, faculty recruit a minimum of four students into the Troika study abroad program. These students receive course credits because of their participation in the program.

To help defer some of the cost of the program, colleges award a minimum of \$750 in scholarships to each of the four students who participate. This is a \$3,000 annual financial commitment, which typically is funded by the college foundation. The college also covers the travel expenses for faculty when they are not leading the program and compensate the "lead" faculty member for teaching credit course.

The individuals studied were the primary unit of analysis (Yin, 2009). These individuals were interviewed and observed as methods of data collection. One should always keep in mind that the researcher engaged in an individual case study must have adequate access to the "case," which I did as the researcher.

Obviously, this “case” is not a particular individual but, rather, a portion of a very dynamic organization. These cases are typically tricky to define given that the beginning and ending of the case can be elusive (Yin, 2009). To help identify a particular unit of analysis, consider relating it to the initial research questions of the study. Yin (2009) stated that the selection of the appropriate unit of analysis will start to occur when you accurately specify your primary research questions. If your research questions do not lead to the favoring of one unit of analysis over another, your questions are probably either too vague or too numerous—and you will have trouble doing a case study. (p. 30).

Because of this, I selected the study abroad programs that utilize CCID’s Troika model as the case.

Participants

This case is very dynamic because of the many contributing individuals. Based on Esterberg’s (2002) recommendation, a qualitative researcher should choose participants based on qualities they have which can enhance the research study. The participants were students who participated in a short-term study abroad program. The information gleaned from them was the primary data collected for this study.

The student participants were 18 years of age or older and attending a community college at the time of the study. Most of the programs require the student to be in good standing, both academically and financially, with the college before they are accepted into the study abroad program. Age, gender, race, socioeconomic status, and the like were not considered when selecting participants, although a blend of these participant characteristics was desired.

The initial solicitation of participants recruited 15 participants. Of the 15 participants 13 persisted through the entire study. These participants registered and completed a Troika study abroad through CCID and completed the requirements of their program. The pre-trip interview took place once it was determined that the participant was serious about traveling abroad and was based on if he or she had paid a deposit for the program.

Participants came from a variety of geographic locations across the United States. One of the unique characteristics of a Troika study abroad program is the partnership of three community colleges. These three colleges contribute students, faculty, scholarships, and resources to the program. The colleges are located throughout the United States. For example, one Troika program partnered colleges from Iowa, New York, and Florida. Because of the wide geographic range of the participants, the findings of the study will not be limited to a specific region of the United States. This will help generalize the results throughout the country.

During the summer of 2010 there were six CCID Troika study abroad programs:

- Belize – Biological, Tropical, and Environmental Sciences
- China – The Economic, Social, and Cultural Impact Due to Globalization
- Denmark – Sustainable Energy
- Ecuador – Transcultural Nursing
- Guatemala – Life in Modern Guatemala: Old and New
- Ukraine – Global Business in an Emerging Democracy

The 13 participants were identified from these six programs. The goal was to have 2 students from each of the program areas participate in the study. The Guatemala program was not

utilized because it had already completed in January prior to start of this study. All the other programs were represented in this study.

The rationale for choosing a minimum of two participants from each program was to have a representation from across the United States. This representation did not bind the study to a specific geographic region. Whether the student was attending a community college located in the East, Midwest, or West, the themes transcend any geographic boundaries. Another rationale for selecting two participants from each program was to get a representation from a variety of community colleges. These community colleges varied in size, student demographics, graduation requirements, tuition rates, and the like. The themes that emerged went beyond the boundaries of the differences of individual community colleges. Another rationale was to capture data from participants who studied abroad in a variety of cultural contexts. Simply studying only one Troika program would not have provided a rich enough study. Sampling from all available programs did not limit the data to one specific cultural context.

The student participants were interviewed prior to their study abroad experience, and then a follow-up interview was conducted upon the conclusion of their program. All participants who took part in a CCID Troika study abroad program differed in gender, age, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, major, the community college attended, credits earned, and geographic region of the United States.

The participants were accessed through CCID. This organization coordinates all the Troika study abroad programs. Part of this coordination includes collecting applications and program fees, booking airline tickets, and tabulating evaluations upon completion of the program. CCID has contact information for each student participating in a Troika, and this

information was used to solicit participants. A form e-mail was used as the method of solicitation of participants. Enough participants were identified through this process. A follow up e-mail was sent and a phone call was made to set up the initial interview.

Data Collecting Procedures

Data for a case study can be collected from a variety of sources using multiple methods. However, there are some consistent methods by which most of the data for a case study will stem. Yin (2009), Stake (1995), and Merriam (1988) all agreed the three primary ways to collect data for a case study is through data mining documents, interviewing participants, and direct observation. Each of these sources is associated with a type of data or evidence and increases the depth, goodness, and trustworthiness of a research study.

Data Mining

Documents are commonly reviewed by researchers using all kinds of methodology, not just case studies. All case studies should incorporate this into the data collection method. This type of data comes in a variety of forms, and the researcher should devote substantial time and energy to it. Some of these documents could include, but are not limited to letters, memoranda, e-mails, agendas, meeting minutes, proposals, and news clippings. The evolution of the Internet and e-mail has made the task of accessing these documents significantly easier. An advantage of documents is they can be viewed repeatedly and will not change over time. They also have the exact names, references, and details of an event (Yin, 2009). The documents that were used in the data mining process were:

- Students' travel journals
- Students' trip reports

- Student evaluations of the program
- CCID Web site and program material provided to students and faculty

Interviews

The second category of collecting data is interviews. This was the most important source of case study data. These guided conversations were more fluid in nature, which allowed for the flexibility to pursue opportunities for additional information (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). This is why a researcher's listening and questioning skills are stressed. It is critical to develop a nonbiased, nonjudgmental relationship with the interviewee. If they feel more like an informant than a respondent, the interviewer is doing his or her job well.

The student participants were interviewed twice. The first interview was conducted prior to the overseas trip, and the second was conducted upon the conclusion of the program. This provided pre- and post-trip insights into the experience of the participants. Both interviews lasted about an hour in length, and I used an interview guide (see Appendix A and B). The interview guide was developed based on suggestions from research courses taken, my personal experience, and recommendations from dissertation committee members and classmates.

The interviews were conducted over the telephone because of the large geographic distance between participants. This method is not preferred but was necessary to include a wide range of participants.

Five Most Memorable Photos

The use of visual data has become a prominent approach in qualitative research in general (Banks, 2007). The roots of visual data are grounded in areas such as visual anthropology and have been used in these arenas for some time. In today's world students are

inundated with images throughout society (Banks, 2007). Facebook and YouTube Web sites are visited daily by many Americans, including our students. They view and upload images and videos as they make meaning of their lives. The advancements in technology have enabled people to capture, edit, and produce images at an exponential rate.

An image may be able to reveal sociological insight not accessible by any other means (Banks, 2007). The saying, “a picture is worth a 1,000 words,” applies here. Images also give those who are unable to communicate well, either verbally or in written form, the ability to express themselves (Banks, 2007).

The most memorable photos emphasized some of the themes revealed in this project. Accompanying the interviews of the participants with an image of the experience contributed to the goodness and trustworthiness of the data. The echoing of themes through a variety of sources produced the desired richness of the study.

Each participant was asked to submit five memorable photos that were examples of meaning from their trip. These photos were e-mailed from the participant to me. Along with each photo the participants provided a brief description of why the photo was so meaningful, and during the post-trip interview additional questions were asked about the photos to ensure that thick, rich data had been collected.

Data Collection Timeline

The timeline for completing the data collection process was as follows:

- Fall 2009
 - Gained approval from Iowa State University’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) for the data collection process.

- January–March 2010
 - Identified participants.
- April/May 2010
 - Conducted pre-trip interviews with faculty and student participants.
 - Transcribed the interviews.
 - Provided transcribed interviews to participants for clarifications, additions, or retractions.
- June/July 2010
 - Conducted post-trip interviews with faculty and student participants.
 - Transcribed the interviews.
 - Provided transcribed interviews to participants for clarifications, additions, or retractions.
- August/September 2010
 - Drafted the narrative of the results and analysis.
- October 2010
 - Sent results and analysis to participants for member checks and feedback.
 - Finalized the results and analysis.
 - Wrote conclusions and suggestions for further study.

Data Analysis

Once all data were collected, the analysis process began. The first step was to read, in their entirety, all interviews in one sitting. As the interviews were read, I open coded the transcriptions utilizing the process recommended by Esterberg (2002). During the open coding process the researcher works line by line identifying themes in categories that seem to

be of interest to the research project. The goal is to remain open to whatever themes emerge from the data. I worked hard to suppress biases and preconceived ideas.

During the second reading of the interviews, I utilized codes developed during the first reading. Recurring themes began to emerge. These recurring themes were laid out and then categorized. Often multiple themes were grouped together to form major themes. Once a solid grasp on the themes was reached I reread the interviews and utilized a more focused coding, as recommended by Esterberg (2002). This focused coding helped solidify the findings and themes of the project.

To help triangulate the data, I also incorporated information found in students' travel journals and trip reports. These journals were kept by study abroad students while they were in the foreign country. Many of the participants also were required to submit a trip report to their instructor as one of the requirements of the program. These reports were also read and utilized in the data collection process. The participants also sent me their five most memorable photos from their trip. They provided a brief description of why each photo was memorable and questions pertaining to the photos were asked during the post-trip interview. These images also provided support for the themes found in the research. During the follow-up interview, the questions pertaining to the photos helped clarify the meaning of the images. This data collection method was enlightening and enhanced triangulation of the project.

The step of linking the data to the propositions required me to peer into a case study crystal ball and project what data analysis steps would need to be taken. Because a variety of analysis techniques can be used, familiarizing oneself with what is available is essential. Most researchers are not aware of how to analyze case study data until it is the next step in the research process. The examination, categorization, tabulation, and testing of the data

happens during this step (Yin, 2009). Understanding how this should be completed is essential prior to conducting a case study. It would have been discouraging to get to the analytical stage of a study and not know what to do with the data.

Criteria for Interpreting the Findings

Interpreting the data from a case study involves rummaging through the information in search of patterns. Stake (1995) explained,

The search for meaning often is a search for patterns, for consistency, for consistency within certain conditions, which we call correspondence. . . . We can look for patterns immediately while we are reviewing documents, observing, or interviewing—or we can code the records, aggregate frequencies, and find patterns that way. (p. 78)

Addressing rival explanations for the data collected is also encouraged during this step. Understanding what data must be collected to stand against alternative explanations must be thought through prior to the data collection stage rather than after (Yin, 2009). Taking the time to consider this portion during the research design saves time and energy because data will not need to be recollected and analyzed.

Trustworthiness, Validity, and Triangulation

Qualitative research does not have a rigid blueprint that must be followed when conducting research. The research design can be as creative as a piece of art. In the same way that an art teacher would not tell every artist that he or she must create in the same way, no one should do the same to a qualitative researcher. However, there is a way to recognize good qualitative research in the same way quality art is recognized. This section explores what components qualitative research must contain to be considered valid and trustworthy.

One of the strengths of qualitative research is validity. Validity is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, participant, or the readers of account (Creswell & Miller, 2000). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), the issues of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study are dependent on validity.

As a guideline for promoting validity and reliability for my research project, I utilized Merriam's (2002, p. 23) table on what one should look for when evaluating qualitative research. The goal is always to present a first-class qualitative study in which the findings would hold a high-level of goodness and trustworthiness. The goodness and trustworthiness are based on triangulation of the data, prolonged engagement in the field, member checks, peer debriefing, maximum variation, and an audit trail.

Triangulation

Using multiple investigators, sources of data, and data collection methods to confirm emerging findings is known as triangulation (Merriam, 2002). During this research the following data collection methods were used: interviews with faculty and students, observations, data mining of relevant documents, a review of students' travel journals, and a review of each participant's five most memorable photos from their study abroad experience. Because multiple data collection methods were used in this study, a high level of triangulation was obtained.

Adequate Engagement in Data Collection

The longer one is in the field, the better grasp he or she has on a topic. Creswell (2009) stated that prolonged engagement in the field allows the researcher to "develop an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under study and can convey detail about the site and

the people that lends credibility to the narrative account” (p. 192). For this study I collected data from participants in the following ways:

- Prior to their study abroad trip, all participants were interviewed.
- During the overseas trip, participants took their five most memorable photos and kept a travel journal of their experiences.
- After the program had concluded, all participants were interviewed a second time, and memorable photos and trip reports were collected about their experiences.
- For some of the programs, students were required to submit a trip report about their experiences; these reports were analyzed and contributed to the themes of the study.

The anticipated amount of engagement and time spent in the field during this study was adequate for the data that needed to be collected. Obviously, the more time and larger amounts of data that can be collected always increases the goodness and trustworthiness of a project.

Member Checks

Another way to help ensure the goodness and trustworthiness of a research project is to perform member checks. Member checks are done when the tentative interpretations of the data are taken back to the participants. The sources of the data are asked to add, retract, or clarify the data. This helps ensure reliability of the results (Merriam, 2002). Creswell (2009) stated that member checks do not involve “taking back the raw transcripts to check for accuracy; instead, the researcher takes back parts of the polished product, such as the themes, the case analysis, . . . the description, and so forth” (p. 191). Once the interviews had been transcribed and coded, themes identified, and conclusions drawn, the manuscript was sent to

the participants for their review. They were encouraged to provide feedback based on my conclusions.

Peer Review/Examination

Everyone knows a fresh set of eyes on a project can often expose any blind spots the research may have. During this study I utilized a classmate from the Education Leadership and Policies Studies program at Iowa State University. The peer reviewer had finished his case study dissertation and was someone I knew well. Based on the peer reviewer's experience and relationship with me he was trusted to provide critical feedback on this research. This peer reviewer had done a case study dissertation, so he was familiar with qualitative research and the case study methodology. Merriam (2002) recommended discussing the process of study and the concurrency of emerging findings with the raw data and with the tentative interpretations as the narrative is drafted and throughout the revisions. These peers "review and ask questions about the qualitative study so that the account will resonate with people other than the researcher" (Creswell, 2009, p. 192).

Rich, Thick Descriptions

Throughout this study I provided detailed descriptions of the experience of students in community colleges who participated in short-term study abroad programs. As Creswell (2009) stated, "This description may transport readers to the setting and give the discussion an element of shared experiences" (pp. 191-192). Transporting readers into the story can be accomplished only through rich, thick descriptions.

Maximum Variation

Purposely seeking variation or diversity in additional sampling selections allows for a greater range of application of the findings by the consumers of the research (Merriam, 2002).

The number of participants in this study achieved maximum variation based on the saturation of the data.

Audit Trail

Another technique that helps with the goodness and trustworthiness of a qualitative study is an audit trail (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Merriam (2002) described an audit trail as “a detailed account of the methods, procedures, and decision points in carrying out the study” (p. 31). An audit trail was utilized in this way during the research project (see Appendix C).

Overall the attention to detail produced a research product rich in goodness and trustworthiness. Additional effort should be made in this area to insure the highest quality possible.

Review and Approval

The concept of this topic was first considered in a Qualitative Research course taught by Dr. Robyn Cooper at Iowa State University in the summer of 2008. The concept was then revisited and revised in a later course taught by Dr. Frankie Laanan during the summer of 2009 and discussed at length with my major professor, Dr. Larry Ebbers, before it was ready for proposal to my dissertation committee.

The organizational plan for this study was submitted to Iowa State University’s IRB for review and approved prior to conducting human subjects research (Appendix D). Upon approval from the IRB potential participants were contacted by e-mail to solicit their interest in the study. A follow-up e-mail was disseminated to interested participants clearly outlining the intent of the research project (Appendix E). This second e-mail served as a formal request for participation in the study.

Each participant agreed to two 1-hour interviews and submission of their five most meaningful photos and their travel journals. The participation requirements were outlined in the Informed Consent Form (Appendix F) prior to completion of the interviews. Participants were asked to participate in member checks once the initial draft of the findings section of the dissertation had been composed. Participants then were asked to check data, correct errors or inadequacies, and offer additional information they felt appropriate to the study.

Delimitations

This case study utilized CCID's Troika study abroad programs. These programs are available only to CCID member colleges who collaborated with other member colleges to make a successful program. Member colleges are recognized on two different levels. The member college has many of the advantages as the board college with the exception of representation on the board. Currently the board consists of 30 colleges, and replacement colleges are considered when a seat becomes vacant or a college is no longer in good standing with the organization.

