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RAISING AWARENESS IN STUDY ABROAD

by
Leslie A. Gassler

A Dissertation

Submitted to the
Department of Educational Leadership

College of Education

In partial fulfillment of

Doctor of Education

at

Rowan University

2013

Dissertation Chair: MaryBeth Walpole, Ph.D.

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Dedication

This dissertation would not have been possible if it were not for the continuous help and encouragement from my family and friends. Thank you for your endless support throughout this process. I would like to extend my appreciation especially to the following.

To my Mom-mom and Pop-pop, I'm forever thank you for instilling your love for travel and passion for learning within me. At a very young age, you showed me slide shows of your adventures in countries I only dreamed of visiting. While on my first trip abroad, you commented that you opened a door for me that would be hard to close. You were right!

To my parents, Mom and Dad, thank you for your love, support, and encouragement throughout my life. Thank you for giving me the strength to reach for the stars and chase my dreams. Your faith in me allowed me to take risks without fear of failure.

To my husband, Bryan, whose values and spirit match my own. Thank you for accompanying on this adventure and for encouraging me to dream big. Most importantly, thank you for being the voice of reason and for your continuous love and support.

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Abstract

Leslie A. Gassler
RAISING AWARENESS IN STUDY ABROAD
2010/2014
MaryBeth Walpole, Ph.D.

Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership

As a result of globalization, U.S. students need to acquire international knowledge, intercultural communication skills, and a global perspective in order to compete, succeed, and contribute to the interconnected world and global economy of the 21st century (Leask, 2001; Obst, Bhandari, & Witherell, 2007). Study abroad programs have been found to provide students with the necessary skills and competence required for the 21st century. The purpose of this action research study was to examine honors students' intercultural competency and the barriers they saw to studying abroad, and to develop of online study abroad information and promote a study abroad information session. This study focused on undergraduate honors students at Greenwich University, a four-year mid-Atlantic public university during the 2010-2012 academic years. In order to determine how to raise honors students' awareness in study abroad, this research study measured two concepts. One concept measured was an individual's experience, interests, and challenges regarding study abroad. The second concept measured was how an individual understands his intercultural development. The conceptual framework of this four cycle action research dissertation centered on collecting data to determine honors students' intercultural levels and their perceptions of study abroad, and to identify barriers they believed existed. Data was then used to create an online study abroad

information link and promote a study abroad information session. Through surveys, focus groups, and interviews with Greenwich University honors students, I was able to determine that the online study abroad information link and the promotion of the study abroad information session affected awareness of study abroad.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Problem Statement

Numerous changes have occurred in the world since the onset of globalization. As technology and telecommunications have advanced worldwide, people from different cultures have become more interconnected and education has continued to become more cross-cultural (Robins, Lindsey, & Terrell, 2006). As a result, there is increasing acknowledgment that specific skills and competencies are necessary for the 21st century, including an understanding of world regions, cultures, and issues; skills in communicating across cultures; and a sensitivity to and knowledge of the values, beliefs, and concerns of other cultures and people. Researchers agree that there is an increased need for U.S. students to acquire international knowledge, intercultural communication skills, and a global perspective in order to compete and thrive in, as well as positively contribute to, the interconnected world and global economy of the 21st century (Leask, 2001; Obst, Bhandari, & Witherell, 2007).

Researchers have found that study abroad programs give students cross-cultural immersion experiences that combine academic experience with travel so that students gain a global perspective (Cushner & Mahon, 2002). However, with a total higher education enrollment of 17 million students, there remains a vast unmet need to develop and increase U.S. students' international experience, and an even larger challenge to make certain that study abroad is accessible to all U.S. students in higher education (Obst et al., 2007).

Context of the Study

At Greenwich University, although study abroad programs are available, few students take advantage of them. Even honors students, who have funding for study abroad, do not participate in high numbers. In 2004, the Honors Concentration received a gift from a donor that provides funds to honors students participating in study abroad. Since the Honors Concentration received the gift, approximately 7-8 honors students have participated in study abroad each year. On average, there are approximately 300 students enrolled in the Honors Concentration at Greenwich University. Therefore, it is estimated that about 2.5% of honors students at Greenwich University study abroad each year. The lack of honors students taking advantage of study abroad was identified in a spring 2010 report produced by students enrolled in the Planning and Resource Allocation in Higher Education course. The report outlined a strategic plan for the Honors Concentration at Greenwich University, including recommendations for increasing study abroad participation. The report recommended that the Honors Concentration find ways to increase study abroad by making students aware of how the study abroad program actually works.

As a result of low participation, many students who do not study abroad may have low intercultural competence. Study abroad experiences, including traditional semester long programs and shorter faculty-led programs, are an increasingly practical way for students, including these honors students, to study abroad, so it is necessary to understand what study abroad barriers exist and offer effective study abroad information for honors students. Participating in study abroad programs makes it possible for students in higher education to immerse themselves in cultural settings different from their own settings.

These new settings can offer intellectual and cultural opportunities that may influence professional and personal development (Bates, 1997). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate the specific barriers to honors students' participation in study abroad and make efforts to address these barriers and increase awareness in study abroad and intercultural competence. This dissertation explores honors students' intercultural competence and their perceptions of study abroad and creates an online information repository for students on the Greenwich University's Honor's Concentration website and promotes a study abroad information session.

An Emerging Concern for Greenwich University's Honor Students

Part of the study is to find out why many honors students do not study abroad. Student participation in study abroad programs is often cited as a valuable tool for internationalizing campuses and helping students prepare for living in the 21st century (Bates, 1997; Cushner & Mahon, 2002). Since the honors students at Greenwich University have some funding available and are still not studying abroad, it is necessary to understand what factors influence study abroad awareness and participation in order to offer accessible study abroad programs for honors students at Greenwich University.

Focus on Honors Students

Encouraging study abroad participation is critical for all our students, but especially our honors students who are typically an institution's highest achieving, most motivated students. Research affirms that higher education institutions dedicate time and resources to creating effective ways of working with international students, minorities, and students with disabilities (Noldon & Sedlacek, 1998). Yet, despite myths suggesting that academically talented students do not require specific services, highly achieving

college students have needs that require special consideration (Kerr & Colangelo, 1988). According to researchers, the support that undergraduate students receive from their higher education institutions is a major factor in their adjustment and growth in college (Noldon & Sedlacek, 1998). As a result of researchers (Haynes, 2006; Kerr & Colangelo, 1988) suggesting that honors students have specific needs that necessitate special consideration in order to adjust and succeed in higher education, it is essential to identify and understand honors students' characteristics in order to effectively promote academic and personal growth through study abroad.

Since honors students are selected and viewed as higher achieving in some way compared to nonhonors peers, specific characteristics can be identified. According to researchers, honors students have a higher rate of academic achievement, are more interested in learning for the intrinsic value rather than only to earn higher grades, engage in more extracurricular activities, and manage study time more effectively than higher education students not enrolled in honors programs (Achterberg, 2004; Mathiasen, 1985). Additionally, honors students tend to be more eager, exploratory, and experienced than their nonhonors peers. Characteristics of present day higher education students, including the feeling of being special, sheltered, confident, and pressured are extreme descriptors of honors students (Lowery, 2004). Students enrolled in honors programs often have anxiety and a need to excel in all academic subjects in addition to the added pressure related to the requirements of the honors program (Lowery, 2004). These characteristics create specific implications for how higher education institutions should provide services for honors students to ensure that they adjust to and grow in while in college. In an effort to meet the needs of honors students in a global world, it is necessary for higher education

institutions to create new ways of working with the current generation of honors students (Lowery, 2004). Furthermore, it is essential that higher education institutions assist honors students in meeting the demands of a global nation and in promoting the development of intercultural competence through study abroad awareness and participation.

Significance of the Study

As the world becomes more interdependent, it is not only essential that honors students in higher education in the United States are aware of other cultures, but that they are active participants within this rapidly evolving global society (Cushner & Mahon, 2002). International education, specifically study abroad programs, offers honors students direct access to world cultures and immerses them in active roles as global citizens. It is the responsibility of higher education institutions to prepare culturally aware and globally-minded students, particularly eager, exploratory, and high achieving students. Although obtaining experience with diverse populations within one's own community is valuable, international study abroad experiences for honors students may provide a more challenging and explicitly unfamiliar environment in which to examine cultures and practices.

Aims of the Study

The purpose of this action research study is to examine honors students' intercultural competency, to investigate the barriers they see to studying abroad, and to develop online information and to promote a study abroad information session that may increase their participation. Because I am working with the Honors Concentration as I attempt to lead this project, I also examine the leadership traits I develop and utilize in

my role as a catalyst for promoting a student's intercultural competence through awareness of study abroad. As the researcher, my role is to increase honors students' awareness of study abroad through a student study abroad online link and workshops that provide information.

Supporting Facts

With the onset of globalization, intercultural competence has become an essential skill for succeeding in an interconnected global world (Leask, 2001). Yet, U.S. higher education students lack the intercultural experience, language capabilities, and intercultural communication skills necessary to succeed in the interconnected world and global economy of the 21st century (Leask, 2001; Obst, Bhandari & Witherell, 2007). In order to build global competence, researchers have found that study abroad immerses students in cross-cultural experiences that combine academic and personal experiences, resulting in students gaining a global perspective (Cushner & Mahon, 2002).