Both the board and member colleges are required to pay yearly dues to the organization. These dues provide for the services of CCID, including the coordination of Troika programs. Each Troika program is limited to the three colleges who have committed to sending students, assigning faculty, and providing presidential support from the college. The impact from this is that only member, dues-paying colleges are represented in this study.

This study is also delimited because the participants come from only the six Troika programs CCID offers. The duration of time spent abroad is short term in length, typically lasting 2 weeks or less.

Limitations

There are many short-term study abroad models that community colleges utilize. This study examines only one type of short-term program. The Troika model has been used by CCID and their board and member colleges for several years. Those involved feel it is meeting the needs of their institutions.

Another limitation to the study is how young the Troika model is. The Troika model was the brainchild of Michael Brennen who developed it in 2003–2004. Since then there have been six programs developed that utilize the Troika model.

Summary

The purpose of this study is to examine how participants of short-term community college study abroad programs make meaning of their experience. This chapter provided the methodological framework that was used for this study. More specifically, the characteristics of a qualitative case study were presented as the underpinning framework for the study. These characteristics are the methodological approach, philosophical assumptions, the research approach, the researcher's positionality statement, the research design, a description of the participants, how the data were collected, the review and approval to conduct the research, how the data were analyzed, trustworthiness, delimitations, and limitations.

CHAPTER 4. FINDINGS

Simple exchanges can break down walls between us, for when people come together and speak to one another and share a common experience, then their common humanity is revealed.

President George W. Bush

This chapter describes the cases of community college students who participated in short-term study abroad programs. Included is a description of CCID and the Troika study abroad model, the concept of the program, the students who participated in the study, and what participants acquired from studying abroad. I used data gained during an in-depth two-interview process with the study abroad participants. The first set of interviews was conducted prior to the students participating in the study abroad program, and the second set was conducted shortly after they returned. The participants in this study were all assigned pseudonyms in an attempt to protect their confidentiality to the greatest extent possible.

This chapter also provides themes that emerged during the data analysis of this case study. These themes supply a framework for developing a greater understanding of short-term study abroad programs at community colleges. The participants shared the following common themes:

- International experiences encourage participants to study abroad
- Student perception of faculty leading the study abroad program is key to study abroad participation
- Expanded worldview through human interaction
- Studying abroad produces a desire to travel internationally
- Participants earn intellectual, social, professional, and personal capital as a result of studying abroad

Description of the Case

Community Colleges for International Development (CCID)

CCID is a consortium of colleges from around the world. Stateside, the consortium serves primarily community colleges (or former community colleges such as Florida community colleges that have transitioned into colleges that offer bachelor's degrees) and colleges with similar missions from around the world. This section describes the history of CCID and the members it serves.

The formation of the CCID was first discussed in 1976 in a conversation between Dr. Maxwell C. King, president of Brevard Community College, and Dr. Robert L. Brueder, then the assistant to the president at Brevard. King and Brueder believed that a consortium of community colleges would find more international opportunities than a single college would find, and thus a cooperative of like-minded, internationally focused community and technical colleges was established (CCID, 2010).

The initial concept was to keep the consortium small in order to facilitate communication and coordination. Two additional requirements for members were personal presidential involvement and the willingness to commit resources to the cooperative. The cooperative was formed in October 1976 with five member colleges and was known as simply "The Cooperative." The colleges and presidents who were the first members of the international cooperative that was later to become CCID (CCID, 2010) are.

- Brevard Community College, Maxwell C. King, President
- Bunker Hill Community College, Harold Shively, President
- Delaware Technical and Community College, John R. Kotula, President

- Florida Junior College at Jacksonville, Ben Wygle, President
- Navarro Community College, Kenneth P. Walker, President

In May 1979, the Cooperative filed for incorporation under the laws of the state of Florida as the Community College Corporation for International Development, Incorporated, a not-for-profit corporation. By 1980, the board of directors had settled into the pattern of offering an open conference on international education each winter and a smaller invitational conference each summer. The Cooperative perceived the winter conference as a partial fulfillment of its national leadership role in advancing the cause of community colleges in international education. The conference also provided income that could be used for operations. The summer conference was used for discussion and planning. Attendance was generally limited to Cooperative members and guests. Board meetings were scheduled at both conferences (CCID, 2010).

Further organizational changes were made to facilitate operation as a corporation. The fiscal year was established as July through June. Because of a conflict with Florida law over the term “cooperative,” the name of the corporation was changed to Community Colleges for International Development, Inc. The acronym CCID soon became popular and eventually became the preferred working title (CCID, 2010).

By the end of 1980, CCID had developed the organizational structure and operational philosophy that would support the continued development of the consortium. It had acquired two major overseas clients, the Republic of China, Taiwan, and the Republic of Suriname, both of whom are still active with CCID. The successful winter and summer conferences had set a pattern that would be continued. CCID had developed good working relationships with AACJC and CIE. All of the elements were in place for continued success.

After decades of discussion, the membership philosophy of CCID is still developing. The rapid membership growth of the 1980s and 1990s has produced a dynamic organization. The value of a larger membership has proven its worth, both in terms of dues revenue and increased access to college resources for project activities. Currently, CCID comprises approximately 170 colleges. Of that number about 80 percent are from the U.S. and 20 percent are located in countries on five continents (Australia, Asia, Africa, Europe, Central and South America; CCID, 2007b).

CCID management concepts have functioned well, although the increased number of CCID colleges has placed some strain on communications and coordination. Communications and information technology advances offer CCID the opportunity for greater flexibility and responsiveness in this area. The interest and participation of the member presidents has been important to the success of CCID.

CCID projects and activities have been many and varied and have been beneficial to CCID, its members, and its clients. Perhaps the real measure of the effectiveness of the consortium is its impact on the members and affiliates. Most of the members and many of the affiliates had little experience with international education when they joined CCID. Many now have varied and active international programs that were developed at least to some degree using contacts and expertise acquired through CCID.

The belief that community colleges should be involved in international education is now widely accepted among community college educators (Institute of International Education, 2004). CCID has played a major role in this major attitudinal shift through its annual conferences and the educators' visits to Taiwan. Although the university community is somewhat less convinced, USAID, U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and

Cultural Affairs, and other agencies are actively seeking ways to involve community colleges in international activities.

CCID has proven that community colleges can participate effectively in international development. The initial rationale for internationalizing the community college (responsibility to the student, faculty, and community) is still valid and continues to gain more adherents.

Today CCID has expanded its focus to include:

- Providing opportunities for internationalizing the college,
- Sponsoring programs of international studies and exchanges,
- Developing linkages among institutions of the world, and
- Providing technical educational assistance to other countries (CCID, 2007b).

Providing opportunities for internationalizing the college develops an informed community and an enriched student population that can function independently and successfully in a global setting. CCID provides leadership in the development of international post-secondary education programs around the world through participation in the consortium. CCID's members provide their students and their community with a unique array of personal and professional growth opportunities, from special language and culture studies to increasing the capabilities of local organizations to work more effectively with international businesses, government, and educational institutions for social and economic development (CCID, 2007b).

Part of internationalizing the college consists of sponsoring programs of international studies and exchanges. This promotes the understanding of cultural differences and the value of diversity, making people more effective in their own society and the world. CCID's

exchange programs and international studies highlight the similarities and differences among participants and institutions, building transcultural capabilities that are of vital importance to success in a global economy. From student study abroad to faculty teaching assignments, members are developing the skills and knowledge needed to improve their understanding and appreciation of different cultures. This increases their success in every aspect of living and working in a worldwide system, including business practices, communication methods, and pedagogies of other countries (CCID, 2007b).

For studies and exchanges, international partners are essential. Developing linkages among institutions of the world to share information, gain insight, and advance by improving individual's knowledge of the world in relevant disciplines and technologies, CCID is dedicated to the development of long-term relationships and reliable contacts that will serve our educational, governmental, and business institutions on an international level. Their world-wide network of scholars and institutions and their linkages through the Internet provide the means to exchange information routinely across a broad range of subjects. CCID has a database of capabilities and an experience base from which to build practical and affordable programs to assist businesses and government organizations in carrying out their international missions more effectively (CCID, 2007b).

As these linkages evolve, CCID thrives at providing technical educational assistance to other countries to build and use state-of-the-art models through which top quality technical and vocational programs can be established and sustained. CCID's member colleges work together to provide teams of experts unequalled in the world for quality education. More than 300 programs of study gleaned from 22 years of international training and experience are available. Leading edge technology is blended with practical, hands-on delivery to maximize

the transfer of critical skills and teaching techniques for short- and long-term programs both in-country and at CCID colleges in the United States and Canada (CCID, 2007b).

Troika Study Abroad Model

The CCID consortium has developed a study abroad programming model for short-term study abroad that is “president-driven and faculty-led.” The programming model is nicknamed “Troika” because a minimum of three CCID colleges collaborate on each international program. Troika (troi'kə), a noun, is defined as “any group of three persons, nations, etc., acting equally in unison to exert influence, control, or the like” (Ask.com, 2009). The primary objective of this model is to provide community college students with greater access to study abroad opportunities.

The benefits of utilizing such a model within the organization are to:

- Deliver immediate educational benefits to students,
- Provide faculty with extraordinary professional development opportunities,
- Give CCID member colleges a viable and cost-effective means to sustain programs,
- Strengthen the consortium as a whole by expanding its capacity as a provider of knowledge-based services, and
- Position community colleges as the local gateways to global education (CCID, 2007a).

This model is unique in the way it uses a collaborative approach. Collaboration is at the foundation of CCID, which is why this model fits well within the organization. The unique features of the Troika model are that:

- Faculty from different colleges take turns as the “lead” faculty member,
- Traditional barriers are removed with “scholarship provision” and “open source” approach, and
- The field of study and a strong in-country partner determine country selection (CCID, 2007a).

Further, the college has to not only buy into the model, but also has to contribute in the following ways:

- Develop a credit course linked to program content,
- Recruit a minimum of four students for each “Troika” program in which the college participates,
- Award a minimum of four \$750 scholarships (\$3,000) for each program annually,
- Cover travel expenses for faculty the year before they serve as “lead,” and
- Compensate “lead” faculty for teaching a credit course (CCID, 2007a).

Finally, this past year CCID organized the following Troika study abroad programs:

- Belize – Biological, Tropical and Environmental Sciences
- China – China's Economic, Social and Cultural Impact Due to Globalization
- Denmark – Innovation, Experience Economy and Event Management
- Ecuador – Transcultural Nursing
- Guatemala – Life in Modern Guatemala: The Old and New
- Ukraine – Global Business in an Emerging Democracy (CCID, 2008) .

For this study participants were solicited from all of the programs except the Guatemala program. The participants in the Guatemala program were not used in the study because their

program had ended prior to this study. For a more detailed description of a Troika study abroad program see Appendix G for an example syllabus used in the Ukraine program.

Description of the Participants

In this study 13 participants from five different study abroad programs contributed to this project. Pseudonyms were given to each participant to conceal their identity.

James Bavard

The first participant in our study enjoys a good laugh, will lead a group when needed, and enjoys adventure. James, a nontraditional student, was the father of a 24-year-old daughter and a 16-year-old son. His daughter was no longer living at home and his son was splitting living time between him and his ex-wife.

James began school about four years ago to jump start a lagging career with mediocre chances of advancement. James explained it this way:

I grew up out in the West Coast, and I came out to [East Coast State] about 30 years ago. [I] did all right employment wise but nothing special. I started going to college about four years ago to get a career going. Nursing sounded good. It evolved into very special relationship for me. I really, really love the work that I am doing as a nurse even though I am just starting it. It has been life changing, and I very happy with who I am and where I am in life right now. (Bavard pre-trip interview)

James was holding a part-time position at a local hospital as a technician. The hospital had agreed to employ him full-time once he graduated from school. Family, work, and school was occupying most of his time, but in his free time James enjoys working out, spending time with his friends, attending church, volunteering at the Ronald McDonald house, and going to art festivals.

The community where James was living is a suburb in a large metropolitan area. The homes in the community are, “fairly established and most of the homes are at least 20–30 years old” (Bavard, pre-trip interview). There was plenty to do in the area with “a decent amount of shopping areas nearby but also plenty of areas to run and parks and stuff like that” (Bavard, pre-trip interview). James also classified his community as fairly diverse, describing it in this light:

Culturally it’s not a total slice of America but, yeah, it’s pretty diverse. I consider [City 1] and [City 2] area part of my community even the residential community. The [City 1] community is very diverse with a lot of Asian and Hispanic particular influence. (Bavard pre-trip interview)

James’s family is part of the Asian influence within his community that he speaks about. Diversity for James is as common as mother and father. He has been around it since the day he was born:

My mother [was] born and raised in Japan and she is living in [West Coast City 1] right now. She visited Europe and [has been] back and forth to Japan. My father traveled around a little bit. [He] went to South America [and] of course to Japan and Korea. (Bavard pre-trip interview)

Being raised by parents who were well traveled enlightened him of things that are worldly and gave him an appreciation of cultures. His two years of military service in Europe also contributed to his comfort level for traveling overseas with a study abroad program.

James was very excited about the opportunity to study abroad even if he didn’t have “any other program to choose from. If it wasn’t this [program], I wouldn’t be going on any program” (Bavard pre-trip interview). James continued,

[Having] the opportunity to visit an interesting culture which I love . . . and also to do it in the realm of healthcare nursing, that is huge. To be able to do that with an experienced program that I will visit this culture [and] I will be able to build a base of transcultural nursing. (Bavard pre-trip interview)

The combination of an interesting culture and country and within his program of study made this program a perfect fit for James.

Prior to his trip James expressed what this experience would mean to him and his future:

I really have a thirst for learning and new experiences, and I think this is going to just be a huge opportunity to appreciate and enjoy. It[’s] just going to be a great way to match my life experiences. I am truly grateful I am going to be on the trip. (Bavard pre-trip interview)

Brenda Carter

Brenda was a business administration major for the moment with thoughts of getting into the field of human services. Brenda, a traditional age student, was living with her father. She considered her family very wealthy and had had a life of privilege. Many students find it difficult to finance their study abroad program; this was not the case with Brenda.

I would definitely say [the study abroad program] is expensive to other people. So far talking to my class, other people have had a problem with [coming up with the money]. I’m not really paying, my parents are so it’s not a big deal to me. (Carter pre-trip interview)

Brenda considered herself a bit shy when in front of a group, but opens up once she gets to know you. “I can be very shy like in front of when I have to do presentations

definitely. That brings out a lot of my shyness but once I get to know people I will talk forever” (Carter pre-trip interview). Her shyness had not prevented her from living life to the fullest. She enjoys a good adventure which keeps her life interesting. “I would definitely say adventure I like to explore and learn new things. I think this is why I am going on this trip because I want to learn a new culture” (Carter pre-trip interview).

Tabby Caldaron

Not all traditional age community college students live at home while attending college. Although young, Tabby was very independent with great aspirations for her life. She described herself in the following way:

I am 20 years old. I just graduated high school last year so I just now finishing up my first year of college. I live in an apartment away from my mom which is pretty awesome. It's nice to be somewhere else that is not a dorm but it's not like completely out there. I lived my friends that I grew up with. I am a business major obviously. I'm in the entrepreneur concentration at my school. My dream job is to own and run a reception/event center. (Caldaron pre-trip interview)

Her independence had come at a bit of a cost. She was working as a work study at her local community college so she could afford to live on her own.

Tabby was living in a very diverse urban community:

It definitely is city life. Everything like all the businesses that are not bars or restaurants shut down at 6 p.m. or 7 p.m. You can't go to CVS down the street and it won't be open. But you can go down to Dublin's pub and that will be open. . . .

There's quite a bit of clubs. It's a pretty liberal area. We live in the fruit loop. It's this block and there's a lot of gay culture. (Caldaron pre-trip interview)

Despite her proximity to a vibrant night life Tabby enjoyed spending her time in a good story:

I read a lot and I watch TV a lot. I know that sounds bad but I get really interested in stories and the progress the character takes in a story. That's what intrigues me more than the ending. I mostly know how stories are going in but I don't really care about the ending but I care about what the character is going to go through. (Caldaron pre-trip interview)

Tabby possessed a very unique set of interests. She knows quite a bit about Japanese culture, was taking mixed martial arts lessons, attended church every Sunday, traveled to Mexico and Canada, and regularly took medicine for ADHD (Caldaron pre-trip interview). Her uniqueness makes her a very diverse and fascinating person. Participating in a studying abroad program enhanced her life experiences.

Jordan Fields

The next participant is a minority in his field of study, not because of his race, but because of his gender.

I'm a nursing student at [Eastern Community College] in [East Coast State]. I have been working in surgery as an attendant for several years now and I have enjoyed that. [I'm] just trying to pursue a degree in nursing and give myself some new opportunities in the medical field. I have spent a lot of time doing that the past couple of years (Fields pre-trip interview).

In his spare time Jordan was utilizing some of his musical talents at his local church. He enjoyed playing the guitar and got to play with a band on Sunday mornings at church

(Fields pre-trip interview). Sunday mornings were a chance for Jordan to get his mind off of nursing and relax from the rigorous studies of the program.

Like many of the participants in this project finding the financial resource required for a study abroad program nearly prevented him from participating. Although Jordan was working part-time to support himself he did not consider himself wealthy person.

I guess if I had to put a technical classification [on myself I would consider myself] lower middle class. I've been blessed and I'm not struggling day-to-day to put food on the table or anything like that. I'm not exactly raking in the dough either though. . . . Fortunately we did get help from [Eastern Community College] and I don't know if that's true across the board for the other community colleges but [Eastern] did give us some assistance for [the study abroad program]. (Fields pre-trip interview)

Jordan may not have been rich but he had a wealth of international experience:

I went to Romania couple years ago. . . . It was a week-long trip and we went to serve a church, a mission trip. We went to Romania to help a local pastor with vacation Bible school. We did a few other things . . . as far as improving his facilities. . . . I had a great time with the kids and I got to meet a lot of kids. Just to do some of the activities with them and spend some time with them to help the pastor there establish some relationships in the villages. Just to give him an opportunity to reach out to some people in the countryside there in Romania. It was a great experience. (Fields pre-trip interview)

Jordan also had a sense of school pride. He believed Eastern Community College provides a great nursing program for an affordable price. He felt the faculty members in the nursing program do an excellent job and are quality educators. Jordan felt good about his

time at Eastern Community College and was looking forward to passing his nursing board exams in the near future.

Julie Licklighter

The next participant was also a nursing student from a small Midwest town. Julie described her simple life in the following way:

I am the oldest of three kids. I have two younger brothers both still in high school. I've lived in [Midwest town] my entire life. I haven't really had a whole lot of opportunity to travel just yet. . . . I'm 24 and going to school for nursing. . . . I live in a very small town. The population is only a couple of thousand if that. The majority of the people who live here are predominately White so there's not a whole lot of diversity. . . . It's kind of upscale a little bit as far as the homes go and the yards and you know the gardens and all that type of thing. It's safe; there's not a lot of crime here. Sports are a huge thing you know like football and all that stuff. Everybody knows about when there's a football game in who won and who did what. (Licklighter pre-trip interview)

Despite not having the opportunity to study abroad, the concept had been in her life since her dad remarried over 20 years ago.

My stepmom is a Spanish teacher at a high school in [Midwest City]. Every four years she takes her students or gives them an opportunity to [study abroad] wherever it is they're going. They go [abroad] for a couple of weeks. They're probably doing the same type of thing that we're doing except [my program] is in nursing. . . . I went with her and my dad to Spain and Ireland last time they went for the class trip and I loved it. It was the first time out of the country and I love to travel. Once I'm done

with school if I have the financial means traveling will definitely be something I'm interested in doing. (Licklighter pre-trip interview)

Julie was also very active in the nursing club at her community college. She was leading by example and contributing the best way she knew how:

I am the secretary of the nursing club. There are meetings once a month that . . . anybody in the nursing program or prerequisite [courses] for the nursing program is welcome to come. We have guest speakers come in and talk about different topics. We provide lunch and will have prizes for a drawing and that type of thing. We also do a lot of volunteering for the [town]. Just a couple weeks ago we did a medication drive for everybody in the community. You could bring your old prescription medication in and we give them to . . . the garbage people and they taken to be incinerated. (Licklighter pre-trip interview)

Her goal in life was to make a difference no matter what activities, profession, or people she was involved in.

Amanda Oakley

This participant was working on a business degree at her local community college with the hopes of transferring to a university in the area. Most of Amanda's time was not spent out with her friends but as the primary care giver for her grandmother.

Amanda described herself in the following way:

I am very outgoing and I always try to meet people because I really value connections because I think who you know means a lot more than what you know most of the time. I always try to be nice to people and not burn any bridges. Most of my life is just about my friends and connections and just relationships and try to reprove those.

I've never really been much of a sports person or anything I've always been more of a people person. I'm more interested in people than I am in hobbies or activities.

(Oakley pre-trip interview)

Amanda did not consider herself a true leader or a follower. She often found herself in both roles depending on the group and situation. Her calculated personality was reflected in the role she accepts within the group.

I'm an observer. I observe the leaders and the followers and I pick the best out of those. Sometimes I lead but it's more from good observations. It's what I've seen other leaders do and then sometimes I follow if there's another good leader around.

(Oakley pre-trip interview)

Amanda was a logical person who had had some exposure to international travel. Her dad and mom had been to a couple of Caribbean islands, and her grandfather had traveled extensively while in the Navy. Their experiences had an impact on Amanda's decision to participate in a study abroad program.

Cole Perry

The next participant was probably the most educated in the group. He was a retired chiropractor who was going back to school to become a nurse. Cole's life as a chiropractic was cut short when he acquired carpal tunnel syndrome. After unsuccessful surgeries on both hands his doctor recommended a career change. Cole stated,

I was in practice for 18 years at two different locations in [Midwest City]. I ran a very busy practice. I specialized in workplace traumatology where I would help patients who are involved in motor vehicle accidents. I also specialized in accident reconstruction and several times a year would be an expert witness for my clients. I'm

going to college at [Midwest Community College] to get my R.N. The next step after that would be to get work in a critical care cardiac ICU preferably as soon as possible.

(Perry pre-trip interview)

Cole, a family man, had three grown children of his own and two grandsons. His son was working for a Japanese bank in New York, and his daughters were attending Midwest University and were studying to be a brain surgeon and an international community developer. Because of his age and background Mr. Perry was not your typical community college student. He was highly educated, a former member of the Rotary Club, very driven, volunteered at a homeless clinic, and attended his daughter's college volleyball games.

Cole's attraction to this program stemmed out of his daughter's year-long experience in Ecuador.

My youngest daughter has just returned from an entire year in Ecuador where she was doing a Rotary youth exchange and she has also been to Madrid and Paris for a class trip. She has [also] been a Mexico five or six times . . . having just been there for an entire year she was very encouraging. Pretty much totally encouraging. (Perry pre-trip interview)

Cole was excited about the opportunity to study abroad and expand the way he views and interacts with the world. He described the opportunity to study abroad in the following way:

[Studying abroad is] just a very unique experience and a chance to see a piece of the world. I tend to be very interested in travel anyway so I think it's kind of a piece of the big collage, the bigger picture that has been a piece of [my life]. In my excursion to England it certainly has changed major things about how I look at life now so I

anticipate going to Ecuador will be a similar deal. It will give me new perspectives and a broad horizon. (Perry pre-trip interview)

Hoover Rose

Our next participant enjoyed hanging out with friends, learning interesting information, and reading books (Rose pre-trip interview). This is how he described his situation in life:

I am currently unemployed right now but I am more concentrated on education and experience. I am majoring in business concentrating on finance and management and hopefully gain more experience and knowledge through school that is in working because if I work late now I mean it is not going to be a job that I want. I am mainly concentrating on education. (Rose pre-trip interview).

Hoover was an outgoing person who liked adventure. He described his curiosity like this: “I like taking adventure. I like exploring new things. I am a very open minded person. . . . I want to meet new people” (Rose pre-trip interview).

Hoover grew up in a family who spent time in other countries and cultures. His mother grew up in Africa, and his family traveled to India when he was a young boy. His international exposure as a young child planted a seed which would take root later in his life. He had this to say about his upcoming study abroad program to China:

One of my major reasons I want to go to China was ever since I was little I always wanted to travel all around the world. I would see pictures on TV about all these other countries and just I wanted to go and experience it firsthand. I never really thought I would go to China . . . now that I have the opportunity I took the opportunity and I didn't let it pass. (Rose pre-trip interview)

Emma Sampson

The next participant highlighted for this study was a nontraditional student who described herself in the following way:

I am very cute. I am 5 feet 2½ inches and African-American. I am an older student coming back to school from being let go from my sales position as a vehicle sales person. I've worked for a business for five years as a relocating operations manager. I'm single with no children, and I enjoy life as much as I can. If I'm not being interviewed, I'm very high-spirited. I think I have a good sense of humor, and most people think that as well. I'm an extrovert, and when I'm not actually in a room full of people being a social butterfly, I do like to be very quiet and get in a lot of reading and books on tape. (Sampson pre-trip interview).

Emma was living in a mixed neighborhood in the Southeast with most of the population being African-American. She was the primary caregiver for her elderly mother even though her siblings were living in the area. Emma (2010) described it like this:

I live in a somewhat mixed neighborhood but mostly African-American. A quiet neighborhood with very few children. Mostly senior citizens. It is suburban. I am only in this neighborhood because I'm taking care of my mom who is a senior citizen. I take care of my mom, and I have two siblings. A brother and a sister one older and one younger and all of us live within a 10 mile radius of one another. (Sampson pre-trip interview)

Life hadn't been easy for Emma since she lost her job. She was receiving unemployment and doing odd jobs here and there just to get by.

I am not [employed]. I am a full-time student, and I do freelance where I bake and cook food for people who need it. Every now and then somebody who needs some extra help around their house and if it's something that I can do and do well I'll put a price tag on it and get 'er done. (Sampson pre-trip interview)

Emma (2010) summed up her recent struggle to complete her education and stay afloat financially in the following way: "It's a challenge, but I'm in there for the long haul."

One may wonder how an unemployed student has enough resources to study abroad. Emma had been saving for her trip for the previous 18 months since she heard about it. She had found a way to raise money in some of the most unique ways. Her frugal lifestyle and tight budget allowed her to pay for the program.

[I have been] baking cakes and cupcakes and pies. Just doing some freelance jobs. For instance, if my great nephew needs to be babysat (he is 9 months old), I put a price on his head. If my brother needs me to pick up his elementary school children from school, I put a price on their heads. You know that type of thing and [my family and friends] understood what I was doing. It wasn't like I was misusing or abusing my family. It was a challenge actually [to come up with the finances] and I'm still a little bit short so it's still a challenge . . . it has brought out the creative juices in myself to create ways to make money. I don't know where the money is coming from, and I didn't know where the money was coming from prior to turning in a good portion of that, but I feel confident that I will reach my financial goal and spending money. (Sampson pre-trip interview)

This entrepreneurial spirit has placed a desire in Emma's heart to end her employment dependence on others and become her own boss. Upon completing a degree in

business administration Emma hoped “to have a host of businesses under my enterprise name and export/import will be part of what my goal is to have” (Sampson pre-trip interview).

As she reviewed her goals of importing and exporting goods, a more diverse view of the world was essential for success. Emma understood this and had known this since she was a young girl. Her father, who was born in the British Isles, had family around the world. His stories from his extensive travel allowed Emma to see the importance of understanding other cultures.

My father is from the British Isles. He has his family [all] over the world, the Netherlands and Europe, and he has come back with a lot of the stories from family members and what they are doing. That impacted my brother when he went into the military to travel to places that he has seen. Since I’m very competitive, because they have gone, I have to go and do better. That’s one of the reasons why I wanted to go so I can at least step on some of the places my brother had gone to as well as create some new ones that he's going to want to go back and look at for himself. (Sampson pre-trip interview).

Olenka Svetlanna

This participant was unlike any other. She was not born and had not grow up in the United States. Olenka explained:

I lived in [Eastern European Country] all my life and I came to the U.S. about 8 years ago. I have lived in [Eastern State] the entire 8 years. Two years ago I decided to enroll in [East Coast Community College] to get a marketing degree. (Svetlana pre-trip interview)

At the time of the interview, she was working as a hair stylist and attending school full time. Her personality makes her a great conversationalist. She described herself in the following manner:

I am very outgoing and I like to travel. I am very artistic and I am a hair stylist. I do a lot of art projects on a side. [I am] friendly and diplomatic. Sometimes I feel I'm a full-time psychiatrist [while I am] at work. I'm not just cutting hair but listening to people and giving them advice. (Svetlana pre-trip interview)

Attending school full time and juggling a hair stylist position and the local beauty salon was consuming most of Olenka's time. She described some of the difficulties she had had attempting to develop quality friendships with a busy schedule.

My married family in the U.S. is my husband and his family. I still have all of my family in [Eastern European Country] and the majority of my friends. I have friends in the friendships I've made in the U.S. but not a lot of friends I guess. Plus being a part-time employee and a full-time student I don't have as much time for friendships as I want. (Svetlana pre-trip interview)

Living in Europe allowed her to travel to a variety of different countries because of their proximity to home. Olenka described a couple of her international experiences:

[Eastern European Country] is a very small country. If you want to get anywhere you have to travel [outside the country]. From a young age my parents took me on different vacations. I've actually been to China before when I was 13. My dad took me on one of his business trips to China. . . . We took a family vacation when I was 17 to Tanzania. So I've been a lot of places throughout my life. (Svetlana pre-trip interview)

Jessie Thomas

The next participant, a 31-year-old single mother, had four children. Attending school, working at a local hospital, providing for a family, and participating in a study abroad program can be challenging for a single mother. Jessie had the support and determination that allowed her to fit a study abroad program into her demanding life. The support she had as a single mother helped Jessie. She described her life situation in the following way:

I'm a single mom with four children. I don't have a lot of activities outside of school because it's very time consuming. I do try to stay involved with my local church and a ministry called Celebrate Recovery. . . . My oldest [son] is 12 and then an 8-year-old daughter, a 6-year-old son, and then a 4-year-old daughter. We don't have any pets because my 6-year-old is allergic to cats and dogs. . . . I killed most plants as well so they're not safe in my house. . . . My ex-husband and I separated when my youngest was only two and a half months old and our divorce was final a year later. [My ex-husband] has been very active in their lives and he is a good dad. We share custody within a 2-week period. They spend 6 days with him and 8 days with me. We are in a good co-parenting relationship. I haven't dated much because of children and nursing school but hopefully one day that will come along again in my life when I have more time. All of my extended family like my mom and my dad and siblings live only within 30 minutes of me so that's nice to have everyone close. (Thomas pre-trip interview)

This will not be Jessie's first trip outside the United States. She had visited other countries while on mission projects with her church, and once she left for pleasure.

I like traveling and I've been able to travel a little bit. It's not my first trip out of the country. I have been to Canada and Mexico on two different occasions. I've been to Toronto, Canada with a youth group and I've been to Mexico on a mission's trip. We went to Santiago and Monterey, and then when I was visiting my cousin in California we went to Rosario just across the border. (Thomas pre-trip interview)

Despite having the opportunity to travel in the past she felt that this study abroad program was an opportunity she could not pass up.

It's kind of an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be able to do something like this.

Being a single mom with four kids I don't have the ability to travel at leisure.

Financially the school helped us with scholarships and all of the students going got a certain amount of scholarships. . . . Because it's a three credit hour class I have Pell grant and funding I received helped to pay for the trip. The trip ended up costing me very little personally and that's because of school related [financing]. That's part of the reason why . . . I think it's going to be fascinating and it's probably going to change some outlooks on nursing here in the United States. It's going to be a great learning opportunity. You know it's just an once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for me.