Developing the skills needed to effectively communicate with people from other countries and cultures is a necessary skill for students in the 21st century, yet, few honors students at Greenwich University take advantage of studying abroad. Greenwich University honors students receive funding for study abroad, however, only about 7-8 honors students participate in study abroad each year. A 2010 report by students enrolled in the Planning and Resource Allocation in Higher Education at Greenwich University noted concern for the lack of Greenwich University honors students' participating in study abroad. Consequently, the 2010 report outlined a strategic plan for the Honors Concentration at Greenwich University that included recommendations for increasing honors students participation in study abroad. Since study abroad may increase students'

intercultural competence, it is logical to identify Greenwich University's honors students' intercultural competence level, identify and address study abroad barriers, and increase Greenwich University honors students' awareness in study abroad.

Research Questions

In order to determine how Greenwich University's Honors Concentration can increase honors students' awareness in study abroad programs, this research study is measuring two concepts. One concept measured is an individual's experiences, interests, and challenges regarding studying abroad. The other concept measured is how an individual understands his intercultural development. Furthermore, the study is designed to answer the following questions about study abroad programs for honors students at Greenwich University.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What levels of intercultural competence do honors students have?
2. What are honors students' interests and perceived barriers regarding studying outside of the United States?
3. How can existing programs offered by Greenwich University be promoted to increase awareness and reduce perceived barriers for honors students?
4. To what extent and how has the implementation of the online study abroad information availability affected honors students' awareness of and interest in study abroad?
5. To what extent and how has the implementation of the study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness of and interest in study abroad?

The study seeks to answer the following question about my leadership:

1. What leadership traits did I develop and utilize in my role as a catalyst for promoting honors students' awareness of study abroad?

According to Creswell (2003), a mixed methods approach is a collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, which is the approach this study utilized. Using combined methods allows the researcher to better understand the concept being tested or explained. Multiple data collection methods also contributes to the trustworthiness of the data (Glesne, 2006). Furthermore, a mixed methods approach is desirable in order to triangulate the data and make it more reliable. I use surveys, individual interviews, and focus groups to collect data throughout the study. The data is used to identify how Greenwich University's Honors Concentration website can be promoted to increase study abroad awareness for honors students. My first phase surveys honors students to determine their intercultural competence levels. I then survey students a second time to examine their perceptions of study abroad and to identify barriers they believe existed. I then used the information I gathered to improve study abroad awareness in honors students by creating an online study abroad link accessible on Greenwich University's Honors Concentration website and by promoting a study abroad information session.

Because I am leading this project, the following chapter outlines my espoused leadership styles and approaches. In Chapter 2, I attempt to give meaning to my leadership styles and approaches as they have evolved from self-reflection and past experiences. Implementing specific leadership styles helps me to engage others toward meaningful and sustainable change in education. Following, in Chapter 3, I review the literature related to undergraduate students, study abroad, and the development of intercultural competence. In Chapter 4, I describe the context of the study and the

research methods used to answer the research questions. Next, Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8 provides the results of each cycle of my research. Concluding my dissertation, Chapter 9 explored my leadership during this action-based dissertation (Glesne, 2006) and compared it to my espoused theory.

Chapter 2

Leadership Platform

Introduction

Throughout my doctoral coursework and dissertation process, there have been two core theories that have guided me as a leader: transformational and moral leadership (Burns, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1992). Within these leadership theories, I integrate emotional intelligence and reflective practice to help me understand and interpret my past experiences as a learner and leader (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). The events described in my leadership platform are leadership stories and examples that have molded my leadership practices and best describe my leadership style. In this chapter, I attempt to give meaning to my leadership style and practices as they evolve from self-reflection and past experiences. Additionally, I give details of significant classroom experiences that have become the foundation of my awareness and interest in advocating for students with special needs, specifically students identified as honors students in higher education.

A leader is one who helps others become the best they can be. As a leader in the classroom, I worked to build a solid foundation for my students on which they could accomplish their goals and achieve their dreams. I am a transformational and moral leader who uses emotional intelligence to enlist the enthusiastic participation of others (Burns, 2003; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1992). Throughout my life, a variety of experiences have created challenging and rewarding opportunities that have helped me identify and refine my leadership style and practices. As a researcher, I strive to influence and promote positive change in the field of higher education.

Developing into an effective leader and achieving success relies on my ability to reflect

on experiences and learn the valuable lessons that each experience presents. As I acquire knowledge and insight from prior experiences, I develop and give meaning to my leadership style and practices as a researcher. Evidence of my leadership style and practices are portrayed through my efforts to influence and promote positive change in undergraduate honors students' awareness of study abroad. The following section details my experience and interest in my research topic, followed by descriptions of the leadership theories to which I subscribe.

Research Interest and Experience

In addition to identifying my leadership style through self-reflection and past experiences, I have acquired an interest in the field of higher education and study abroad that has evolved into the topic of my dissertation. My desire to increase study abroad awareness and intercultural competence in undergraduate honors students evolved as a result of my personal experiences studying and teaching in the U.S. and abroad. Teaching elementary school gave me first-hand experience working with individuals of all academic levels. It made me aware of the importance of challenging and motivating all students, those who were struggling academically, as well as those who were advanced academically and needed additional support to continue to succeed. Participating in a study abroad program as an undergraduate and graduate student made it possible for me to immerse myself in a cultural setting different from my own that offered intellectual and cultural opportunities that influenced my professional and personal development. Since then, I have developed a passion for promoting study abroad in undergraduate students that ultimately has become the focus on my doctoral research.

During my seven years of teaching elementary level students in an urban school

district, I encountered students of all levels and abilities. During my first year of teaching, I was amazed by the quantity of special services available to students who were performing below grade level. Throughout the school day, students in need of extra academic support were removed from instructional time in my classroom, and given small group instruction, often times one-on-one, with a teacher. At the time, it seemed natural that students who were struggling academically would be given extra support.

It never crossed my mind that another group of students, those at the other end of the special education spectrum, were not receiving services that they, too, were in need of. A father of an identified gifted child in my class brought to my attention that the school district had recently eliminated the Gifted and Talented program due to budget cuts. At the same time, the school district increased special services for the students identified with deficiencies in reading and math. The father was concerned that resources were being diverted from gifted education and transferred to remedial reading and math programs for students performing below grade level. He also informed me that, legally, the school district was required to provide a Gifted and Talented program for qualified students. Ultimately, the father, along with other parents, united together and were able to get the school district to reestablish a Gifted and Talented program.

Prior to the father bringing his concerns to me, I did not realize the significance and value of gifted students receiving additional support in order to succeed both academically and personally. However, this experience made me realize that gifted students often encounter other challenges. Despite being intellectually advanced, a gifted student may not be advanced in other areas. As I reflected on the gifted students in my class, I realized many of them had difficulties fitting in with their peers. Often times, this

left an impact on their emotional development that became evident as they progressed through school. As a result of this experience, I became more aware of the needs of all individuals, specifically gifted students who were often underrepresented in my school district.

At the end of my elementary level teaching career, I worked closely with higher education students pursuing teaching degrees. I realized that I could utilize the skills and knowledge I gained as an elementary level teacher to have an impact on students in higher education. With a desire to be a leader in the field of higher education, I have focused my dissertation on promoting study abroad to honors students as a way to foster their academic and personal growth. Because of my experience studying and teaching abroad, I believe participating in a study abroad program will provide honors students with experiences necessary to adjust and succeed in the 21st century.

As a result of low numbers of honors students participating in study abroad programs at Greenwich University, it is necessary to examine factors that affect honors students' participation. Exploring specific determinants that affect an honors student's participation in study abroad in an effort to increase study abroad awareness and intercultural competence necessitates reflection of my own experiences and leadership practices. This research project is a result of my past experiences and leadership study as I pursue my Ed. D. in educational leadership.

Foundations of Leadership Development

According to Burns (2003), developing into an effective leader relies on an individual's ability to understand how particular leadership styles influence a situation's emotional climate and change process. Burns (2003) states that one's leadership style is

and value system. In this section, I explain how I implement the practices of transformational and moral leadership to engage others toward committed and empowered participation in the pursuit of meaningful and sustainable change in education.

Leadership as Transformational

Burns (2003) defines transformational leadership as a process in which leaders and followers engage in a reciprocated process of elevating one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. The transforming leader seeks potential motives in followers, looks to satisfy higher needs, and engages the full person of the follower (Burns, 1978). Transformational leadership is a mutual relationship that converts followers to leaders and leaders into moral agents. Burns describes transformational leadership as:

When one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. Their purposes, which might have started out as separate but related, as in the case of transactional leadership, become fused... Transforming leadership ultimately becomes moral in that it raises the level of human conduct and ethical aspirations of both leader and led, and thus it has a transforming effect on both (Burns, 1978, p.20).

Transformational leaders put forward a purpose that goes beyond short-term goals and focuses on higher order intrinsic needs. As a result, followers identify with the needs of the leader (Burns, 2003).