(Thomas pre-trip interview)

Miguel Walker

The next participant was a full-time student while holding a full-time job. He was 29 years old and back in school to finish his degree. Miguel described himself in the following way:

I'm a person who likes to learn. I'm 29 years old. I'm pretty patient. I consider myself a good listener. All my friends bring their crises to me, and I wish that they would

work them out. I like to problem solve. I'm quiet. I pretty much it along with everyone and I like to meet new people. I'm optimistic and outgoing and I like to do funny things. . . . I try to keep myself busy. I have a lot of hobbies and I like to read.
(Walker pre-trip interview)

Miguel understood the importance of a degree in this competitive market. His current employment, coupled with the education he was receiving, was giving him the skills necessary to succeed in today's workforce. Mr. Walker described it this way:

I work for the properties appraiser's office for [North] County in local government. I've been there for about three years. . . . We make sure that tax role is balanced and we deal with litigation files whenever our office is challenged in a lawsuit. I also coordinate the Value Adjustment Board process when the taxpayer deals with their property if they are over- or under-assessed. . . . I've recently gone back to college to finish my degree. The workplace is so competitive nowadays that I thought it would be important for me to go back and finish. . . . I'm interested in traveling so I got this opportunity to go to China; I thought, "You know what, I better take it; it's a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity." (Walker pre-trip interview)

He understood that he had a great job but if he ever wanted to advance his career a degree and a vibrant resume would be essential.

Mina Wi

The study's next participant was a married nontraditional student who was back in school to make a career change. She was laid back, enjoyed taking classes that interested her, and regularly did yoga. Mina enjoyed the outdoors, nature, and animals, which is why she wanted to change her career. Mina explained,

I am a full-time pharmacist and I've gone back to school in hopes to get into veterinarian school. I'm taking some courses that I need to complete some of the prerequisites for veterinary school. This is why I'm taking this Biology II class at [Midwest Community College] and the study abroad course in the summer. It sounded like a good fit for me and a good experience. [It was] too good of an opportunity to pass up. (Wi pre-trip interview)

As a nature lover Mina was naturally concerned about the environment, ecosystems, and natural habitats for all types of species. She hoped her study abroad program to Belize, which focuses on these issues, would expand her understanding of the topics.

I hope to gain knowledge in culture and in natural habitats that I would not be aware of and had no knowledge of before. I'm just hoping to have a more eye-opening experience and a better appreciation of countries in Central America and the culture and the population and all the diversities that are associated with it. (Wi pre-trip interview)

Themes and Analysis

Community college students sign up for study abroad programs for a variety of reasons, but their experiences have many common threads. This section identifies those common themes as identified by the participants of this study who participated in a short-term study abroad program at a community college. The following themes were identified in the study:

- International experiences encourage participants to study abroad.
- Student perception of faculty leading the study abroad program is key to study abroad participation.

- Expanded worldview through human interaction.
- Studying abroad produces a desire to travel internationally.
- Participants earn intellectual, social, professional, and personal capital as a result of studying abroad.

The details associated with participants' study abroad experiences are outlined in themes that emerged during the data collection and analysis process completed for this research study.

They are reported below.

Theme 1: International Experiences Encourage Participants to Study Abroad

Community college students sign up for study abroad programs for a variety of reasons. Multiple influences contribute to their overall decision to make the necessary investment of time and money to study abroad. One influence that was prevalent throughout the study was that traveling abroad was not a foreign concept.

My pastor once told me that if I were to spend an hour with my friends, I would have a good idea of the type of person they were. Those with whom one associates influence one's thoughts, ideas, goals, and actions. Participants in this study were not exempt from this concept. Nearly all of them had someone in their life who took them abroad or told them personal stories of other countries and cultures. Based on the support, encouragement, and sharing of experiences, friends and family members who traveled abroad were the greatest influence for the participants to study abroad.

James explained his experience with traveling abroad throughout his life in the following way,

My mother was born and raised in Japan. . . . She visited Europe and went back and forth to Japan. My brother was in the military and went to Europe for a little bit. My

father traveled around a little bit, went to South America, of course to Japan and Korea. My daughter has traveled to Mexico and Europe and Japan. I'm pretty worldly. But my nature is such that I think that even if I didn't have any ties to people who have been overseas or what not. I think that's kind of grown to be my nature rather than me trying to follow in someone [else's] footsteps. That is kind of who I am. [I traveled to] Japan when I was four so I don't count that [as traveling abroad] and military in Europe for two years back in '85, '86, '87. (Bavard pre-trip interview)

When individuals admire and respect someone deeply, the life experiences they share, the encouragement they give, and the desire to live up to their expectations drives these individuals to step outside their comfort zone and be more like them. When those people encourage that individual to travel abroad, the necessity of participating in a study abroad program seems natural. Amanda described her experience with her grandfather like this:

Well my granddad [influenced me a lot]. My granddad, he lives really close to me and . . . he is such a traveler. He loves to travel. He has been encouraging [me to study abroad] all the way and he has told me a lot about traveling to Europe and other places and he definitely encourages us so we want to travel. When we were growing up, we would just get in the car and drive and not talk very much just drive. We would drive all the way to Pennsylvania and to Texas from [East Coast State], which is a really long ways, and I just love traveling because of him. He would just take us out and I wouldn't know where we are going and he would point out everything on the way. "Oh, this is where this book was written," and "this is where this author stayed," and "this is where the Indians came for the first time." He is just filled with random thoughts and it's great just to get my car and not talk about much just about

the land and what happened. So he had a big impact on me. (Oakley pre-trip interview)

Not only were participants influenced by parents and grandparents to study abroad but in Cole's case his children were the influences.

Essentially, my youngest daughter having just been [to Ecuador] for an entire year was very encouraging. Pretty much totally encouraging. My youngest daughter has just returned from an entire year in Ecuador where she was doing a Rotary youth exchange, and she has also been to Madrid and Paris for a class trip, and she has been to Mexico five or six times. I guess [she influenced my decision to study abroad] from two perspectives. I'm excited to see the different culture interacting in that type of thing. . . . I recognize that there's going to be some unique experiences. . . . The idea of going to the rain forest in Ecuador is not necessarily my idea of a fun way to spend a couple weeks. But on the flipside, I would like to say I see it as an adventure and something that will be challenging. (Perry pre-trip interview)

For other participants their exposure to traveling abroad throughout their life made participating in a study abroad program seem like an everyday occurrence. Olenka explained, I am Russian. I lived in [Eastern European Country] all my life, and I came to the U.S. about 8 years ago. [Eastern European Country] is a very small country so if you want to get anywhere you have to travel. So from a young age my parents took me on different vacations. I've actually been to China before . . . I was 13. My dad took me on one of his business trips to China. [I] took a family vacation when I was 17 to Africa to Tanzania. . . . I've been a lot of places throughout my life. I have no fear when it comes to signing up for study abroad. I have no reservations whatsoever; I'm

just excited and that's the only emotion I have, excitement. Because I've already traveled and seen and been places so I'm very curious. (Svetlana pre-trip interview)

Whether a child, parent, or grandparent had influenced a participant to study abroad, the concept was not out of the ordinary. These participants expected to travel abroad, and all of them expected to do it again. The environment they lived in did not evoke fear of leaving the comforts of home for a new country and culture; in fact, it encouraged it. Julie commented, "My family was really excited for me . . . [my dad] thinks it's going to be great" (Lickliter pre-trip interview). Many felt something would be missing if they did not travel abroad because those around them seemed to consider it a part of life. The study abroad program at their community college provided them the opportunity for their initial or additional experience outside the United States. Studying abroad was not a foreign concept; in fact it was practically natural for the participants.

Theme 2: Student Perception of Faculty Leading the Study Abroad Program Is Key to Study Abroad Participation

Nearly all of the participants in this study had been approached by a faculty member, academic advisor, or dean of the department and made aware of this opportunity. Brenda's experience was similar: "My advisor, when I went to go sign up for spring classes told me about the study abroad program. . . . I would say he did influence me because he's from a different country and that really made me want to go and see what else is out in the world" (Carter pre-trip interview). As one will see, this was not uncommon for a student's recruitment into a study abroad program. Something about having a professor ask them to go was important in their decision to sign up for a study abroad program.

Many students recalled the day they were approached by their instructor, dean, or advisor and asked if they were interested in studying abroad. Emma recalled her interaction:

[I was] actually in my business math class; my instructor was talking about [the study abroad program] and had a brochure regarding it and basically gave the class a little bit of a lecture on how it would benefit us as students in the business pursuit. She said it would be really wonderful for our resume and it would give us a type of education that you can't get in the local college. So she pretty much impacted the way I thought about being an international student by being there and experiencing some of the other cultures and not so much on this end if you want to get into international business. (Sampson pre-trip interview)

Emma was not alone. Time after time students expressed a very similar story:

I actually have a marketing class with Professor Lee, and he actually was the one who suggested that I fill out the application. He is the one doing the trip. I'm actually taking an international business practice class with him also. So he suggested it and told me about the trip, and it just sounded so interesting so I filled out the application. (Oakley pre-trip interview)

Nursing student Jordan explained how he discovered studying abroad at his college:

We went to a freshman nursing school orientation, and one of our instructors had a display from the previous year's trip to Ecuador. They had pictures, and I saw the display and was immediately interested. . . . When I saw the display, I was very interested because I knew it was part of the reason why I chose nursing because of some of these opportunities to go into different places and meet people that I might not ordinarily have the chance. (Fields pre-trip interview)

Even an electronic solicitation from the participants' instructors seemed to be enough personal touch to encourage them to study abroad. Tabby was one of those students:

I was in my first term at [Midwest Community College], and my teacher e-mailed me through the business program. I was in his Intro to Entrepreneurship class so he sent it out to all of his students. I found out about it and had to call my mother, and I was like, "I want to go to Denmark." (Caldaron pre-trip interview)

Being approached and asked by someone to participate in a program that costs a significant amount of money, will take a considerable amount of time, and will put you in a foreign culture requires more than a solicitation. Students do not sign up for a study abroad program with a random professor. They had a certain amount of respect and appreciation for the one leading the program and offering the opportunity to participate in it. Olenka described it this way:

My professor came to one of my classes a year ago and told us about the study abroad program in China, and it was the first year that they were doing it. So that was the first time I had heard about it. . . . She's very professional. She is very knowledgeable, and she has a good sense of humor, but she means business. I actually feel very confident traveling with her somewhere like that, and she has also traveled there before so this is the second time she's taking a group. (Svetlana pre-trip interview)

It is almost as though the student had a deeper relationship than an instructor/student relationship with the professor leading the program.

[Professor Andrews] was our lab instructor so I got to be with her in lab. She had written recommendations for me for scholarships in the past. I love her, and I think

she's a great instructor and a great person. I respect her as an instructor and a nurse, and I'm glad that she's one of the ones we get to go with. . . . I trust any of my instructors to take me on a study abroad program. . . . I think I would feel comfortable with any of them going. (Thomas pre-trip interview)

This was a common thread stated over and over by the participants, "Mrs. Cunningham is a really, really sweet lady, and she will bend over backwards to give her students including me the opportunity to enhance our knowledge. Wasn't for her and her caring for her students and myself I probably wouldn't have gone" (Sampson pre-trip interview).

Another student stated,

Every day I would get to know [the professor leading the program] better. It's just the kind of the person that he is. I was always asking questions about trips, and he seems very friendly. He is a good person. He is also self-motivated, and I can tell by all his certificates that he has on his wall and all the books he keeps on the shelves that he is a smart person. He likes working with kids. He likes giving kids opportunities to become better persons and their career and their future. So my relationship is growing with him, and maybe through this trip I can get to know him more. (Rose, pre-trip interview)

Jordan described his relationship with Mrs. Barns:

I would say that Mrs. Barns is very friendly and easy to talk to and easy to relate to. Good person . . . I like have a good rapport with her, and I get along great with her. I think she's a pretty cool person. So I would say that I've got a good relationship with her. . . . She seems like a pretty good nurse just being with her in class; it seems like she's got a lot of wisdom. (Fields pre-trip interview)

Students enjoy their instructors and have great respect for what they do. One participant explained:

I think [the faculty leading the program is] quite an amazing person. She is the Assistant Dean, says she gets a lot of the work and she's pretty awesome. She has really good common sense. She's really fun too and she wasn't sure that I was going to go. The other day she handed me an article to read on Denmark's economy. It was a really good read for me, and I really enjoyed it. (Caldaron pre-trip interview)

If one were to place oneself in their situation, this theme makes sense. Not many people would travel anywhere with a person they did not enjoy or respect let alone to another country or culture. If students are going to follow an instructor to a place where they have never been and invest a significant amount of resources into the commitment, they will first respect, enjoy, and appreciate the person leading the program. Amanda's story sums it up perfectly:

I actually met [the professor leading the trip] last year. I was friends with a foreign exchange student from Turkey. He was going back to Turkey, and my professor, he wasn't my professor at the time, came to the airport to say goodbye to this Turkish kid. He brought his wife and his baby and he was so nice and I thought that was really special that he thought that much of a student to go to the airport and say goodbye. I got to know him because of that, and he would talk to me about school and he actually, before I took a class with him, he would help me plan out my schedule because he went to the University of [Southwest] so he knew exactly what I needed to take to get there. He was a marketing major so he knew exactly what I should start taking, and I ended up taking a marketing class with him and his international

business class this semester. . . . We have such a good relationship. He is friendly. We get along so well. He's such a good family man. For him to go to see a student from Turkey just to say goodbye was really nice of him. He really does care about his students, and he is always giving us the best advice about the school even if it doesn't benefit the school. He tells us to take certain classes because the teachers aren't looking out for the students. He tells us insights about the school. He's a good person and really wants his students to succeed. (Oakley pre-trip interview)

Theme 3: Expanded Worldview Through Human Interaction

The participants in this study described interaction with others as one of the highlights of their study abroad program. Participants suggested through interviews and in their photos that making new friends, helping others, and meeting people from other cultures provided a great deal of meaning into their lives. Jordan stated,

I would tell [a future study abroad participant] if they had an open mind the benefits could be immeasurable. It would just kind of depend on them and what their attitude was. I would tell them that it would benefit them. It would make them more well-rounded person. It would benefit them personally and you never know what kind of relationships, the kind of friendships, the kind of people you meet. You never know the kind of impact that's going to have on your life so I think trips like that are a special opportunity to maybe come into contact with some people that you might not otherwise meet in your ordinary day-to-day life. That can be really special. (Fields post-trip interview)

Photo after photo and comment after comment related to the native people the students met and interacted with while on their study abroad program. Those who

participated in the nursing service learning study abroad program included photos and descriptions of those who they provided service for. In Cole's photo (Figure 3),

those are some of the kids that we did lice treatment on and they're waiting in line to be seen. As you can see from their facial expressions they are very precious. They're what kind of captures your heart at the heart of the country. (Perry post-trip interview)



Figure 3. Children of Ecuador photo taken by participant Perry.

Jordan Fields had a similar experience with the patient he cared for at an Ecuadorian nursing home. His photo (Figure 4) and description communicate the importance of human interaction:

That photo is a photo of me and a lady named Juanita. We were at a nursing home. We came in that morning to spend time with the residents there. To help the Ecuadorian nursing students do some basic care for them whether it be some physical therapy that morning or maybe they needed some oral care or a bed bath or lotion or



Figure 4. Impacting each other's lives photo taken by participant Fields.

whatever. That was kind of our task and just to spend time with them. She was the main patient that I was with. Of course she didn't speak any English, and I don't know hardly any Spanish at all so there was a language barrier . . . even though we couldn't speak to each other we really had a great time together. Basically, all I did with her was put lotion on her feet and on her hands and on her elbows. I think that interaction just that human touch you know trying to have a caring attitude towards her it was neat to see her open up. The Ecuadorian students noticed; they said that usually she's a really angry person, and she carried around this towel and she liked to swat things with it. Every once in awhile she would say stuff, I have no idea what she was saying, but it sounded like barking out orders to the other residents or something like that. By the end of the visit we were having a great time and she was smiling and we had some music there and we were dancing around and I think I enjoyed myself and I really enjoyed being with her and I think she enjoyed it to. I think she had a

good time. That picture I guess kind of represents that. I like the fact that she smiling in the picture so that's why I [chose this photo]. We had a positive impact on each other's lives (Fields post-trip interview).

Even if participants were not serving others as nurses, interacting with people from another culture provided growth experience for participants. Tabby shared about the many bus rides she took during her program in Denmark as a special part of the trip (Figure 5).

Getting to talk to the Danish students [was a highlight]. Just talking to them was amazing. Especially the bus rides because that was all there was to do. It was just very interesting to talk to someone from another culture who speaks a totally different language and try to like find words that they don't know about and try to explain it to them and then they explain words to us and then it's a lot of fun. We talked about different politics and different things and how Denmark is different. . . . It was just



Figure 5. Riding the bus photo taken by participant Caldaron.

really interesting to just talk to them. That was my favorite part. (Caldaron post-trip interview)

Participants also were amazed at the friendliness of natives toward them. It makes one wonder if Americans are not as hospitable or friendly toward foreigners. Brenda's time with Ukrainians is one of these examples (Figure 6).



Figure 6. Ukrainian friends photo taken by participant Carter.

Everyone in Ukraine is extremely nice, and they all seem willing to do anything for you. The part that made me not want to leave Ukraine is how amazed the people there seemed to be with us. I got along with so many people it made me forget about home. I can't wait to see everyone again soon. Some of the best times were when we all sat down to eat. We really got to know each other and see a different side to people. (Carter trip journal)

Participants were amazed that local people would take the time out of their busy schedules to host them (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Shaman traditional healer photo taken by participant Bavard.

Not only was [this photo] an example of just the friendliness of people. He's a shaman, a traditional healer, and she's a midwife. It's not like they had a schedule, but they just welcomed us into their home. There were 18 of us there that day plus 4 teachers and our in-country lead. Very hospitable. So that represents the Ecuadorian hospitality. (Bavard post-trip interview)

In one instance the academic piece of the program collided with the human international piece of the program. Mina described her experience of meeting the main character of the book they were required to read prior to the trip (Figure 8).

For me the highlight was meeting Sharon Matola. She was the founder of the Belize zoo. We were required to read a book called *The Last Flight of the Scarlet Macaw*, and it was about this woman's undying passion for wildlife and preserving the native



Figure 8. The Last Flight of the Scarlet Macaw picture taken by participant Wi.

wildlife within the country and educating the local people as well as people around the world. Her passion and her fight to prevent a dam from being built in order to preserve natural habitats of numerous species along the Macaw River. In reading the book we really wanted to go to the zoo if we were lucky enough to meet the founder of the zoo and we did. I was honored. She is a very inspiring woman, and I was so excited to meet her. It was a highlight for me. (Wi post-trip interview)

Many of the participants have stayed in contact with individuals they met while on their study abroad program. This was often done through e-mail and/or Facebook. Obviously, those who traveled to parts of the world where computers and the Internet were not prevalent or banned (China has banned Facebook) have had a much tougher time staying in contact.

Theme 4: Studying Abroad Produces a Desire to Travel Internationally

An important theme that developed in this study was participants' strong desire to travel abroad again. During the pre-trip interviews many students referred to their study

abroad program as a “once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.” Upon completion of the program many believed that this was just the beginning of their international travels. All participants had caught the international travel bug and had a deep desire to travel again. One participant commented, “I know I definitely would do it again if I have the chance” (Svetlana post-trip interview).

Many of the students had a desire to participate in a similar type of program.

I’m hoping to study again somewhere in a similar situation. I’m searching out more programs that are available to see what else is out there. . . . I would like to go back next summer to do something similar. (Wi post-trip interview)

They want to see a different part of the world through studying abroad.

Well, now I want to participate in a study abroad program in Spain because I want to minor in Spanish. The school that I’m going to has a study abroad program in Spain, and I think it is six weeks. I definitely want to look into that. I developed a taste for study abroad, I guess. (Svetlana post-trip interview).

One student even had the desire to spend a significant amount of time studying abroad.

I definitely wouldn’t mind going to different places and just learning. . . . It would be really cool if I could go to school there. I would enjoy it so much and I would love learning from them. . . . I don’t really know if that’s in my plans, but I would really love to go at least somewhere else in Europe and learn different things about the economy and how their economy is different from ours. (Caldaron post-trip interview)

Some of the participants felt that the short-term concept was not enough for them. “I would like to go back again because two weeks, one week in each city Beijing and Shanghai, wasn’t enough. I would want to go to different places [in China]” (Walker post-trip

interview). Hoover Rose felt an immediate draw to travel internationally from the moment he returned home.

As soon as we all stepped out of the plane, we all wanted to go back to Shanghai. . . . Just knowing that there is a whole different culture and a world out there that you can respect and understand after you've experienced it and wanting to actually go back. . . . Hopefully, going to Europe now or even Southeast Asia or southern Asia like India or even South America since South American economy is booming. . . . Now that I've experienced one country, I want to know what else is out there. (Rose post-trip interview)

Some participants wanted to go back to the same place from which they had just returned, whereas others did not seem to have a particular destination in mind—they knew that any visits or revisits would be an experience they would not regret. It was now something that had become a priority in their lives.

I want to travel more. I've always wanted to travel, but I'm definitely going to make a point to travel. I don't know [where I want to travel], just wherever. I'm not too particular. I just want to see the world really. [I feel] more comfortable, and I really want to make a point to do it now that I've seen a little bit of a different area. (Licklighter post-trip interview)

Other participants decided to take it upon themselves to arrange their own international travel plans. "I tentatively do have a vacation planned to go back to Ecuador to try to take in more culture area, and also I've been a little bit more diligent in terms of trying to gain a better handle on Spanish and foreign language" (Perry post-trip interview). James

scheduled another international trip only 6 months from when he returned from studying abroad.

I'm going with my church on a medical mission trip in January to Guatemala. . . .

Guatemala is going to be a medical mission there is no educational thing about it. I wanted to be prepared for this so I could provide as much care as possible down there. This Ecuador experience prepared me for that tremendously. (Bavard pre-trip interview)

In conclusion, studying abroad produced a desire in participants to travel internationally again. If community colleges desire to incorporate a global perspective in their students, study abroad programs ignite the desire to be a world traveler. This desire will continue throughout the lives of students as they travel again and again to places throughout the world.

Theme 5: Participants Earn Intellectual, Social, Professional, and Personal Capital as a Result of Studying Abroad

The participants in this study described an advantage they gained from studying abroad. This newly acquired capital came from their new perspectives and experiences that made them feel they had added benefit over someone who had not had a similar experience. Participants felt that this advantage added to their lives intellectually, socially, professionally, and personally.

Hoover addressed the capital he acquired because of his study abroad program as humbly as he could:

I don't want to sound too cocky, but I guess [studying abroad] does make me a better person. I guess intellectually I have more of a knowledge than that person who just

... lives in a bubble and I'm over here living and experiencing many things. I could say, "You need to get out of your bubble and just go and experience new things." I think I'm a better person to tell them what it's worth and the benefits of it and if someone told me they studied abroad, we would have a connection because we share similarities. Better than a person who hasn't. (Rose post-trip interview)

Olenka echoed what Hoover described:

[Studying abroad] will make you a better person. You'll have a better understanding of a different culture. It's definitely an experience of a lifetime that you absolutely if you can afford it you have to do it. It changes your perspective on what you have here and what other people have in other countries. I feel like I have an advantage when I graduate and check out employment. I will definitely have an advantage of having this under my belt. Having traveled to Asia and seeing how people interact, seeing how people do business. If I ever have to go to do business in China, I will have a better concept of how it's being done rather than somebody who has never been there. ... I feel like I'm better prepared for this employment if I want to travel internationally for any international business. (Svetlana post-trip interview)

Those who travel are seen by others as being interesting and fascinating. The social mileage one gains from these experiences can be used in a variety of group settings.

I think when you say, "I've been here" or "I've been there" everyone's like, "Oh my gosh, that must've been so awesome." They just kind of get into the whole storytelling thing and everyone's like, "Wow, that's so different than us." (Caldaron pre-trip interview)

Miguel described the social capital he acquired in the following manner:

When you say you travel somewhere most of my friends travel within the United States. Most of my friends that I've told about the trip seem excited and impressed that I would embark on something this big. A couple of my friends have said they really don't have an interest in going to China, and they're really, really curious about how my experience will be. It'll be interesting to share that with them. A couple of my friends look at me differently in a positive way it's a good outgoing aspect to be taking this trip. . . . I'm a more well-rounded person. I'm a person who has world experience. A lot of people that I've met or that I know haven't really had the opportunity to leave the country and to visit people or interact with people who live somewhere else. It's just gaining a broader perspective that's advantageous. (Walker pre-trip interview)

Study abroad participants not only have more capital with those around them but also acquire an inner confidence that others do not. They believe their goals are attainable, and they have the skills and abilities to accomplish anything.

I would feel way more confident in myself. I know what I want and coming back from a country that I never thought of going to makes me feel more confident. This is what I want to do. I have taken a step to accomplish what I want to do. I feel good about myself. (Rose pre-trip interview)

Participants were not viewing their confidence or added capital with arrogance. In fact, it was quite the opposite. They felt privileged that they had the opportunity to do something few of their peers have the opportunity to do.

I am more open-minded. . . . I would say it has expanded my horizons and my ability to relate to situations. . . . Hopefully, I will use that in a humble way. Definitely my

horizons are just extremely expanded. I totally think that this was an incredibly beneficial experience that you can't get out of a 2-week college program. (Bavard pre-trip interview)

Cole explained how his acquired capital benefited his life. “[I’m] somebody who’s going to be typically more culturally competent when it comes to dealing with those from other cultures. . . . Probably somebody who at least is familiar with . . . that type of thing” (Perry post-trip interview).

Everyone had a story to tell about where they had been, what they had seen, and what they had done. These experiences produced a confidence in the participants that was not expected. Hoover, in his trip essay, noted even the simple task of crossing a street in a foreign country can have a great impact. He wrote, “Even the rush I got from crossing the street [in China] was exhilarating, because that’s something you don’t experience in your daily lives” (Rose study abroad essay). Miguel Walker described his experience this way:

Visiting the Great Wall was one of the highlights, probably the highlight of the trip, and I’ve always wanted to do something like that. . . . [Our tour guide] started walking up the hill and not really realizing that out-of-shape Americans couldn’t keep up with him. I was determined that I would stay with him. . . . I don’t know where I mustered the strength to reach the top. My shirt was soaking wet; it was unbelievably hot. . . . I was one of the first in my group to make it to the top. I took that as a personal accomplishment, and it was just a great view from the top (Figure 9; Walker post-trip interview)



Figure 9. Conquering the Great Wall of China photo taken by participant Walker.

Many people have accomplishments that required perseverance. When these accomplishments take place in a setting that few people in America get to experience, the confidence is exponentially magnified.

We went to the Equator . . . you can stand on both sides and all that stuff. And they showed us how you can balance an egg on the head of a nail only on the Equator [Figure 10]. It's the only place in the world you can do it any time any day. So we all got to give it a try and if you did it you got a certificate and all that



Figure 10. Balancing an egg on a nail at Equator photo taken by participant Licklighter.

stuff. I was really excited that I did it because I wanted a certificate really bad. . . . I wanted to be able to do it and say that I went to the Equator and I balanced the egg. The first time I tried, I didn't get it; but I was determined to get it. I got a second time, and it was awesome. (Licklighter post-trip interview)

Confidence was produced not only from things they did but also from things they saw. Mina described her experience of snorkeling off the coast of Belize:

Out on the reef not really being a water-savvy kind of person just getting out of my element and snorkeling and experiencing some really beautiful underwater marine life was a real treat. This is something I normally wouldn't do, and it was a challenge. I overcame some obstacles, and it was a good thing. (Figure 11; Wi post-trip interview)



Figure 11. Starfish of Belize photo taken by participant Wi.

Growth typically happens when one is pushed out of one's comfort zone and into something new. Because a study abroad program is spent in a place totally outside of one's comfort zone, everything experienced impacts the participant. As Cole noted in his description of eating some exotic food,

We were at the Equator, and they were skewering these little guys [guinea pigs]. They smelled pretty good you know. We had seen a little earlier a pen of guinea pigs, and they were raised for food and then we decided that we had to eat some of that. They were actually very tasty.

On the one hand, it seems very odd to be eating something that we consider pets for the most part; but on the flip side, when we look at our culture and eating pigs and that doesn't seem like a very appetizing thing either, but it turns out to be a pretty good deal. (Figure 12; Perry post-trip interview)

Even some of the simplest moments in a foreign land impact participants. James reflected on a moment he had while on a boat ride in the jungle of South America.

Going down [the river] you can imagine going on the river and looking on the banks really exemplified being in the rain forest. Not only were [there] the forces of the water and the vastness of the land but also hearing the native man and his son

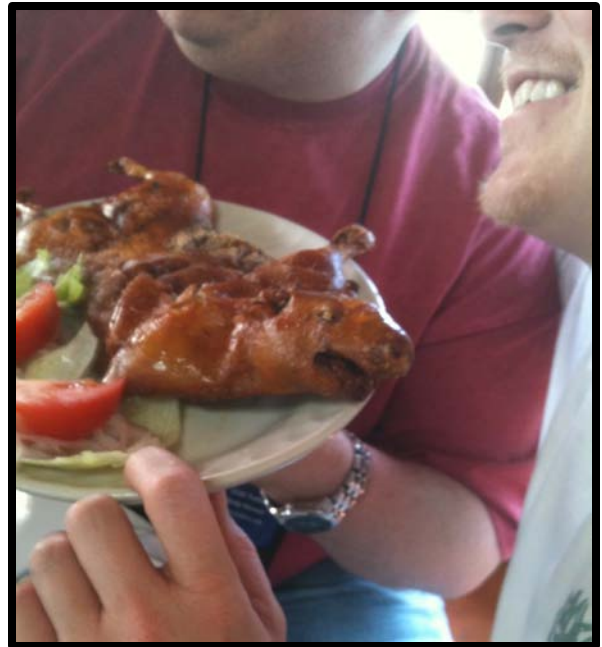


Figure 12. Skewered guinea pig photo taken by participant Perry.

navigating this boat down the river. It's not that you could just rent a boat and go down . . . I guess because the boat ride made it really hard not to feel like you're in the jungle. You really felt like you're in a faraway land because we were away from cabins and roads. And then I guess just being on the boat. It was odd shape long and skinny and tall and lots of people in it. It was memorable because going to a place like that I think you want to work with the people of the land. You can't just walk down there on your own and expect to get around and do everything you want. You need to be a partner with the people that you're there with so you don't crash and burn. (Figure 13; Bavard post-trip interview)

In talking with Americans who have never been outside the country, it is my impression that many of them believe the entire world lives as Americans do. What many do not realize is the resources, comforts, and wealth many have in the U.S. is not common.



Figure 13. Boat ride in the jungle of South America photo taken by participant Bavard.

Studying abroad in a third world country allows students to understand that they live in one of the richest nations in the world.

One of the challenges that face study abroad participants is dealing with the discrepancies of the rich and poor of the world. Many Americans would not consider themselves wealthy. In fact, most classify the majority of Americans as middleclass. Traveling to places that do not have access to the same standard of living produces a sense of appreciation for the American way of life. Brenda opened her trip report by stating, “The trip was amazing and the best experience of my life. It changed my perspective and view on life itself.” (Carter trip report) Julie described her appreciation in the following way:

I appreciate the things I have [in America] a lot more than I did before I left. The healthcare system, even having garbage men pick up our trash every week. That’s something they don’t have there. I really appreciate being American. We are very, very lucky to have what we have, and I think we take it for granted sometimes and assume that things are like this everywhere else. Like everybody else is as lucky as we are to have insurance and healthcare and cleaner cities and transportation and food. We take them for granted, and we don't realize that it’s not that way everywhere. (Licklighter post-trip interview)

This appreciation is not uncommon especially for those who have traveled to third world countries and have lived in very primitive conditions. In a very reflective state Jordan tried to put his appreciation into words:

I would say [long pause] how can I put this? I guess just a way to perceive things back home. I hope that it will just make me more thankful for my own situation in the states. I feel like I’ve been blessed to have the things that I do. I don’t place a lot of

value on material things; that's not what I'm talking about. You know not having to worry about having a roof over my head or where my next meal is coming from or anything like that. I've been blessed in that regard and not having to worry about those things. Seeing another part of the world and seeing how a lot of people live without very much at all. Hopefully, I have a deeper appreciation of what I have here in the states. I guess I would add to that the material things, the nice cars or whatever, are not necessary for happiness. Even though we did meet some poor people down there, they were friendly and nice and didn't act like they were impoverished. (Field post-trip interview)

Participants were moved and realized how much they really had:

You learn that you don't need everything that you have. You don't necessarily need air conditioning in your car. You know where you've been and where you come from if you can live without certain conveniences if you have to. You have to appreciate the modern conveniences that are here. . . . I think I'm just more appreciative of what I have when you go to a place that doesn't have all the available resources that you are used to. We don't necessarily need everything that we have, and we can make do with less if we really wanted to if need be. We are very fortunate, very, very fortunate to have all the accessibility to conveniences. (Wi post-trip interview)

James was the one participant who was impacted the most by this. Multiple times he kept coming back to this very theme and reflecting on the impact it had in his life. His extended articulation of his experience and photo are worth noting.