Bass (1997), a disciple of Burns, offers a model of transformational leadership that includes four dimensions of transformational leadership: idealized influence (or

charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. Idealized influence refers to the degree to which a leader behaves in admirable ways, such as taking stands and appealing to followers on an emotional level, that result in followers identifying with the leader. Leaders with inspirational motivation articulate a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers. They challenge followers with high standards, are optimistic about future goals, and give meaning to the task at hand. Intellectual stimulation is the extent to which the leader challenges assumptions, takes risks, and asks for the ideas of followers. The fourth dimension, individual consideration, is the degree to which the leader acts as a mentor or coach and attends to each follower's needs. Additionally, leaders with individual consideration possess the need to respect and celebrate the individual contribution that each follower can make to the team. Bass (1997) considers the four interrelated components of transformational leadership essential for leaders to possess in order to make transformational leadership possible. Overall, a transformational leader is seeking to satisfy a greater need of an individual. As a leader in my research project, I attempt to instill the qualities of transformational leadership as I promote the awareness of study abroad and intercultural competence.

Moral Leadership

According to Burns (2003), the theory of moral leadership is proposed as a means for leaders to take responsibility for their leadership and to aspire to satisfy the needs of the followers. Leadership is about leading others and influencing them to behave in a particular way (Burns, 2003). Burns (2003) asserts that leaders are neither born nor made; instead, leaders evolve from a structure of motivation, values, and goals. Observing and reflecting on transformational and moral leadership in action have molded my leadership

style and practices. Effective leaders are those who lead from within. The heart of leadership is rooted in the heart of leaders who lead from something deep inside (Bolman & Deal, 1995). Moral leadership requires one to look at what is right and lead others toward that (Walker & Donlevy, 2005). Moral leadership serves as a guide to uphold a positive and active role in my professional and personal relations. My experiences have instilled in me the belief and strength to do what is right.

Sergiovanni (1992) frames moral leadership into three categories: the heart of leadership, the head of leadership, and the hand of leadership. The heart of leadership reflects an individual's values, dreams, and commitment. More than a vision, it is an individual's interior world, evolving into the foundation of one's reality. The head of leadership involves theories of practice that a leader develops over time. In light of these theories, an individual is able to reflect on situations she encounters. An individual's reflection on decisions and actions reshapes the heart and head. The head of leadership is molded by the heart and drives the hand. The hand of leadership includes an individual's decisions, actions, and behaviors. Though some decisions appear to make more sense, in certain situations, than others do, the hand of leadership is not powerful enough to describe or represent leadership. These three categories become intertwined. It is these three categories I incorporate when reflecting on my experiences observing moral leadership in action and implementing moral leadership into practice.

Leadership is more than leading others and having influence. Walker and Donlevy (2005) offer five foundationist approaches to moral decision making to address the problems faced by educational decision makers. The five foundationist approaches suggested by Walker and Donlevy (2005) are: common ethical principles; rational

reciprocity; professional constraints or codes; personal conscience; and professional convictions. These five foundationist approaches offer standards that are expected in decisions and actions of moral leadership. According to Walker and Donlevy (2005), the five commitments for ethical decision making go beyond ethical relativism, and enable leaders in education to navigate the complexities of their daily moral decision-making dilemmas.

Walker and Donlevy's (2005) approach to moral decision making closely aligns with my moral principles: integrity, fairness, and respect. Walker and Donlevy (2005) state that the five commitments for ethical decisions offer a courageous, deliberate, and principled way to moral discernment and decision making for leaders in the field of education. I rely on Walker and Donlevy's (2005) foundationist approach as I attempt to utilize moral leadership both personally and professionally. As an educator and researcher, I strive to create and maintain a safe, caring, and engaging learning environment for all individuals. As a member of society, I aspire to live a purposeful life that values integrity, fairness, and respect.

Relating Leadership Theory to Past Experiences

Many of my experiences growing up shaped the leader I am today. As a child, my parents always placed emphasis on the importance of education and academic achievement. There was never a doubt that school came first. My desire to succeed was driven by my competitiveness with my twin sister. Early on, my parents realized that our competitiveness drove us to take more risks, reach greater heights, and ultimately succeed at what we attempted.

It was not until I was in second grade that I realized competition could result in

unfavorable circumstances that did not appear to be fair. The elementary school I attended homogenously grouped classes according to academic ability, a common practice in the mid 1980's. My twin sister and I were placed in the top group, but our second grade teacher, Mrs. O'Brien, decided that we were too competitive together and, therefore, did not want us in the same class. The following day, I was moved from the top academic class to the middle academic class, while my sister remained in Mrs. O'Brien's class. The move caused me to lose my confidence, and I began questioning my academic ability.

Fortunately, my new teacher helped me to reclaim myself as a motivated learner. She created a classroom environment that encouraged children to develop the skills they needed to be exceptional students. She built a safe, caring, and engaging learning environment for all students despite their academic or socioeconomic level. As a leader and role model, she encouraged her students to become the best they could be by setting high standards and offering positive reinforcement. She valued her students, especially when it came to protecting and advancing their self-confidence and creativity. At the end of the school year, she challenged Mrs. O'Brien's decision to move me to a lower academic class and recommended I be placed the following year according to my academic ability. The following school year I was placed back in the top group along with my twin sister.

My new second grade teacher was an effective leader because she gave love, support, and encouragement to her students. I often reflected on my experiences in second grade when I encountered struggles or obstacles in my own classroom. As a result of my experience, I know how important it is for teachers to believe in their students.

This laid the essential foundation I needed to succeed, and helped define my goal to be an educational leader.

Goleman (1998) states that one thing common among all effective leaders is what is known as emotional intelligence. Without emotional intelligence a leader is unable to be a great leader despite having the best training and possessing a great quality mind (Goleman, 1998). According to Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002), emotional intelligence is not an innate talent, but a learned ability. My experiences as an educator have helped me develop emotionally and intellectually as well as utilize emotional intelligence both personally and professionally.

As an educator, I am acutely conscious of each student's emotions and uniqueness. During my first month as a new teacher, I observed a five-year old boy in my kindergarten classroom having great difficulty making friends, completing class work, maintaining focus during circle time, and making eye contact with others. I reflected back on my own experiences in second grade and knew that I needed to help this student. As a struggling student in second grade, I recalled the immense support and encouragement I received from my new second grade teacher and the difference it made for me academically and socially. My new second grade teacher helped me to reclaim my self-confidence as a learner. Recognizing that my student's self-esteem and academic performance was suffering, I brought my concerns to the child study team. Following numerous evaluations, observations and classroom documentation, it was determined that the student had Asperger's Syndrome. I may have lacked experience as a first year teacher, but was able to rely on prior experiences as a struggling student to provide immediate assistance to a struggling student.

As an educator, I strive to provide a safe and compassionate learning environment that fosters students' self-esteem. I realize the significance of early intervention and its relationship to academic success not only for struggling students, but academically advanced students as well. My student's self-esteem and social interactions drastically improved during the school year because of the immediate interventions he received. As a leader in the field of education, I advocate for the improvement of self-esteem and academic success for all students. Struggling students, as well as students who are academically advanced, need interventions and support services. I rely on these experiences to guide me as an emotionally intelligent researcher exploring the specific needs of honors students in higher education when promoting study abroad.

My experiences have helped me to define my goals as an educator and researcher. Similar to my second grade teacher, I am an advocate for students and promote the enhancement of self-esteem, motivation, and success in students of all academic levels. The stronger a student's foundation, the more opportunities he or she will have in the future to succeed. In this study, I want to inspire undergraduate honors students through positive reinforcement and encouragement. Engaging in reflective practice and emotional intelligence as a researcher has enabled me to form and implement transformational and moral leadership (Burns, 2003; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). The next phase in my life, college, equipped me with examples of exceptional leadership in action and helped me to define the path I would take as educator.

Transformational and Moral Leadership in Education

As an undergraduate student at Kutztown University, I spent a semester teaching abroad at Riverside Primary School, an urban school in London. I was inspired by the unique teaching strategies and the positive learning environment that fostered student success. Every morning, the entire school met in the common room for a brief assembly led by the school's headmaster in which she reminded the students that they were in school for a purpose, and they each had goals to achieve. She often ended the assembly by retelling a story about a recent school occurrence or a particular student who achieved success and made her proud to be headmaster of Riverside Primary School.

Observing the headmaster command respect and ignite passion and motivation in the students for the first time sent chills throughout me. I have always been eager to figure out what made some individuals succeed in leadership positions and what caused others to be ineffective leaders. The headmaster did not threaten or frighten the children; she simply talked in a slow, commanding, and confident voice that kept every ear listening and eager to hear more. She mastered the technique of incorporating different leadership approaches and was therefore successful at improving student motivation and performance (Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, 2002). The headmaster's stories united the students around shared values and beliefs. She was a transformational leader as well as an effective moral leader (Burns, 2003; Sergiovanni, 1992). To increase motivation and desire to study abroad in undergraduate honor students, I will incorporate different leadership approaches, similar to those modeled by the headmaster. Additionally, I recognize the significance and seek to utilize transformational and moral leadership in my quest to promote academic and personal growth through study abroad.