There were toilets in [that white building; Figure 14] but the back was off the top of the toilet and don't flush the toilet paper there. No toilets in the whole of Ecuador



Figure 14. White outhouse photo taken by participant Bavard.

where we were at just because it can jam up plumbing. So there was a box in there, and they were even using old notebook paper to wipe with. Then that blackish thing on the side of the building facing out if you look closely there is a low lip out front and that's where the boys went to the bathroom on a break. There were seven or eight of them around there and they were peeing in that thing. Some of them were barefoot, and this was the bathroom facility for what amounted to an elementary school for 40 or 50 kids. And then we were providing lice treatment and the water that we used to wash and rinse and all that stuff. There was this PVC pipe, and I'm not sure what it was there for. I think it was a water supply that wasn't working but that aluminum kettle we would fill up with water and then walk it around to the front of the building and then empty it into the buckets that we were using. That was their bathroom, water supply, and that day at that school where lunch was one pot of beans and rice and ham-looking thing with maybe some green veggies in there. The kids came running

out of their classrooms, which were extremely bare and run down, to the place where the soup was in the kettle and got their scoop full of it and ran back to their classrooms. It really struck me how little they had. Some people at the end of the day were talking about, you know you need to do the best you can because you can't change everything, and I said, "It's not them that bothers me, it's me." How little they had. It wasn't like I was feeling sorry for them. I literally have so much; I have so much that I don't need. So much it is just a distraction. So it was less about how little they had and about how much I had. The things that I have that I should be grateful for and there's so many things that I have that I just don't need. And it was kind of a life-changing thing. . . . I will forever be more aware of how much we have in this country. . . . That day . . . we were at the school, it was very minimal conditions, I don't want to say pitiful. The conditions were so minimal. . . . To me it was like how could you return from something like that and be nothing but grateful for anything that was put in front of you. . . . In Ecuador people were constantly smiling and friendly and would greet you. In the airport, baggage handlers, the people at the desk, and the people who were guiding us through customs did not seem like happy campers. And we were like, "Why are so many people not happy in this country," and "Why are so many people not grateful for the so much that they have?" . . . I love America and everything like that. I don't dislike anybody for it, but I'm a little bit more aware of how we are so focused on possessions and what it means to be happy. You know you can't be happy unless you have a house, a car, a pretty boyfriend, or pretty girlfriend, and I'm way more aware of what a façade that is. (Bavard post-trip interview)

This change that participants experienced is not considered a bad thing. Participating in a study abroad program forced students to address their own situation and the poverty of various parts of the world. Watching poverty on TV or reading about it on the Internet does not produce the same impact. At the end of the day, study abroad participants were more appreciative of what they have in America because of their study abroad experience.

Participants felt as though they had done something significant after a study abroad program. They had the confidence to go, do, and experience different pieces of the world. Olenka described the confidence she gained from her program to China:

I think China is as different and fantastic as it can get. If you can do study abroad in China, there is nothing too extreme to go. For any student who has been on the study abroad in China, anything else is going to be a walk in the park. (Svetlana post-trip interview)

Participants also felt that they would have an advantage professionally over someone who had not studied abroad. Their international experience would look good on a resume, allow them to answer interview questions in a unique way, and ultimately land them the position. Olenka stated it this way:

I think it's going to look great on my resume, and if I'm able to learn something professionally while in China, I hope it's going to be a good advantage once I get hired. I'll have some extra knowledge that not everybody gets to have. (Svetlana pre-trip interview)

No matter how the newly acquired capital is used, participants reiterated that participating in a study abroad program gave them an advantage over other students.

Summary

As a result of studying abroad on a short-term program in a community college, students reported a significant impact on them personally, socially, intellectually, and professionally. The confidence that they gained through who they helped, where they went, and what they did was life changing.

From the study, seven themes emerged as the data were analyzed. They were:

- International experiences encourage participants to study abroad
- Student perception of faculty leading the study abroad program is key to study abroad participation
- Expanded worldview through human interaction
- Studying abroad produces a desire to travel internationally
- Participants earn intellectual, social, professional, and personal capital as a result of studying abroad

Whether it was changing how they viewed others, appreciating what they have, or believing in themselves, all of the students interviewed for this study reported that, as a result of their study abroad program, they made significant and profound changes in their lives. In addition, all of the participants in this study made comments that indicated they had acquired an expanded worldview as a result of their international experience. This expanded worldview included comments about language acquisition, cultural sensitivity, and the ability to look back home and compare culture and lifestyles, as well as finding a sense of pride and purpose in the relationships they developed.

CHAPTER 5. REFLECTIONS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Reflections

My journey began when a colleague encouraged me to participate in a leadership program at Iowa State University. I reluctantly committed to the program and found the growth, networking, and professional development impactful. The faculty running the program, Dr. Ebbers, encouraged me to continue my education which led to a master's degree and ultimately this dissertation.

This study developed out of an interest in study abroad programs particularly at community colleges. I had developed and led these programs in the past and was interested to find research based in this particular field. Upon finding limited research focused on short-term study abroad programs and even less pertaining to community college students, the decision was made to focus in this area. I had a strong desire to share the experiences of community college students so all could understand what is gained from these programs.

Conclusions

The four research questions that guided this study were:

1. How do community college students describe their experiences in a short-term study abroad program?
2. How does a short-term study abroad program at a community college impact a student's life?
3. How do outcomes of short-term study abroad programs in community colleges moving towards the outcomes of long-term programs?

4. What impact will this study have on senior level administrators from Community Colleges for International Development and other government agencies affiliated with study abroad programs?

The answers to these questions are described in the paragraphs below.

As I collected the data it was very clear that students had had incredible experiences during their short-term study abroad program. Participants described their experiences as rewarding and life changing. The result was they had a deep desire to participate in another study abroad program, return to the region where the program was held, and/or planned a new trip to a different country in the world.

Students who participated in this study had a very positive view of their college. They enjoyed their program of study, department, advisor, and faculty members. One of the major themes of this study was the respect and appreciation participants had for the faculty member leading the study abroad program. This admiration was the culmination of the college and department investing in the lives of their students. These students felt appreciated and valued and therefore had an overall positive view of their community college. This view made participating in a short-term study abroad program easier because they respected the institution offering them this opportunity. Because they had positive experiences with their community college in the past there was no reason to believe they would not have a similar experience during a study abroad program.

Participants, especially those who completed a service learning program, were forced to deal with poverty, materialism, and standard of living at a more intense level than did their counter parts who did not participate in a service learning program. Most people in America think the rest of the world lives like Americans do. The fact is the average per capita gross

domestic product for the world is \$10,400 and the average for the United States is \$46,000 (Central Intelligence Agency, 2010). The average person in the United States earns over four times the average worldwide. If one examines the median GDP per capita one finds this gap to be even larger. The point is Americans are statistically rich compared to the rest of the world. The problem is Americans do not compare our wealth to the rest of the world but to our neighbors, family members, and colleagues.

When a student participating in a short term study abroad program at a community college visits a third world country where the infrastructure, accommodations, and luxuries of life do not exist, they are forced to deal with poverty, materialism, and their standard of living. Participant who studied in third world countries commented over and over again about the conviction of their lot in life. Because the interviews for this study took place shortly after the conclusion of their program the conviction was still raw. Following up with the participants once they had processed and reformed their thoughts and values would be insightful. This is why I have recommended further study in service learning study abroad programs where the location is a third world country.

As participants worked through poverty, materialism, and their standard of living, they also found a new confidence in themselves. They were under the belief that their dreams and goals were not something unachievable but would become their future reality. They were more willing to try new things and take on new challenges to bring their goals and dreams to fruition. Personally, they had a renewed sense of energy and confidence, which their study abroad program drew out of them.

Looking back to the literature review and examining the outcomes of long- and mid-term study abroad programs one notices short-term study abroad programs in community

colleges are moving toward the outcomes of long-term programs. Participants of this study expressed an intercultural understanding that was not present prior to their trip. They felt this understanding benefited them personally, professionally, and academically. This understanding is one of the key outcomes of mid- and long-term study abroad programs. What is to be determined is the depth of this understanding comparatively between the three typologies. Does a participant of a short-term program have the same depth of understanding as a long-term participant? That would be challenging to prove and verify. What can be established is that the understanding of all groups has evolved.

The major shortcoming of a short-term study abroad program compared with mid- and long-term study abroad program is in the language and communication objective. It is impossible to gain fluency of language in 2 weeks. I witnessed a highly motivated student on a short-term study abroad program soak in the Ukrainian language. Committing oneself to learning phrases, words, and tenses in a very short time frame can make a student miss out on the some of the details of an intense 2-week program. Spending a semester, or even an entire year, in a country allows students to develop a deeper understanding of language and communication. With that being stated, many of the participants in this study were committing themselves to learning a second language once they returned home (Bavard post-trip interview; Svetlana post-trip interview; Walker post-trip interview). This point again demonstrates that short-term study abroad programs are moving students toward the objectives of mid-and long-term programs.

Another objective of short-, mid-, and long-term study abroad programs is academic growth. The experiences a student has while studying abroad, no matter the duration, cannot be duplicated in a classroom or in an online environment. All programs provide academic

learning opportunities that contribute to the mission of the program. The mission of a short-term program is to provide students with two to three credits toward the requirements of a degree. A mid-term program typically lasts an entire term and allows students to earn enough credits to keep them on pace for graduation. A long-term study abroad program is similar to a mid-term only it lasts multiple terms or an entire academic year. Short-term programs are meeting the objectives of mid- and long-term programs on a smaller scale. What is encouraging is how participants of this study were looking for additional study abroad opportunities in which to participate.

The final objective of mid- and long-term study abroad programs is to provide opportunities that encourage student development in leadership skills, service orientation, maturity, tolerance, and the like. The participants of short-term programs were required to plan an event, give presentations, provide lice treatment for the poor, live in a culture and country very different than their own, and develop a tolerance and respect for those who are different. Clearly these programs are moving students toward the outcomes of mid- and long-term programs. The challenge of a short-term program is to complete all these outcomes in 2 weeks. I witnessed combinations of these outcomes but rarely were all present in a short-term program. Mid- and long-term program would have ample time to implement all of these components because of their duration. Again the results of this study demonstrate that participants of short-term study abroad program are moving toward the outcomes of mid- and long-term programs.

Senior level administrators from CCID and other government agencies affiliated with study abroad programs must recognize the achievements of short-term study abroad programs. It is true that long term programs have a great effect on a student, but not all

students have the resources and time to participate. Many community college students have dependents and hold jobs; a short-term solution is their only opportunity. Investing in these programs begins the process of moving them toward the outcomes of mid- and long-term study abroad programs. Education is about giving students the opportunity to grow in a way they may not have done on their own. Short-term programs are doing just that for those who may only have this opportunity once in their life.

Recommendations for Practice

This case study dissertation examined CCID's Troika study abroad model. The 13 participants in this study contributed to six themes on the meaning students give from their study abroad experiences. Based on the findings of this project, several recommendations for practice can be made for future CCID Troika study abroad programs.

Recommendations for Community Colleges for International Development

1. Recruit outstanding faculty to lead Troika study abroad programs. Time and time again participants in this study had great things to say about the faculty leading their study abroad program. They looked at faculty with great respect, appreciation, and admiration. They fully trusted these people and felt they were more than just teachers. Many participants felt they had deeper relationships that extended well beyond the classroom.

This feeling toward the faculty leading the program does have an impact on whether or not students decide to invest their resources into studying abroad. CCID should utilize the presidents and international education directors of member community colleges who could identify the best faculty within their institutions. Recruiting these faculty members to develop and lead study abroad programs will increase the likelihood of student participation and therefore the globalization of the community college student.

2. *Focus the marketing of these programs on faculty not students.* From a student's perspective, CCID's role in these types of programs is behind the scenes. Many of the participants in the study knew very little, if anything, about CCID. I would encourage the organization to focus its energy on marketing to community college employees and accept the fact that most students may never really know the scope of CCID's programs and projects.

Recommendations for Faculty Leading the Study Abroad Program.

1. *Create support systems for students who have not had the exposure to international experiences.* Every participant viewed traveling or studying abroad as something normal. Either they had been out of the country before or they had a family member close to them travel abroad. The proximity to these experiences instilled in them that study abroad programs are opportunities of which one should take advantage. Faculty leading these programs must understand that to truly internationalize a student, the ones who do not have this type of background need support systems in place to help them realize this opportunity. Taking the time to implement a system of support for potential study abroad participants will identify students whose participation will have the greatest impact on their lives and the lives of their family members.

2. *Incorporate components of interaction with the native people into study abroad programs.* A highlight for all the students was meeting and befriending the local people. They would talk about the people they met with great appreciation for the limited time they had with them. Faculty members leading these programs recognize this component and provide ample opportunity for these relationships to develop. One of the ways this could be

achieved is through home stays while abroad. Logistically this is more challenging to set up than hotel rooms, but in the long run, the overall experience of the students will be enhanced.

3. Recruit freshmen so they travel again as sophomores. All of the participants had a deep desire to travel again. The problem was many of them were about to graduate.

Identifying first-year students at the community college who are willing to participate in a study abroad program will give them a chance to study abroad again as a sophomore. They will also help with recruiting as they will tell their fellow students what a wonderful experience they had.

4. Recruit and utilize other respected faculty on campus to contribute to study abroad programs. Student must have a certain level of respect and trust for the faculty member leading the study abroad program before they will participate. Because of this reality, study abroad faculty need to find avenues where these relationships can be developed. One way to build the student/faculty relationship is to utilize other respected faculty on campus. If students trust particular faculty members, they can be advocates for the study abroad program and the faculty member leading the program. Utilizing other faculty will encourage a transfer of the trust capital already developed. Leveraging this will expedite the level of trust a student requires of their faculty before studying abroad.

Recruiting additional outstanding faculty members to contribute to study abroad programs will begin a leadership succession process that will revolutionize the culture of the college. When one faculty recruits another, the pool of students who will study abroad has essentially doubled because of with whom the faculty members come in contact. Eventually a college could produce its own internal troika programs among classes, departments, or campuses.

Recommendations for Students Participating in a Troika Study Abroad Program

1. Spend adequate time preparing for the study abroad program. Many students stated that the study abroad program they participated in was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Because many believed this, they needed to take full advantage of the opportunity. If students work hard to prepare for the program, during the program, and after the program, they will insure their experiences reach their full potential.

I felt that few students were making the necessary preparations required to get the most out of their study abroad programs. Many participants were not studying the culture or country to which they were about to travel. Had the faculty leading the program required readings, essays, or research prior to the program, students would have gotten more out of their experiences.

2. Document your experience. Those who kept a travel journal as recommended for this study thanked me for encouraging them to do so. At the time many participants did not find it fun, but in the end they appreciated having documentation of their thoughts, feelings, experiences, and accomplishments while studying abroad.

3. Follow up by continuing the study abroad program after it has concluded. I found many participants were more engaged in the topic, country, and culture once they returned home. Many students were watching television programming or reading news articles that related back to their study abroad program. Students need to take the time to continue their international education once they return home.

If students commit to doing difficult projects prior to, during, and after a study abroad program their overall experience will be enhanced.

Future Research

This research study attempted to add to the literature regarding short-term study abroad programs at community colleges. The qualitative case study methodology utilized in this study offered a detailed examination of the experiences of 13 students who participated in a short-term study abroad program at community college. Although this study is a start to developing a larger body of research on short-term study abroad programs at community colleges, there is further research that should be conducted. Recommendations for future research related to short-term study abroad programs at community colleges include:

1. An in-depth quantitative study based on the Troika study abroad model should be conducted to increase the breadth of knowledge related to the experiences of students who participate in short-term study abroad programs at community colleges.
2. An in-depth case study focusing on the experiences of students who have participated in a service learning short-term study abroad program would add to the literature and offer a comparison to the experiences of non-service learning programs.
3. An in-depth case study focusing on the experiences of students who have participated in short-term study abroad programs where home stays are a key component of the program would add value to the literature and offer a comparison to the experiences of non-home stay programs.
5. An in-depth case study focusing on the experiences of students who have participated in career and technical education study abroad programs compared to

liberal arts programs would add value to the literature and offer a comparison to the experiences of career and technical students compared to liberal arts programs.

6. An in-depth case study on the experiences of faculty who lead short-term study abroad programs at community colleges would add value to the literature and offer a perspective in addition to the students' perspectives.
7. A study offering insight into other short-term study abroad models would add value to the literature and a comparison to the Troika study abroad model.

Policy Implications

Recommendations for Government Agencies Funding Study Abroad Programs

Many government agencies do not provide funding for short-term study abroad programs. During the writing of this dissertation, I was managing a grant from the National Science Foundation. A project to Denmark that I was working on requires students to study abroad for 4 weeks. The initial requirement of the grant was to study abroad for 8 to 10 weeks. Most community college students could not be away from their jobs and dependents for that amount of time. Through negotiation, the length of the study abroad program was reduced to 4 weeks, which gave this program the opportunity to be successful. Funding agencies like the National Science Foundation need to appreciate short-term study abroad programs at community colleges because they serve community college students in a better capacity.

Short-term study abroad programs move students closer to the goals and outcomes of mid- and long-term study abroad programs by giving students a window of opportunity they may never have. All would agree that the longer one spends in a country the greater chance one has for a deeper experience. The duration of time spent studying abroad also comes with

a price tag. The resources required to participate in a mid- or long-term program is significantly higher, as the time away from family is for a mid- or long-term program is 12 weeks to 1 year and community college students would need to quit their job if they participated in a mid- or long-term program. These are barriers that can be hard to overcome when the typical community college student is 28 years old, 60 percent attend school part-time, 84 percent hold a job, 16 percent are single parents, 40 percent are minority, and 42 percent of them are first generation college students (AACC, 2009a). Investing in community college students is value added to our communities, academic institutions, and society. Please send these students abroad for 2 weeks and change their lives.

Recommendations for Community College Chancellors and Presidents

Because of the experiences of the participants in this study, community college administrators should utilize short-term study abroad programs to enhance the globalization of their students, programs, and campuses. Participants attest to the intellectual, personal, and professional growth these programs afforded them. The challenge is to increase the number of participants.

Final Reflection

Providing an opportunity for community college students to study abroad does matter. It is especially important for the development of the students' worldview. Experiencing another country and culture firsthand impacts them in a way a face-to-face or online class is incapable of replicating. Students who participated in these programs hold the faculty who lead the program in high regard; gain confidence in themselves; are more appreciative of their situation in life; value interacting with natives; have a desire to travel internationally on

a regular basis; and earn intellectual, social, professional, and personal capital as a result of studying abroad.

I have witnessed firsthand how these programs change the lives of the students who participate in them. Effective, well-planned, and affordable short-term study abroad programs should be an essential component of the community college curriculum.

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APPENDIX A. PRE-PROGRAM STUDENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Can you please help me get to know you better by telling me about yourself? What type of community do you live in? Tell me about your family and friends. Are you employed? Tell me what you or your parents do for a living? What is your major? Tell me about some of the activities you are involved in at your community college.
2. Tell me about your personality. Are you quite, outgoing, introvert, extrovert. Leader or follower. Serious or jokester. Conservative or risk taker.
3. Has anyone in your family been overseas? What was the attitude toward studying abroad in your family?
4. Have you ever been overseas? Tell me about that experience.
5. Do you know anyone who has been overseas?
6. Have you studied abroad before? Tell me about that experience.
7. If Applicable – How did that experience influence your decision to participate in this trip?
8. Describe how you learned about the concept of studying abroad at your school. What were the circumstances surrounding the way(s) you came to know about studying abroad?
9. What attracted you to the particular study abroad program you are registered for?
10. Are any of your friends participating in this program?
11. If Applicable – Tell me about the relationship you have with your faculty leading the program. Why do you trust that person to take you abroad? ...college? ...department?
12. What almost prevented you from participating in the program?
13. If Price...do you think the program is fairly priced?
14. Was your trip expensive? How did you finance your study abroad program? Was it a challenge?
15. When did you first decide to study abroad? Please describe how you felt about your decision.
16. How are you preparing for your study abroad program?

17. How has CCID impacted your decision to study abroad?
18. How much contact have you had with individuals from the country you will be visiting?
19. Describe your interactions with people who are from a country different the one you grew up in?
20. What do you expect to gain from studying abroad?
21. Do you think your meaningful relationships will change when you return home? In what way.
22. How will this impact your education next semester? Will your peers view, treat, look at you differently when you return? Will your family treat/look different... How will this impact your job outlook...Community you live in...
23. How do you anticipate it affecting your future?
24. When your trip is over and you look back on your experience what is it going to mean to you to have studies abroad (self-Identifier)?

APPENDIX B. POST-PROGRAM STUDENT INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Did you participate in an orientation associated with the study abroad program?
2. Tell me about the orientation?
3. In what ways was it helpful?
4. Where did you study abroad?
5. How long were you there?
6. What was the topic?
7. Describe some of the activities you participated in during your time overseas.
8. Describe the highlights of your study abroad program.
9. Tell me about the five most memorable photos you submitted to me. Photo 1, 2, 3...
10. What was the biggest surprise(s) you experienced while on your study abroad program?
11. Did you have any negative experiences with the program?
12. What would you tell someone who was thinking about participating in this program next year?
13. What would or did you tell others the benefits of study abroad are?
14. What types of relationships did you develop overseas?
15. How much contact do you still have with individuals from the country you visited?
16. How much contact do you have with members of the group who participated in the program?
17. Describe your experience of returning home.
18. What part of your life seems different because of your study abroad experience?
19. Describe the changes in your life as a result of your study abroad experience?
20. What did you learn about your own culture as a result of studying abroad?
21. How did your meaningful relationships change as a result of your experience abroad?

22. Did you have any negative experiences upon your return?
23. Did you make any presentations, etc. describing your study abroad experience? To what groups?
24. What personal qualities do you possess as a result of studying abroad?
25. What professional qualities do you possess as a result of studying abroad?
26. What qualities as a student do you possess as a result of studying abroad?
27. Have you participated in any new internationally related activities on or off campus as a result of your study abroad experience? Describe them.
28. As a result of your study abroad experience has any of your family express interest in future participation of similar projects? Friends? Coworkers if employed? Other Students?
29. As a result of studying abroad what future plans do you have related to studying abroad?
30. What future plans do you have related to traveling internationally?
31. Do you anticipate traveling overseas again in the future? If yes where do you anticipate traveling to and why that destination?
32. How has your job outlook changed because of your study abroad experience?
33. What does it mean to be someone who has studied abroad (self-identifier...has it changed)?
34. Did you keep a travel journal, write any papers about your trip, or give any presentations, which I may have?

APPENDIX C. AUDIT TRAIL

June 12, 2008	Meet with peer review group about the ETMM of the qualitative research fieldwork project
June 25, 2008	Conducted trial research project based on this concept with a small group of participant for a PhD research course
Jan – May 2009	Developed Case Study Methodology for dissertation
Summer 2009	Wrote chapters 1-3 dissertation
February 2010	Discussed conducting a case study of the Troika study abroad program with Community Colleges for International Development John Halder at the CCID annual conference in Houston, TX
	Contact CCID Manager Andrea Siebenmann who coordinates the Troika programs about conducting the case study
	Received a letter of support from CCID/John Halder giving permission to conduct the case study of the Troika study abroad program at CCID.
March 17, 2010	Receive approval from Iowa State's IRB to conduct the research project
March 30, 2010	Received a list of participant registered for a CCID Troika study abroad program from Andrea Siebenmann.
	Contacted all registered participants via email soliciting participation in study
	Followed up the individuals who were interested in the study
	Sent consent forms with self addressed stamped envelope to participants
April 3, 2010	Conducted pre-trip interview with Hoover Rose
April 5, 2010	Conducted pre-trip interview with Brenda Carter
	Conducted pre-trip interview with Olenka Svetlanna
April 6, 2010	Conducted pre-trip interview with Tabby Caldaron
April 9, 2010	Conducted pre-trip interview with Jordan Fields

- April 10, 2010 Conducted pre-trip interview with Erin Gaucho
 Conducted pre-trip interview with Ashley Ewing
 Conducted pre-trip interview with Miguel Walker
- April 12, 2010 Conducted pre-trip interview with Emma Sampson
- April 17, 2010 Conducted pre-trip interview with James Bavard
- April 24, 2010 Conducted pre-trip interview with Mina Wi
- May 5, 2010 Conducted pre-trip interview with Jessie Thomas
- May 1, 2010 Conducted pre-trip interview with Amanda Oakley
- May 4, 2010 Conducted pre-trip interview with Cole Perry
- May 23, 2010 Conducted pre-trip interview with Julie Licklighter
- July 2, 2010 Obtained a copy of Brenda Carter's Travel Journal via Email
- July 25, 2010 Conducted post-trip interview with James Bavard
 Received five most memorable photos from James Bavard via Email
 Received five most memorable photos from Olenka Svetlana via Email
 Received five most memorable photos from Brenda Carter via Email
- July 26, 2010 Conducted post-trip interview with Olenka Svetlanna
- July 27, 2010 Conducted post-trip interview with Hoover Rose
 Conducted post-trip interview with Jordan Fields
 Obtained a copy of Jordan Fields Travel Journal via Email
 Received three most memorable photos from Jordan Fields via Email
 Obtained a copy of James Bavard's Travel Journal via Email
- July 28, 2010 Conducted post-trip interview with Mina Wi
 Received five most memorable photos from Mina Wi via Email
 Received five most memorable photos from Julie Licklighter via

	Email
	Obtained a copy of Hoover Rose's Travel Journal via Email
July 29, 2010	Conducted post-trip interview with Cole Perry
	Received five most memorable photos from Cole Perry via Email
July 30, 2010	Received five most memorable photos from Tabby Caldaron via Email
July/August 2010	Transcribed Post-Trip Interviews
August 1, 2010	Conducted post-trip interview with Tabby Caldaron
August 3, 2010	Conducted post-trip interview with Julie Licklighter
August 5, 2010	Conducted post-trip interview with Miguel Walker
	Received five most memorable photos from Miguel Walker via Email
August 9, 2010	Conducted post-trip interview with Ashley Ewing
	Received five most memorable photos from Ashley Ewing via Email
September/October 2010	Wrote Chapters 4-5 of dissertation
October 18, 2010	Conducted member check over the themes and analysis
October 18, 2010	Peer review of project of draft
October 20, 2010	Met with editor about changes to the dissertation
October 25, 2010	Peer review over second draft
October 27, 2010	Met with editor about final changes to the dissertation
November 12, 2010	Presented Project to the Dissertation Committee for review, comments, feedback, and modifications. The recommendations of the committee were implemented into this study.
November 15, 2010	Sent to Editor

APPENDIX D. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) APPROVAL

IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Institutional Review Board
Office for Responsible Research
Vice President for Research
1138 Pearson Hall
Ames, Iowa 50011-2207
515 294-4566
FAX 515 294-4267

Date: 3/17/2010

To: Jeremy Pickard
152 Colorado St
Muscatine, IA 52761

CC: Dr. Larry Ebbers
N256 Lagomarcino Hall

From: Office for Responsible Research

Title: A Case Study of a Short-Term Study Abroad Program Model in Community Colleges

IRB Num: 10-028

Approval Date: 3/16/2010

Continuing Review Date: 3/15/2011

Submission Type: New

Review Type: Expedited

The project referenced above has received approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Iowa State University. Please refer to the IRB ID number shown above in all correspondence regarding this study.

Your study has been approved according to the dates shown above. To ensure compliance with federal regulations (45 CFR 46 & 21 CFR 56), please be sure to:

- **Use only the approved study materials** in your research, including the recruitment materials and informed consent documents that have the IRB approval stamp.
- **Obtain IRB approval prior to implementing any changes** to the study by submitting the "Continuing Review and/or Modification" form.
- **Immediately inform the IRB** of (1) **all serious and/or unexpected adverse experiences** involving risks to subjects or others; and (2) **any other unanticipated problems** involving risks to subjects or others.
- **Stop all research activity if IRB approval lapses**, unless continuation is necessary to prevent harm to research participants. Research activity can resume once IRB approval is reestablished.
- **Complete a new continuing review form** at least three to four weeks prior to the **date for continuing review** as noted above to provide sufficient time for the IRB to review and approve continuation of the study. We will send a courtesy reminder as this date approaches.

Research investigators are expected to comply with the principles of the Belmont Report, and state and federal regulations regarding the involvement of humans in research. These documents are located on the Office for Responsible Research website <http://www.compliance.iastate.edu/irb/forms/> or available by calling (515) 294-4566.

Upon completion of the project, please submit a Project Closure Form to the Office for Responsible Research, 1138 Pearson Hall, to officially close the project.

APPENDIX E. E-MAIL OF INVITATION TO PARTICIPANTS

Dear Study Abroad Participant:

My name is Jeremy Pickard. I am a graduate student at Iowa State University and an employee of Eastern Iowa Community College District. It is my understanding that you will be participating in a short-term study abroad program sponsored by Community Colleges for International Development (CCID). I am contacting you in hopes that you would be willing to participate in a research project based on your study abroad experience. Your insights, comments, and thoughts will help educators better understand the impact of your study abroad experience.

I myself have studied abroad and have led a CCID study abroad program through my community college. As these programs are developed there is very little research from a community college student's perspective. With your help I hope to change that. Your commitment to this project will be an interview prior to your trip, a follow up interview upon your return, keeping a travel journal, and submitting your five most memorable photos. Your participation is voluntary and will not have any impact on your participation or grade in the program.

Please reply to this email or contact me by phone if you would be interested in participation. I am willing to answer the questions you have and provide you with additional details about the project.

Thank you in advance for your willingness to participate.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Pickard
International Education Director
Business Department Faculty
Eastern Iowa Community College District
Muscatine Community College
152 Colorado Street
Muscatine, IA 52761
563.288.6026
jpickard@eicc.edu

APPENDIX F. INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

CONSENT FORM FOR:**A Case Study of the Troika Short-Term Study Program Model in Community Colleges**

This form describes a research project. It has information to help you decide whether or not you wish to participate. Research studies include only people who choose to take part—your participation is completely voluntary. Please discuss any questions you have about the study or about this form with the project staff before deciding to participate.

Who is conducting this study?

This study is being conducted by Jeremy Pickard.

Why am I invited to participate in this study?

You are being asked to take part in this study because you are participating in a Troika study abroad programs coordinated by Community Colleges for International Development (CCID).

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to examine the phenomenon of students and faculty members who participated in a short-term study abroad program at a community college. Participants will be encouraged to share meaning from their trip and how that meaning has shaped their lives academically, professionally, and personally. The programs used in this case study are coordinated by Community Colleges for International Development, which uses the Troika Model.

One of the goals of this study is to provide research which challenges conventional wisdom that short-term study abroad programs are not significant learning experiences compared to their semester- or year-long counter parts.

The second purpose of this study is to challenge the notion that institutional resources required to offer these programs is not producing a good return on the investment. This study will understand what return community colleges are getting on their investment.

Finally, the results of this study will help community colleges recognize ways to assist additional students in studying abroad. This investment would give more students and faculty exposure to international experiences including customs, culture, business, language, and international perspectives. These experiences will help produce more well-rounded community college graduates and enhance the global perspectives of the faculty members who teach at these colleges.

You are being invited to participate in this study because either have or will be participating in a short-term study abroad program at a community college either as a student or faculty.

What will I be asked to do?

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in a one hour interview about your participation in a short-term study abroad program and how it impacted your life. You will participate in two (2) interviews lasting no more than one hour in length. Your interview will be recorded and transcribed so the information provided can be analyzed by the researcher. You may be asked to provide additional information to clarify your answers in a follow-up interview if the researcher deems it necessary.

You will also be asked to provide five (5) of your most memorable photos from your trip. These photos will be accompanied by a brief paragraph explaining why you chose this photo and how it represents your experience.