As an educator, similar to the headmaster, I have worked to create a community of motivated and creative learners by encouraging collaboration amongst my students, despite differing academic levels. My practices and beliefs as an educator reflect my transformational and moral leadership styles (Burns, 2003; Walker & Donlevy, 2005). From the beginning of my career as an educator, I have felt strongly about improving student motivation and achievement through a structured, collaborative, and respectful classroom environment. As an emotionally intelligent leader, I have continually supported and encouraged my students (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). These past experiences have helped identify and refine my interests in working with students in higher education, specifically honors students.

As a transformational and moral leader, I believe in promoting amiable interactions that foster teamwork and collaboration (Burns, 2003; Walker & Donlevy, 2005). As an educator and member of various organizations and committees, I have been able to refine my skills as a leader and recognize the importance of instilling my values and beliefs as a member of a group seeking similar goals. The role of educators and their leadership styles and practices are of great importance. Engaging and promoting underrepresented students to be the best they can be is my goal as an educator and leader. Through past experiences as a student and teacher, I have developed an interest in improving student motivation and achievement in higher education. Specifically, as a teacher, I gained insight on the needs of honors students, including the importance of special considerations, in order for honor students to continue to advance academically and grow personally.

Education plays a significant role in our society. The role of educators and their

leadership styles and practices is of great importance. Creating a supportive community of learners helps to build self-esteem in students, regardless of their developmental levels. With my goal to increase study abroad awareness in undergraduate honors students, I realize the significance and impact my leadership style will have on the students and my research. As a leader in my research, it is my goal to establish a learning environment that promotes student achievement and individual growth, which in this case means raising students' awareness of study abroad.

Creating Meaningful and Sustainable Change

I believe increasing study abroad awareness and participation may improve motivation and achievement both professionally and personally. It is this relationship that I wish to further investigate in my research. Through past experiences as a student and teacher, I have developed an interest in study abroad and the positive attributes that may develop as a result of a studying abroad experience. The personal and professional growth resulting from my international student teaching experience and additional study abroad coursework ignited my interest in the development of intercultural competence in undergraduate honors students through study abroad experiences.

Framework for Change

I have encountered many challenges in my attempts to promote study abroad awareness and the development of intercultural competence. I rely on Fullan's (2001) theory of effective leadership change to express and maintain my focus (Figure 1). Fullan (2001) identifies four key factors in effective leaders who seek to create change or improvement. First, leaders need to have a clearly stated "making a difference" sense of purpose. According to Fullan (2001), instilling clarity and detail in one's vision promotes

shared commitment to explicit values. Second, Fullan (2001) states that leaders need to use strategies that mobilize many people to tackle difficult problems. Fullan (2001) asserts that empowering others to act on a vision and gathering a guiding coalition are essential elements of effective change. Third, Fullan (2001) claims leaders must be held accountable by measured and debatable indicators of success. Fullan's (2001) fourth key factor in effective leadership is "ultimately assessed by the extent to which it awakens peoples' intrinsic commitment, which is none other than the mobilizing of everyone's sense of moral purpose" (p.20). I use these strategies to overcome obstacles and promote awareness in study abroad programs.

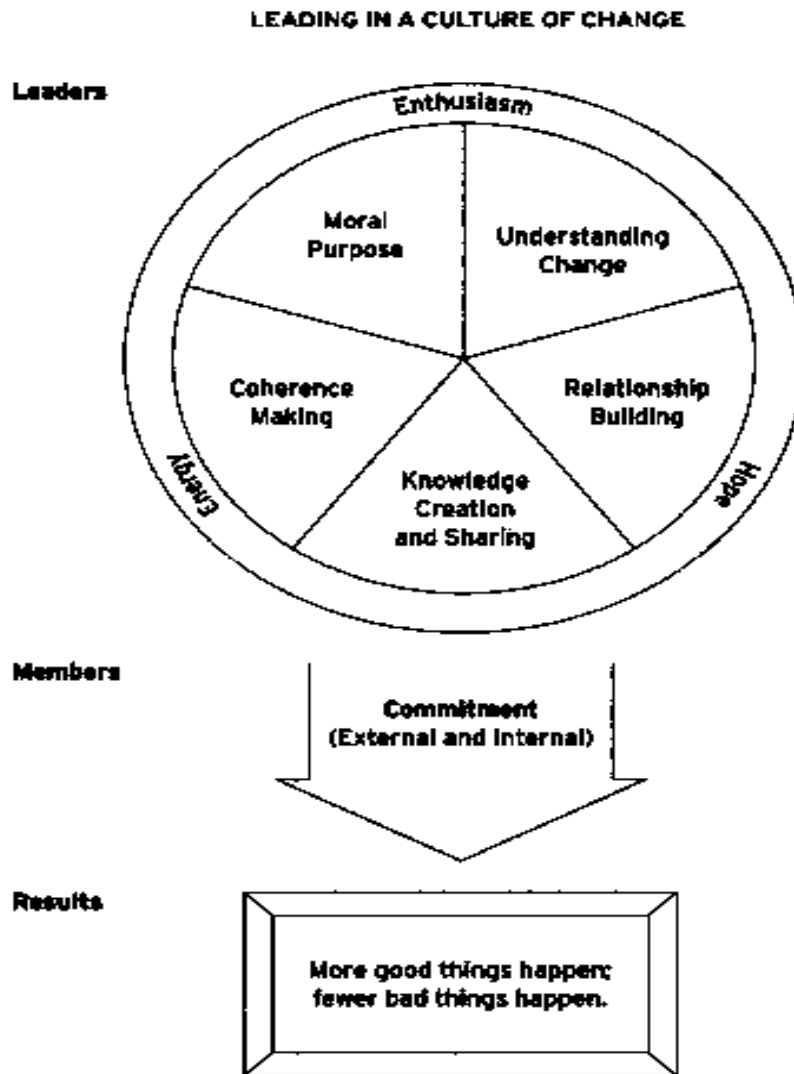


Figure 1.1. A Framework for Leadership.

Figure 1. A Framework for Leadership

As stated earlier, Fullan (2001) identifies the value of empowering others to act on a vision and gather a guiding coalition as essential elements of effective change. Gladwell (2002) further develops a framework for explaining how certain isolated epidemics or social phenomena can suddenly become widespread and extremely successful, and how situations suddenly swing from one extreme to another. Gladwell (2002) also argues that the most momentous changes that occur in society often begin on

the smallest of scales. As an educational leader striving to serve as an agent of change, the knowledge and understanding of these organizational theories served as valuable tools to draw upon when I was faced with challenges and opportunities in my pursuit of increasing awareness and participation in study abroad programs. Similar to Gladwell's (2002) claim that the most significant changes begin on a small scale, I realized that I can increase critical stakeholders' attention by raising awareness about the importance of study abroad on honors students' personal and professional growth. Like Fullan (2001), I needed to empower others, which increased the value of study abroad. Gladwell's (2002) and Fullan's (2001) leadership frameworks were critical in my research as I attempted to bring awareness to the development of intercultural competence through study abroad.

In addition to utilizing Gladwell's (2002) and Fullan's (2001) leadership frameworks, I recognize the influence organizational culture has on effectively implementing change. According to Bolman and Deal (2003), it is essential to understand the challenges in one's organization in order to solve problems and effectively accomplish goals. Schein (2004) affirms that cultural understanding is desirable for individuals, but essential to leaders if they are to lead. Additionally, Bolman and Deal (2003) state that in order to capture a comprehensive picture of what is wrong or right in an organization, one must understand and use multiple frames. Referred to as reframing, using multiple perspectives offers new ways to understand organizational cultures, makes it easier to know what challenges a leader faces, and what appropriate responses are available (Bolman & Deal, 2003). As a leader in this research project, I sought to understand organizational culture and articulate and communicate a clear vision as I investigated honors students' intercultural competency and the barriers they saw to

studying abroad, ultimately raising awareness in study abroad.

Clark (1984) and Kashner (1990) suggest that resistance in institutional transformation is often overlooked. As a result of longstanding tradition of criticism and a wide array of sub-cultures, resistance to change is particularly relevant in higher education institutions (Clark, 1984). Sub-cultures, based on organizational role, institutional position, or discipline affiliation, often thrive within higher education institutions. Consequently, the sub-cultures support their own set of customs, beliefs, and practices that are often dissimilar from the larger university culture and the goals of most change efforts (Clark, 1984). Additionally, sub-cultures in higher education institutions may also create feelings of ownership regarding symbolic territories, particularly when the proposed change appears to threaten these rights of ownership (Kashner, 1990). The values amongst sub-cultures are most often the contributors to resistance toward change efforts (Kashner, 1990). Although conflict within any higher education institution can be disruptive, resistance is not always negative. According to Kashner (1990), resistance is an inevitable component of institutional change and transformation. As a means to move beyond resistance that I encountered as the leader in my research project, I prepared the environment for change by encouraging open communication, identifying a clear vision, and maintaining trust amongst all stakeholders.