Your participation is completely voluntary and participants will not be compensated for their participation.

Your participation will last for one year. Participating in the interviews and providing your most memorable photos will require the most amount of time. You would only be contact following these two events if clarification is deemed necessary from the researcher. This follow up will be done by phone and/or email.

What are the possible risks and benefits of my participation?

Risks – The no foreseen risks associated with this study.

Benefits – You will not receive any direct benefit from taking part in this study. The desire is that this research will benefit society by encourage more community colleges to offer similar opportunities to their students. These programs promote understanding of different cultures, acceptance of those who are different, and a better understanding of your own culture.

How will the information I provide be used?

The information you provide will be used for the following purposes:

- Completing the dissertation requirements of Iowa State University.

The information you provide may be used for the following purposes:

- Evidence in a journal articles
- Material for presentations a conferences and/or conventions
- To make adjustments to Community Colleges for International Development’s study abroad programs

What measures will be taken to ensure the confidentiality of the data or to protect my privacy?

Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by applicable laws and regulations. Records will not be made publicly available. However, auditing departments of Iowa State University, and the ISU Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies with human subjects) may inspect and/or copy your records for quality assurance and analysis. These records may contain private information.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent allowed by law, the following measures will be taken: You will be given or choose an alias and/or a unique code to be used instead of your name. An identifier will be kept with the data so the researcher(s) can contact you for clarification if needed.

If the results are published, your identity will remain confidential. Your alias will be used in place of your name and the college you attend will not be disclosed.

All files related to your interview will be kept confidential in a locked filing cabinet or on a password protected computer files. The files will be kept through the 2011 calendar year at that time they will be erased, shredded, and destroyed.

Will I incur any costs from participating or will I be compensated?

You will not have any costs from participating in this study. You will not be compensated for participating in this study. You will not receive extra credit for participating.

What are my rights as a human research participant?

Participating in this study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part in the study or to stop participating at any time, for any reason, without penalty or negative consequences.

During your participation you will be asked a variety of questions concerning your participation in a study abroad program at a community college. You may skip any interview question(s) that you do not wish to answer. Your responses to the interview questions will be kept confidential and will not impact your scholarship (if applicable), participation in the program, and/or your final grade for the study abroad program.

Whom can I call if I have questions or problems?

You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study.

- For further information about the study contact:

Principal Researcher
 Jeremy Pickard
 563.288.6026
 jpickard@eicc.edu

Major Professor
 Dr. Larry Ebbers
 515.294.8067
 lebbers@iastate.edu

- If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the IRB Administrator, (515) 294-4566, IRB@iastate.edu, or Director, (515) 294-3115, Office for Responsible Research, 1138 Pearson Hall, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa 50011.

Consent and Authorization Provisions

Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Participant's Name (printed) _____

 (Participant's Signature)

 (Date)

Investigator Statement

I certify that the participant has been given adequate time to read and learn about the study and all of their questions have been answered. It is my opinion that the participant understands the purpose, risks, benefits and the procedures that will be followed in this study and has voluntarily agreed to participate.

 (Signature of Person Obtaining Consent)

 (Date)

APPENDIX G. TROIKA STUDY ABROAD SYLLABUS

GLS 100 Contemporary World Issues
(3 credit hours)

Course Information

Instructor:	Mr. Pickard	Semester:	Spring 2009
Office:		E-mail:	
Phone:	(555) 555-5555	Class Location:	Arranged
Office Hours:	11:30 AM – Noon Monday-Thursday	Class Schedule:	Arranged Spring Semester Travel Dates: Tentative May 18-28, 2009

Course Description

The course, **Study Abroad in Ukraine: Global Business in an Emerging Economy** will provide students an opportunity to learn about the issues of business in an emerging democracy and at the same time understand Ukrainian culture and their people. Students enrolled in the course will have the opportunity to experience firsthand these issues on their expedition to Ukraine.

During the course of the visit students will spend the majority of their time in city of Drohobych. This important industrial center in Western Ukraine is home to 77,000 people. The city has a variety of businesses including oil refineries, textile and chemical companies, auto crane plant, oil and natural gas drill bit factory, mineral water bottling facility, masonite and plywood production, and cut flower greenhouses. Students will internship at and/or tour these businesses and learn from owners and managers about commerce and trade in an emerging market.

Students will spend time between business visits in discussions and classroom-based seminars held at the Drohobych State Pedagogical University. Local experts in culture, history, and business will present their expertise in their respected field of study. At night they will stay at a local hotel, in the university's hostel, and/or with Ukrainian host families.

In addition to the business-related studies students will have an opportunity to learn about the rich culture and diverse people of the Ukraine, an area with a history dating back to before the 9th century. Cultural events will include but are not limited to exploring cathedrals, salt mines, historical Lviv, attending a ballet, and traveling over the Carpathian Mountains to the Trans Carpathian region.

Prerequisite

None

Entry Level Skill

Students entering should have basic computer skills and have the desire to interact online with other students participating in the program.

Course Materials and Supplies

To ensure a timely delivery and all materials required for the course we recommend purchasing materials through the Muscatine Community College Bookstore. All required text(s) and supplies can be purchased online at <http://bookstore.muscatinecc.com> or on campus at the college bookstore.

Pre Trip Reading:

Shevchenko, Anna. *Ukraine - Culture Smart!: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette*. Kuperard, 2006. ISBN: 9781857333275

Passport:

All participants must have a valid passport which will not expire within six months of the travel dates. To apply for a passport use the following web site:
http://travel.state.gov/passport/passport_1738.html

Application:

All student must complete the application form found at <http://www.ccidinc.org>.

Supplies:

1. You will need to bring enough clothes for the entire trip. No laundry facilities will be available.
2. It is recommended you bring a couple rolls of toilet paper.
3. If you will need to use the electrical outlets you must purchase a converter. Wal-Mart carries these converters in their travel department.

Attendance

Prior to the trip an orientation will be held either face to face, by phone, or an alternative delivery method. This orientation is required for all participants.

While overseas all student are expected to attend all scheduled activities. These activities comprise the majority of the students final grade.

Make up Policy

It is impossible to makeup the orientation and the study abroad trip. Failure to meet the expectations of these activities will result in a failing grade.

Prior to the trip students will be required to read one book and several articles. This will help prepare them for the study abroad trip. There will be short assignments assigned for each reading.

REQUIREMENTS

Communication

Announcements - From time to time the instructor of the course will post announcements to the course site concerning materials, homework and assignments, tests, etc. It is the student's responsibility to read and take appropriate action regarding these announcements.

Discussion Board Participation - One of the great advantages of an online course over traditional face-to-face courses is the ability to communicate and share ideas. You'll be required to participate in the number of regular (after each section) discussions on selected topics. You should check the Discussion Board on the course site frequently and participate in all active discussions.

It is recommended each student should check the course site three to four times a week to stay abreast of the announcements and discussion Board participation.

E-mail - On occasion you will receive and send e-mail to the instructor. Do to the large number of e-mail messages received by the instructor, it is very important that **all e-mail** messages you send me the following criteria:

- The subject line **MUST** contain the course name. This lets the instructor know which course you are sending a message about.
- Include your full name somewhere the message. It is not always possible to tell which student is sending the e-mail from his or her first name and/or e-mail address.

If you do not include these things in all e-mails you send your instructor, then they cannot promise they will read or receive your message in a timely manner.

The instructor will check his or her to e-mail once a day Monday through Friday unless otherwise communicated. Depending on the instructor they may or may not check their e-mail during the weekend. Do not expect weekend correspondence to occur on a regular basis.

Reading Assignments

Since students do not meet face to face with the instructor an essential aspect of an online course is the reading assignments. It is expected that you will complete all required readings by the due date (if specified). This will allow you to effectively participate in the online

discussions as well as for your own benefit in being able to grasp the concepts being taught in the lesson.

Lesson Activities

Often the instructor will assign smaller activities during any given week which are designed to help you further understand the concepts and applications being taught. It is expected that you complete these activities as you progress through the related lesson materials. However, unless it is otherwise stated in the Syllabus, lesson activities are not graded and do not affect your final grade. Your completion of these activities will help you score better on other assignments, papers, and/or tests for this course.

Papers, Case Studies, and/or Assignments

These types of assignments must be submitted electronically in a Microsoft Word compatible file format using the Dropbox located in on the course site.

If you are required to write a paper or essay for this course it should be in a Microsoft Word compatible document. Upon completion of your paper/essay place it in the appropriate Dropbox in the course site. Within the Word document your document must use the following format:

- Font size 12 points
- Double-spaced
- One-inch margins on all sides
- Correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- No more than four errors per page are acceptable
- Documented in MLA style when citations are necessary

Below is an example of the beginning of an MLA report and the citation page.

Last Name 1

Student's Name

Course Name (example College Writing)

Instructor's Title and Name (example Dr. William Smith)

Current Date

A System to Review Course Objectives

I have the luxury (or curse depending on your perspective) of riding in a car for 40 minutes to and from work Monday through Friday. Making the same trip day after day can get quite mundane. These 40 minutes would be a great opportunity for me to review the course objectives for the week.

In the glove box of my car I will keep five laminated cards with the week's objectives on them. I have one card for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. Each day I take a new card to learn the concepts for the week. By the end of each week I have know each objective for the unit (Duvall 135).

Last Name 2

Works Cited

Buttrick, George Arthur, ed. *The Interpreter's Learning*. Nashville: Abingdon, 1980.

Duvall, J. Sam and J. Daniel Mayes. *Grasping Your Subject Area*. Grand Rapids, MI: Life Learning Publishing House, 2001.

MacArthur, William F. *The MacArthur Brain Based Learning Techniques*. Chicago: The Learning Institute, 2004.

Exam(s)/Quiz(zes)

All of the exam/quizzes will be available online from the course site and/or using SAM 2007. Once you've started the exam you will not be permitted to close it and returned to it later. It must be completed in one sitting.

Evaluation

Grade will be based on the following scale.

A	90%-100%
B	80%-89%
C	70%-79%
D	60%-69%
F	00%-59%

Distribution for final grade:

Book Review (3-5 Pages)	10%
Discussion Boards	10%
Attendance, participation, and attitude while in country	30%
Travel Journal (minimum 1 page per day)	30%
Final Paper (3-5 Pages)	20%

Other

- Policies on student conduct are presented in the EICCD Student Handbook.
- During this program you will represent yourself, your family, your school, and the United States of America. Please let your actions have a positive reflection on these groups.
- Important dates to remember:
 - Orientation (to be announced)
 - Book Review Due May 16, 2008
 - Travel Dates May 19-30, 2008
 - Travel Journal Due June 8, 2008.
 - Final Paper Due June 22, 2008.

Ukraine Study Abroad Tentative Itinerary (Spring of 2008)

Monday, May 18, 2008

Travel from United States

Tuesday, May 19

Arrive in Lviv, Ukraine

Travel by bus/van from Lviv Airport to [Drohobych](#)

Check into Hotel (Fata Morgana)

17:00 Dinner at Hotel

Wednesday, May 20

8:00 Breakfast at the Hotel

9:00 Meet at [Drohobych University](#)

Presentation on History of Ukraine

12:00 Lunch at University Cafeteria

14:00 Business Tour (Auto Crane Plant)

18:00 Dinner

20:00 Arrive back at Hotel (Fata Morgana)

Thursday, May 21

8:00 Breakfast at the Hotel

9:00 Meet at Drohobych University

Presentation on Customs, Culture, and Language of Ukraine

11:00 Meet Drohobych University Students - Pair our students with at least one English speaking student from Drohobych University.

12:00 Lunch University Cafeteria (with Drohobych Students)

12:50 Attend part of third class with Foreign Languages and Management students

14:00 Walking tour of Drohobych

(Led by Helen/Olenka if possible) (Drohobych students are welcome to join us)

Wooden Church, Drohobych Art Museum, and other points of interest

18:00 Dinner at the restaurant up the street from the University

(Drohobych students are welcome to join us)

20:00 Arrive back at Hotel (Fata Morgana)

Friday, May 22

6:00 Breakfast at the Hotel

7:00 Leave for Khost

9:00 Tour [Uniplyt](#) wood production company on the way to Khost

12:00 [Train Tour](#) through the Mountains and lunch at the summit

16:00 Check into Russian Spa and Hotel (Valeriy's Hotel)

18:00 Dinner at Hotel

Saturday, May 23

- 8:00 Breakfast at Hotel
- 9:00 Meet in front of Hotel
- 10:00 Tour Winery
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:00 Leave for Castle Tour
- 18:00 Dinner at Trout Restaurant
- 22:00 Check back into Hotel (Fata Morgana)

Sunday, May 24

- 6:00 Breakfast at the Hotel
- 7:00 Leave Hotel for Train Station
- 8:00 Board Train for [Lviv](#) (schedule subject to change based on train schedule)
(Led by Olenka - Drohobych students are welcome to join us)
- 10:00 Arrive in Lviv – Tour sites of interest
- 12:00 Lunch Under the Blue Moon
- 14:00 Tour(s)
- 17:00 Ballet at Lviv Ballet House
- 20:00 Board Train for Drohobych
- 22:00 Arrive back at Hotel (Fata Morgana)

Monday, May 25

- 8:00 Breakfast at the Hotel
- 9:00 Meet at Drohobych Univeristy
Presentation on Political Situation of Ukraine
- 12:00 Lunch University Cafeteria
- 14:00 Business Tour ([Tandem](#) - Fresh Cut Flower Greenhouse Company)
- 18:00 Dinner
- 20:00 Arrive back at Hotel (Fata Morgana)

Tuesday, May 26

- 8:00 Breakfast at the Hotel
- 9:00 Meet at Drohobych Univeristy
Presentation on Best Business Practices and the Economy in Ukraine
- 12:00 Lunch University Cafeteria
- 14:00 Business Tour ([Sapsadoor](#) – international door company)
- 18:00 Dinner
- 20:00 Arrive back at Hotel (Fata Morgana)

Wednesday, May 27

- 8:00 Breakfast at the Hotel
- 9:00 Meet at Drohobych Univeristy
- 10:00 Leave for business tour (Water Bottling plant Truskavets)
- 12:00 Lunch
- 13:30 Visit to Truskavets Market

18:00 Dinner at restaurant in Truskavets where Ehore took us
 20:00 Arrive back at Hotel (Fata Morgana)

Thursday, May 28

9:00 Meet at Drohobych Univeristy
 9:30 Ivan Franco Historical Site
 12:00 Lunch
 13:30 Prepare to travel home
 16:00 Complete Evaluation Forms
 18:00 Dinner
 20:00 Arrive back at Hotel (Fata Morgana)

Friday, May 29

Travel Home

I. BRIEF HISTORY OF UKRAINE- To be presented by faculty at Drohobych University

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ukraine>

- STALIN
- COLLECTIVISM 1928-1954
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Collectivisation_in_the_USSR
<http://youtube.com/watch?v=mFeqb0x7q1E>
<http://youtube.com/watch?v=9JAIUcqy3IM&feature=related>
- FALL OF THE SOVIET UNION- 1991
<http://youtube.com/watch?v=Fab3PLPSnGE&feature=related>
- UKRAINE AS AN INDEPENDENT COUNTRY
http://www.yourchildlearns.com/europe_map.htm

II. BUSINESS

- REVENUES - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Revenues>
- EXPENSES - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Expenses>
- PROFITS - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Profits>

III. TYPES OF BUSINESSES

- SOLE PROPRIETORSHIP - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sole_proprietorship
- PARTNERSHIP - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Partnership>
- CORPORATION - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Corporation>
 - PUBLIC CORPORATION
 - PRIVATE CORPORATION
 - STOCK
 - CORPORATE GOVERNANCE
 - STOCKHOLDERS
 - BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 - OFFICERS
 - ANNUAL REPORT

1V. TRADE AGREEMENTS

- NAFTA - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nafta>
- EUROPEAN UNION - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_union

V. EXCHANGE RATES

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Exchange_rates

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

<http://www.oanda.com/convert/classic>

VI. QUOTAS, TARIFFS, AND SUBSIDIES

VII. IMPORTS AND EXPORTS

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imports>

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gdp>

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_%28nominal%29

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_%28nominal%29_per_capit

a

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_GDP_%28real%29_growth_rate

VIII. ISO 9000

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ISO_9000