Engaging in rigorous coursework and working together with supportive and enthusiastic professors and colleagues has inspired me to be a leader of change in higher education. Through class discussions and activities, I have discovered several elements of effective leadership. I implemented the practices of transformational and moral leadership approaches to engage others toward committed and empowered participation

in the struggle for meaningful change in higher education (Burns, 2003; Walker & Donlevy, 2005).

Conclusion

My leadership platform has served as a means to constantly reflect on past events and the effects these experiences have had on me as a leader. Reflecting on my experiences has helped me to refine my goals as a leader and my interest in higher education. The common thread in all of my experiences is my connection with the identification and understanding of another's situation, feelings, and motives. After examining and reflecting on my experiences, I was able to evaluate and define my leadership styles and personality traits. I gained insight on transformational and moral leadership traits that helped me create specific goals, initiate action, and enlist enthusiastic participation of others (Burns, 2003; Walker & Donlevy, 2005). Engaging and promoting undergraduate honor students to be the best they can be is my goal as a researcher and educator. Utilizing creative and efficacious leadership qualities, as well as connecting with students using emotional intelligence, help me to inspire and motivate students to learn (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Uniting my philosophy, personality, experiences, and value system, I subscribe to the transformational and moral leadership theories.

This research project helped me to demonstrate my understanding of leadership theory, my leadership practice, change, organizational culture, and my research abilities. Through this action research project, I proposed to positively influence honors students' awareness in study abroad at one higher education institution. In order to carry out any research study, it is critical to understand previous research. In the next section, I review

the literature related to undergraduate students, study abroad, and the development of intercultural competence.

Chapter 3

Literature Review

Introduction

In this literature review, I examine issues related to undergraduate students, study abroad, and the development of intercultural competence. The first section focuses on the need for increased study abroad participation amongst U.S. higher education students. The second section focuses on the significance of study abroad amongst undergraduate students, specifically how participation in study abroad gives students cross-cultural immersion. This is achieved first by exploring numerous conceptualizations and characteristics of intercultural competence as provided in the literature. Next, I present the definition and characteristics of intercultural competence and provide rationales underlying the need for undergraduate students to possess this competence. Additionally, I examine the circumstances in which intercultural competence can be promoted through international study abroad experiences for undergraduate students and criticism of study abroad. Then, because this dissertation focuses on honors students in one university, the final section of the literature review examines characteristics of undergraduate honors students and explores barriers affecting study abroad participation in higher education institutions.

The Demand for Study Abroad

In an effort to gain practical and valuable understanding of different cultures and increase their intercultural competence, undergraduate students can participate in living and learning abroad experiences, specifically study abroad. Study abroad is defined as a student's experiences in another country that often involve academic coursework and

may focus on acquiring language proficiency and general knowledge of the host country (El-Khawas, 1994). Reflecting on diverse cultural experiences aids in one's ability to incorporate other ways of being and acting (Emert, 2008). Participating in living and learning abroad experiences makes it possible for students to immerse themselves in unfamiliar settings that provide intellectual and cultural opportunities that positively affect personal development (Bates, 1997; Emert, 2008).

Researchers affirm that study abroad programs play an integral part in the effort to internationalize education (Cushner & Mahon, 2002). In addition to academic coursework, foreign language acquisition, and the recruitment of foreign students to U. S. higher education campuses, study abroad is considered a critical component of the globalization of American education (Hayward & Siaya, 2001). There has been an increasing demand for U.S. students in higher education to participate in international education experiences during their university careers. Additionally, the need for encouraging, developing, and enhancing a global perspective through study abroad within the existing higher education system has been acknowledged by the government and the majority of U.S. colleges and universities (American Council on Education, 2000).

Recently, the Federal government established an initiative to increase access, program quality, and the number of U.S. higher education students studying abroad. The Lincoln Commission Report issued in 2007 addressed how critical it is to America's competitiveness and national security to provide more American students with international experience, and the report put forth a goal of sending one million students abroad each year. The Lincoln Commission Report also focused on the issue of capacity abroad to host so many American students, and to ensure U.S. higher education

institutions have the resources and structures available to prepare and send students abroad (Lincoln Commission and Program, 2007).

In addition to the Lincoln Commission initiative, there is current legislation in the U.S. Congress for the Paul Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act to increase the number of U.S. students studying abroad, provide additional funding for study abroad programs, and increase the number of underrepresented students studying abroad and the diversity of study abroad locations. Despite these initiatives and increased attention on U.S. higher education students studying abroad, participation continues to be a concern (Open Doors, 1998, 2007, 2009, 2013).

U.S. Students Studying Abroad

As our world becomes increasingly interconnected and interdependent, a student's understanding of other cultures becomes more of a requirement (McCabe, 1994).

According to the Institute of International Education, the percentage of U.S. students in higher education participating in study abroad increased to 9.9% in 2003-2004, up from 8.5% the previous year. In 2004-2005, the total number of U.S. students participating in a study abroad program was a then record 205,983 (Open Doors, 2007). Open Doors 2009 reported that the number of U.S. higher education students studying abroad increased by 8.5% to 262,416 in the 2007-2008 academic year. Study abroad continues to build on decades of steady growth, with four times as many U.S. students studying abroad in 2007-2008 than in 1987-1988 (Open Doors, 2009). Most recently, the Open Doors 2013 report states that in 2011-2012, the number of U.S. students participating in study abroad increased by 3% to 283,332 students. The 3% increase represents a higher rate of growth than the 1% increase during the previous year. These numbers reflect a strong

commitment to the significance of an international academic experience to prepare students to live and work in a more global society (Open Doors, 2013).

Although the total number of U.S. students in higher education participating in study abroad has steadily increased over the past several years, study abroad students represent only 1% of the total U.S. higher education population of approximately 20 million students (Wheeler, 2000). A survey administered by the American Council on Education (2000) found that 90% of the U.S. public agreed that knowledge related to international issues would be important to careers of younger generations. Yet, less than 300,000 U.S. higher education students studied abroad for credit in 2011-2012, representing less than 1% of all students enrolled in U.S. higher education (Open Doors, 2013). On the other hand, more than half a million international students study abroad in the U.S. each year, and more than two million study outside of their home countries (UNESCO, 2006). Despite the positive academic and personal experiences obtained from a study abroad experience, few U.S. students have taken advantage of an international education experience (Open Doors, 2013). Although study abroad has more than tripled over the past two decades, a growth from 71,000 in 1991-1992 to a record high of 283,332 in 2011-2012, fewer than 1% of all U.S. higher education students study abroad at some point during their undergraduate school years.

There are several advantages that evolve from a student's participation in a study abroad program. Researchers agree that participation in a study abroad program gives students cross-cultural immersion that combines academic experience with travel so that students acquire a global perspective (Cushner & Mahon, 2002). Additionally, participating in a study abroad program provides direct contact with world cultures and

immerses students in active roles as global citizens. In order to compete, thrive, and contribute in the 21st century, researchers agree that there is an increased need for U.S. students to acquire international knowledge, intercultural communication skills, and a global perspective through study abroad (Leask, 2001; Obst, Bhandari, & Witherell, 2007). A top educational priority today is the development of interculturally competent citizens who are knowledgeable, ethical decision makers in an increasingly diverse and globally interdependent world (Lewin, 2009). For that reason, it is necessary to examine the components and characteristics of intercultural competence and its significance to student participation in study abroad.

Intercultural Competence Background

The cultivation of intercultural competence has been an important goal of study abroad and the main objective of education and training in intercultural communication. In the 1950's and 1960's, the concept of intercultural communication competence was suggested as important by researchers interested in observing the development of personality characteristics in overseas technological assistants and Peace Corps volunteers (Gardner, 1962; Hoselitz, 1954). Since then, scholars have interpreted and defined intercultural competence from a variety of viewpoints that focus on personal skills and abilities (Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Emert, 2008; Kim, 2001). However, there is a broad variation in the literature regarding the definition of intercultural competence as well as multiple theories on how one develops intercultural competence. These theories explaining intercultural competence development have been developed in the field of intercultural communication. This is an interdisciplinary field representing many

academic disciplines, including cultural anthropology; cultural and social psychology; sociology; and international, intercultural, inter-group, and multicultural education.

Intercultural Competence and Related Terms

In a study to determine the definition and components of intercultural competence, Deardorff (2004) identified numerous terminologies that are typically used synonymously with intercultural competence. Alternative names for intercultural competence include cross-cultural adaptation, intercultural sensitivity, multicultural competence, transcultural competence, global competence, cross-cultural effectiveness, international competence, global literacy, global citizenship, and cross-cultural effectiveness. Additionally, intercultural communication competence is a term with similar meaning and is often used interchangeably with intercultural competence (Gudykunst & Moody, 2002). Based on Gudykunst and Moody's (2002) explanation, intercultural competence is now the favored term for most researchers when describing the sum of intercultural skills, behaviors, and attitudes that combine to make an individual successful and effective in intercultural interactions, which is one goal of study abroad experiences.

Cross-Cultural, Intercultural, and Cultural Communication

The terms cross-cultural and intercultural communication are frequently used interchangeably across disciplines despite definitional differences. To distinguish between cross-cultural and intercultural communication, Gudykunst and Moody (2002) infer that intercultural research involves the study of people from different national cultures interacting together and that cross-cultural communication research focuses on comparative study of face-to-face communication across cultures. For example, cross-

cultural communication research may compare speech convergence in initial interactions of two different cultures. For the most part, cross-cultural communication research tends to be comparative.

A related area of research is cultural communication, which focuses on the role of communication in the formation and negotiation of shared identities. Cultural communication research often focuses on understanding communication within one culture from the insiders' point of view. Knowledge and understanding of cross-cultural, cultural, and intercultural communication is a prerequisite to understanding intercultural competence (Gudykunst & Moody, 2002).

Intercultural Competence Defined

Intercultural competence refers to an individual's ability to communicate effectively across cultural understandings, as well as to communicate effectively in cross-cultural situations and relate appropriately in diverse cultural contexts, and is often fostered by study abroad experiences (Bennett & Bennett, 2004). When defining intercultural competence, personal skills, and abilities, researchers emphasize the appropriateness and effectiveness in a given context (Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Emert, 2008; Kim, 2001; Spitzberg, 2000). For instance, Spitzberg (2000) defines intercultural competence as a notion that an individual's behavior is appropriate and effective in a given context. Similarly, Kim (2001) theorizes about the characteristics of intercultural communication on groups and defines intercultural competence as face-to-face communication encounters among individuals with differing cultural backgrounds. Additionally, Kim (2001) identifies intercultural competence as the overall internal ability of an individual to deal with key challenging features of internal communication.

These key challenging factors include cultural differences and familiarity, intergroup posture, and the accompanying experiences of stress.

Researchers often define intercultural competence as personal skills, abilities, and social acts involving individuals interrelating with others from differing cultures (Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Emert, 2008; Kim, 2001; Spitzberg, 2000). Researchers have conceptualized and described intercultural competence in a variety of ways, however there is no consensus on any one definition that encompasses the multidimensional nature of intercultural competence (Emert, 2008). To understand intercultural competence, it is essential to understand what culture means (Talib & Hosoya, 2008).

Culture Influence on Intercultural Competence

The conceptions of culture that support the various theories of intercultural competence define culture from the constructivist and socio-cultural perspectives (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Rogoff, 2003). These theories define culture as a dynamic system of values, beliefs, cognitive frameworks, and behavioral norms held by a group of people. Additionally, individuals, as members of cultural communities, consciously and unconsciously create meaning from their social, material, and inner worlds (Berger & Luckmann, 1966; Rogoff, 2003). As a means of influencing all of who we are, culture influences our perceptions and experiences of the world, including how we communicate (Rogoff, 2003). Therefore, an individual's perceptions and experiences of the world are filtered through cultural understandings that are shared with a cultural group.

Based on Berger and Luckmann (1966) and Rogoff's (2003) theories of culture, the field of intercultural communication focuses on the complexity of communicating across cultures, as well as the role culture plays in all levels of communication. Thus,

intercultural competence requires more than overcoming differences in language, it involves communicating across differences in meaning (Barnlund, 1998). Additionally, Barnlund (1998) affirms that in order to communicate within different cultural contexts and with individuals who have different cultures, one must understand how to distinguish one culture from another. Therefore, the development of intercultural competence is the process of becoming aware of how culture influences one's own and others' perceptions of the world and developing the skills to communicate effectively with those from different cultures. It is essential that honors students develop intercultural competence because they may play a significant role in modeling culturally appropriate knowledge, behaviors, and attitudes for other students (Emert, 2008)

Characteristics of Intercultural Competence

To determine how intercultural competence can be promoted in undergraduate students, it is important to understand the characteristics that make up intercultural competence. Researchers focus on characteristics internal to an individual, such as motivation and perception (Emert, 2008; Wiseman, 2002), as well as external factors, such as expectations of the person with whom one interacts (Martin & Nakayama, 2004). According to Martin and Nakayama (2004), competent interaction is based on many factors, including the situation and cultural expectations. Intercultural competence does not just focus on the personal traits one possesses. Important to successful intercultural competence is effectiveness, appropriateness, and motivation.

Effectiveness, Appropriateness, and Motivation

Effectiveness and appropriateness are often referred to as the two most prominent characteristics of intercultural competence (Martin & Nakayama, 2004). According to

Wiseman (2002), effectiveness means that individuals can realize personal goals or results. Additionally, Ting-Toomey (1999) affirms that to be effective, attaining mutual shared meaning and desired goal-related outcomes is significant. When referring to appropriateness, Ting-Toomey (1999) states communication is grounded in an understanding of the context, and reflects expected standards as defined by cultural insiders.

Motivation is also regarded as a relevant characteristic of intercultural competence (Martin & Nakayama, 2004). According to Martin and Nakayama (2004), if an individual is not motivated to communicate, then being prepared interculturally is irrelevant. Motivation may be influenced if interactions with culturally different individuals are psychologically intense, due to intensity factors (Paige, 1993). According to Paige (1993), intensity factors, such as factors in the interaction between the individual and the environment that make the intercultural encounter more or less intense, influence the level of psychological stress a student may experience while in a diverse culture setting.

Components of Intercultural Competence: Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills

Researchers often group components of intercultural competence into three categories: knowledge, motivation or attitudes, and behaviors or skills. According to Bennett and Bennett (2004), knowledge describes the cognitive information that a study abroad student takes with him into an intercultural situation. Wiseman (2002) defines motivation as a collection of feelings, intentions, needs, and drives connected to intercultural communication. Behaviors and skills are associated with the actions that signify success in an intercultural encounter (Spitzberg, 2000). Researchers have

documented inherent complexities, along with numerous characteristics and components necessary for individuals to understand themselves and others as cultural beings in a manner that encourages effective and appropriate intercultural interactions.

Significance of Intercultural Development and Study Abroad

As a result of various changes taking place in the world since the onset of globalization, it is essential that students develop international and global awareness. The educational systems in the United States have a responsibility to provide students with the necessary skills to be productive members of society (Le Roux, 2002). This responsibility includes preparing students in the 21st century to be globally literate, capable of working in diverse environments, and accepting of responsibility for world citizenship (Hollin & Guzman, 2005; Le Roux, 2002).

Researchers have found that study abroad programs offer students the opportunity to experience cross-cultural immersion that combines academic study and travel while gaining a global perspective (Bates, 1997; Emert, 2008). Consequently, the importance of encouraging greater study abroad participation in American college students is receiving more attention from public, government, and higher education institutions (Institute for International Education, 2007). Higher education institutions and state governments agree that study abroad programs are an important means of competing in the global market and maintaining the United States' economic strength (Sowa, 2002).

There are numerous advantages that evolve from a study abroad experience. Participation in a study abroad program offers direct access to world cultures and immerses students in active roles as global citizens. Students who have participated in a study abroad program attain academic success, increased global perspective, improved

communication skills, and greater maturity (Bachner, 2000). Additionally, researchers have found that study abroad increases students' intellectual development, personal development, independence, and self-confidence (Klineberg & Hull, 1979).

Martin (1987) found measurable increases in students' intercultural competence as a result of intercultural experiences studying abroad. Specifically, there were correlations between increased cognitive and affective abilities in students who studied abroad longer than three months. Similarly, Jurgens and McAuliffe (2004) found that international experiences, such as study abroad and international exchange programs, are important in developing intercultural competence in students. For example, study abroad experiences introduced students to scholars and educators, and students were brought into intensive contact with people of different cultures. As a result of research affirming the benefits of study abroad (Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Jurgens and McAuliffe, 2004; Le Roux, 2002; Martin, 1987), it is essential to explore study abroad barriers that result in too few U.S. students, and in this study honor students specifically, taking advantage of an international education experience.

Although much of the research into study abroad focuses on the transformation of attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and academic and intellectual development, some studies found that the personality of a study abroad student will vary the type of change that takes place in students studying abroad (Bachner, 1994). Similarly, Grove and Hansel (1983) concluded that a longer duration of the study abroad experience resulted in greater impact on attitudes. LaBrack (1993) stated that assumptions that students who are going to study abroad will automatically gain global competences or students who have studied abroad must have gained some degree of global competence are not unusual, but not

always good assumptions. Consequently, Wilkinson (1998) recommends the following questions when evaluating the benefits of a study abroad experience:

1. What happens during a sojourn in a different cultural and linguistic environment?
2. What kinds of contacts do students have within such a context?
3. How do participants themselves perceive these encounters, particularly in view of their expectations for immersion?

Additionally, Freed (1995) asserts that while there are numerous variations of the study abroad experience, and it is impossible to describe with precision the quality and extent of social contact and linguistic interaction. A variety of program factors, including the length of stay, the location of the program, the role of the program administrators, the types of housing available, the nature of any orientation sessions and overseas support systems, and the role of academics can play an influential role in shaping immersion experiences (DeLey, 1975).

Criticism of Study Abroad

Although many researchers (Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Jurgens & McAuliffe, 2004; Le Roux, 2002; Martin, 1987) identify the numerous benefits of study abroad, other researchers note concern for study abroad programs (Bolen, 2001; Hayden, 1976; Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002, Ogden, 2006). Factors such as program logistics and administration make it more difficult for international educators to stay focused on how study abroad programs involve study abroad students in cultural learning and exploration (Ogden, 2006). In addition to a wide variety of study abroad program designs, factors relating to the diversity of host cultures and individual participants

creates further problems affecting the quality and extent of social contact and linguistic interaction (Wilkinson, 1998). An American student studying French will experience immersion differently depending on whether the study abroad experience takes place in Quebec, Belgium, or Senegal, since the possibility for acclimation difficulties varies according to anticipated and unanticipated variances between home and host cultures. Additionally, two study abroad individuals participating in the same program in the same country will most likely encounter their surroundings in two unique ways as a result of a multitude of personal factors of the individuals. Due to the number of possible combinations of program, host culture, and participant factors, establishing a generalized understanding of the overseas context from a critical stance is rarely, if ever, possible to describe with accuracy (Wilkinson, 1998).

Researchers note another concern for study abroad programs and the immersion of exchange students into one particular place (Bolen, 2001; Hayden, 1976; Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002; Ogden, 2006). An international location can only support a set number of study abroad programs before it becomes so saturated with students from one particular country as to alter the cultural interactions of the students. Students studying abroad are often isolated in English-only classrooms, share apartments, and have schedules arranged to coincide with the U.S. academic year as a result of study abroad programs restructuring to accommodate larger numbers of students and program offerings to meet students' expectations (Ogden, 2006). This phenomenon has been particularly noted among American students and has been termed the American Ghetto (Bolen, 2001; Hayden, 1976, Ogden, 2006). Overpopulating American study abroad students in one specific place increases the American ghetto phenomenon international

educators and students complain about (Bolen, 2001). Study abroad students find themselves in closely regulated U.S. Ghettos and lack the social skills or confidence needed to break away from their familiar cultural group and form relationships within the host culture (Ogden, 2006). Other terms such as the “Flock” or the “One-hundred-legged American” are metaphors frequently given to U.S. students abroad because students abroad move in groups, seemingly one body with multiple legs (Ogden, 2006). Similarly, Hayden (1976) states that study abroad programs are as numerous and prolific as rabbits, and like rabbits, their lifespan is short. Hayden’s (1976) criticism of study abroad programs is based on its instability, as a result of not being part of the educational mainstream, its expense, and its rigid designs. Furthermore, Hayden (1976) claims that at worst, study abroad students are sequestered in little American ghettos; at best, study abroad students are expected to fit their international experiences into course structures replicating those from the American higher education institutions.

In an effort to avoid the American ghetto phenomenon, Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich (2002) claim it is important that student learning communities be immersed within the local host community. Student immersion will further the goal of learning from within the local community. Failure to do so would result in study abroad students remaining isolated in island communities of their peers (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002). Similar to Bolen (2001) and Hayden (1976), Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich (2002) assert that it is important that study abroad students not be segregated into ghettos made up exclusively of exchange students.

Since corporations usually rely on higher education institutions to prepare students with essential skills and knowledge for conducting business in the corporate

arena, Bikson and Law for the Rand Institute (1994) conducted a study on the implications of study abroad for human resources, and gathered data from corporate and academic sites. Research participants were interviewed and asked questions pertaining to factors that contributed to successful work performance. Among the findings, numerous corporate respondents believed that study abroad programs were too isolated and academic, resulting in mini-Americas or American ghettos within the host country. Collectively, Bikson and Law (1994), Bolen (2001), Hayden (1976), and Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich (2002) express concern about study abroad programs immersing too many American students into one specific place, resulting in an American ghetto. Nonetheless, Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich (2002) offer a solution, which includes immersing student learning communities within local host communities, in an effort to avoid the American ghetto phenomenon.

Acceptance of Study Abroad

Despite criticisms of study abroad programs, there has been an increasing appeal for U.S. higher education students to study abroad. However, several factors work against widespread acceptance of study abroad. A major factor influencing a student's decision to study abroad is cost, especially for public university students who may not have the resources available for additional higher education costs (Open Doors, 1998, 2007, 2009, 2013). Furthermore, U.S. students may experience difficulty transferring credit from foreign institutions to the home university. As a result, students must pay twice for a study abroad experience, first for the international experience and again for the student to make-up course work that was not accepted by the home institution or was missed while studying abroad. Further difficulties in promoting study abroad include the lack of

specific validating information and few studies documenting the changes that students undergo and sparse recognition of the future benefits of those changes. These factors work against widespread acceptance of international study and result in reluctance of U.S. higher education personnel, including administrators, advisors, and faculty to advocate for the indispensable value of study abroad (Open Doors, 1998). Yet, because the Lincoln Commission set a goal of one million U.S. students studying abroad each year, it is critical to find ways to assist students in overcoming these barriers. Research suggests that partaking in a study abroad program exposes students to numerous cultural challenges, immerses them in a culture entirely different from their own, broadens their worldviews, and strengthens their cultural awareness (Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Jurgens & McAuliffe, 2004).

The History of Honors Programs

Since this dissertation focuses on honors students in higher education, it is necessary to understand honors programs in higher education as well as honors students. The development of Honors programs in higher education occurred in a manner similar to the development of other programs geared towards specific groups on campus. There was a need to identify and address the needs of academically talented students. Consequently, the majority of higher education institutions implemented programs, such as an honors program, aimed toward specific subpopulations of the higher education population. Early on, honors programs were seen as a way to promote honors education as an expression of equality through individualism.

The need to raise academically talented students' intellectual curiosity and motivation dates back to the nineteenth century when Honors programs emerged as a way

to provide enriched learning opportunities for students referred to as intellectually talented, superior, gifted (Kreith & Allen, 1963) and brilliant (Aydelotte, 1944). The first efforts to implement Honors programming in the United States were started at Wesleyan University in 1873 and the University of Vermont in 1888. However, it is Frank Aydelotte who is mainly responsible for the spread of the Honors program movement throughout the country (Rinn & Plucker, 2004). Aydelotte (1944), one of the early pioneers of honors education, stated:

We must guard against the temptation to think that a man's worth as an individual or his value to society can be measured by his aptitude for mathematics or languages. We must recognize that there are diversities of gifts, but whether it be plumbing or Plato that is in question, a society that is not to be condemned to mediocrity must demand the best of each. (p.19)

During his inaugural address as President of Swarthmore, Aydelotte (1944) complained about the lack of a higher standard of intellectual attainment and suggested that the method to amend this was to separate those students who are really interested the intellectual life from those who are not. Additionally, Aydelotte (1944) acknowledged that the existing system of higher education, specifically the education of academically talented students, needed to change. In 1944, Aydelotte stated:

The academic system as ordinarily administered is for these better and more ambitious students a kind of lock step: it holds them back, wastes their time, and blunts their interest by subjecting them to a slow-moving routine which they do not need. It causes, furthermore, the atrophy of the qualities of independence and

initiative in more gifted individuals by furnishing too little opportunity for their existence. (Aydelotte, p.14)

As a result, Aydelotte (1944) utilized a new approach to education in the form of seminars, which involved little instruction and depended mostly on discussion (Rinn, 2004).

The changes that Aydelotte (1944) introduced were centered on the improvement of the individual. Aydelotte (1944) instilled that each person is unique and that each person deserves to have his own powers, including his intellect, character, and sensitiveness to beauty, developed to the fullest possible extent. His approach to undergraduate education had a profound impact on the development and growth of honors programs in the United States.

The next key stage in the development and growth of Honors programs in the United States was the launch of the Sputnik satellite in 1957. The launch of Sputnik provided further attention to the need for honors programming by calling to attention the necessity to foster talent (Austin, 1986). At this time, the most important figure in honors education was Joseph Cohen. Cohen, who was responsible for developing an Honors program at the University of Colorado in 1928, was awarded a grant that provided funds to increase the size of the University of Colorado's honor program, as well as visits to various higher education institutions in preparation for a national conference on honors. As a result of preparations for the National Honors Conference in Boulder in 1957, the Inter-University Committee on the Superior Student (ICSS) was founded. The ICSS has been largely credited with systematic, coordinated effort to extend honors programming to the large private and state universities (Cohen, 1966). When Cohen handed over

leadership in 1966, the ICSS was succeeded by the National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC), which presently provides a variety of services to those responsible for college and university honors programs (Austin, 1986). Current Honors programs in higher education all share in parts of this history. Honors programs in higher education all benefit from developing the attempt to educate the very brightest and to do so with as much equality and individualism as possible.

Current Honors Programs

The creation of honors programs in higher education institutions is often in response to increased competition between colleges for high-achieving students. As a result, many higher education institutions have increasingly marketed themselves to high-achieving students by creating honors programs and colleges (Long, 2002). Honors programs in U.S. higher education can be found in 60% of all four-year institutions and over 40% of all two-year institutions (Baker, Reardon, & Riordan, 2000). Currently, one distinct characteristic of honors programs in higher education is the opportunity for honors students to attend smaller classes and gain more attention and interaction with faculty members (Rinn & Plucker, 2004). Additional benefits found in current honors programs in higher education include individualized majors, accelerated degree programs, special orientation classes, increasing financial support and staffing, and increased emphasis on undergraduate research (Rinn & Plucker, 2004). The effect of receiving these incentives and benefits results in increased pressure to make sure the students most capable of succeeding in an honors program are recruited and enrolled by their higher education institution.

Description of Honors Student

Researchers conclude that there is no concrete definition or description of honors students. Additionally, preexisting information on the characteristics and personalities of honors students in higher education is not abundant. Researchers (Rinn & Plucker, 2004) acknowledge that there is an absence of information on honors students between the traditional college ages of 17 and 22. The term honors student is generic and relative to other students within a single higher education institution (Achterberg, 2004; Cummings, 1994; Stoller, 2004). Since honors students are selected and viewed as superior in some way to nonhonors peers, specific characteristics can be identified. However, specific characteristics of honors students and selection criteria vary widely across higher education institutions (Achterberg, 2004). Since honors students are in some way defined as superior, many people assume that honors students will be leaders in society in the future. As leaders, it is even more important that they have intercultural competence as globalization increases.

Conclusion

Researchers identify an undergraduate student's intercultural competence as a significant factor affecting motivation and academic achievement. The literature suggests that participation in a study abroad program exposes undergraduate students to numerous cultural challenges, immerses them in a culture entirely different from their own, widens their worldviews, and strengthens their cultural awareness (Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Jurgens & McAuliffe, 2004; Le Roux, 2002; Martin, 1987). Additionally, the review of literature has shown that for undergraduate students to become interculturally competent, they need to participate in experiences in which they have opportunities to significantly

interact with culturally diverse people and reflect upon those experiences in ways that affect how they perceive themselves and others as cultural beings (Jurgens & McAuliffe, 2004; Martin, 1987).

Student participation in study abroad programs is frequently cited as an important tool for internationalizing campuses and helping students prepare for living in the 21st century. As a result, researchers are studying the effects of study abroad experiences on intercultural competence among undergraduate students. Participating in living and learning abroad experiences makes it possible for undergraduate students to immerse themselves in different cultural settings that provide intellectual and cultural opportunities that may affect professional and personal development.

The following chapter describes the history and demographics of Greenwich University, the Honors Concentration, and study abroad at Greenwich University. Additionally, the following chapter outlines the purpose and procedures of the research undertaken at Greenwich University to increase undergraduate honors students' awareness in study abroad programs. Chapter 4 describes the context of the study, the participants, and the research methods used to answer the research questions. Additionally, Chapter 4 explains how I designed and assessed my action plan and leadership strategies.

Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction

In the United States, study abroad in higher education has gained increasing popularity and is rapidly becoming a component of the college experience for more undergraduate students (Kasravi, 2009). According to the Institute for International Education (2007), the total number of undergraduate students electing to participate in a study abroad program continues to increase every year. Further, the importance of study abroad programs has been recognized by higher education institutions and the federal government. Higher education institutions and the federal government agree that study abroad programs are a significant means of competing in the global market and sustaining the United States' economic force (Sowa, 2002). Students who participate in study abroad increase their intellectual development, personal development, independence, self-confidence, and intercultural competence (Bates, 1997; Emert, 2008; Klineberg & Hull, 1979). As a result, more programs and resources have become available for the purpose of increasing the number of students participating in study abroad programs.

Despite more students studying abroad in higher education each year, the number of honors students enrolling in study abroad programs is minimal at Greenwich University. Exploring honors students' barriers is critical in understanding their decisions about whether to study abroad. Data collected from interviews and surveys may reveal barriers that often prevent honors students from participating in study abroad. It is necessary to identify barriers and try to reduce them so more honors students at

Greenwich University can study abroad and have the opportunity to develop their intercultural competence. Study abroad can be part of an honors student's college experience by integrating study abroad into their college curriculum.

This action research based dissertation utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies. The mixed method methodology implemented in this study collects quantitative and qualitative data to assist in answering the research questions. According to Glesne (2006) and Creswell (2003), the more sources tapped for understanding, the richer the data and the more credible the findings. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were chosen for the study in an effort to contribute to trustworthiness and to gain greater insight into the experiences and interests of honors students regarding the awareness of study abroad and intercultural competence (Hinchey, 2008).

This dissertation developed in part based on recommendations from a spring 2010 report. In spring 2010, students enrolled in the Planning and Resource Allocation in Higher Education course developed a strategic plan for the Honors Concentration at Greenwich University. As part of developing the strategic plan, researchers evaluated honors students' attitudes about activities offered by the Honors Concentration, including study abroad. Overall, the data included a lack of interest in study abroad. Out of the 101 honors students who participated in the survey, 29.9% expressed a neutral feeling towards study abroad. The report recommended that the Honors Concentration find ways to increase study abroad.

This chapter outlines the purpose, context, and procedures of the research undertaken at Greenwich University to investigate honors students' intercultural

competence and the barriers they saw to study abroad, to implement methods of providing additional information, and to raise their awareness of study abroad. The research study will measure three major concepts, implement changes, and reflect and assess my leadership strategies. The first cycle measures honors students' intercultural competence. The second cycle explores honors students' experiences, interests, and challenges regarding studying abroad. The third cycle documents the creation of the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session and explores how the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness of study abroad. The fourth cycle offers recommendations to revise and strengthen the online study abroad information link in response to feedback in cycle 3 and assesses my leadership approaches.

The first section of this chapter identifies the history and demographics of Greenwich University, the Honors Concentration at Greenwich University, and the International Center at Greenwich University. The second section justifies and details the use of action research as an approach and quantitative and qualitative data as collection strategies. The second section also details the processes for analyzing data. The third section describes my role as the researcher and the research questions that guide the study. The fourth section explains how the quantitative and qualitative approaches will be used to answer the research questions. The fifth section explains how the mixed methods will be used in each of the four cycles, along with trustworthiness criteria, limitations, and validity of the study. The data collected and analyzed throughout the action research project will be continually used to inform and improve the action for the next cycle of the study.

Greenwich University

Greenwich University offers undergraduate through doctoral programs and combines liberal education with professional preparation. According to Greenwich University's website (2012), the University's mission is to "provide a collaborative, learning-centered environment in which highly qualified and diverse faculty, staff, and students integrate teaching, research, scholarship, creative activity, and community service."

History of Greenwich University

With a mission to train individuals to teach in the classroom, Greenwich University has evolved from a normal school in the early 1920's to a comprehensive university. Greenwich Normal School opened in September 1923 with an enrollment of 236 students. In 1934, the program was expanded to a four-year training school, and eventually changed its name to State Teachers College at Greenwich. The school continued to grow in enrollment and curriculum in the 1950's. To better reflect the school's mission, the name was changed to Greenwich State College in 1958. The college's next phase included doubling the enrollment and becoming a multi-purpose institution, including new majors and a campus in an additional town. In the 1990's, Greenwich State College grew by adding the Colleges of Engineering and Communication and established a doctoral program.

The growth in the 1990's was the result of a very large donation. The gift significantly affected the quality of education that could be offered at the college. The gift enabled the college to establish a school of engineering, provide scholarships, enhance the college's programs, and encourage other donors to follow suit. As a result of

tremendous growth and reputation, Greenwich College achieved University status in 1997.

Present at Time of Study

Greenwich University's approximately 12,000 students can select from among 80 undergraduate majors, 55 master's degree programs, and a doctoral program in educational leadership. During the time of this study, the University had eight colleges: Business, Communication, Education, Engineering, Fine and Performing Arts, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Medicine, and Graduate and Continuing Education. Beginning as a modest normal school almost 90 years ago, Greenwich University has evolved into an extraordinary all-inclusive higher education institution that has improved the quality of life for the citizens of and the surrounding states.

Honors Concentration Program History

The history of the Honors Concentration Program is not documented. However, a professor at Greenwich University who was instrumental in helping to develop the Honors Concentration Program reconstructed the history of the Honors Concentration Program for me through email.

During the 1986-1987 academic year, the Dean of the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences initiated the idea of an Honors Concentration Program in the School of Liberal Arts and Sciences. A committee was formed, and named the Greenwich State College Liberal Arts and Sciences Honors Committee. The committee consisted of 3-4 faculty members. In the fall of 1987, three faculty members served as Greenwich State College's representatives to the annual conference of the National Collegiate Honors Council in Dallas, Texas. The committee worked the following two years to develop the curriculum

for the Liberal Arts and Sciences Honors Program. The first coordinator of the Honors Concentration Program served from September 1989 to June 1992. Numerous faculty members have served as coordinators of the Honors Concentration Program since June 1992. In 2004, the Honors Concentration Program received a large donation to establish an endowment. This endowment provides funds to honors students participating in study abroad, research projects, and outside activities.

Current Honors Concentration Program

The Honors Concentration at Greenwich University is an eight course program emphasizing challenging coursework for high achieving and intellectually curious students. The courses are taught by Greenwich University's top faculty and selected adjuncts from different disciplines in every college. The Honors Concentration Program at Greenwich University offers students an enhanced learning experience through unique and interdisciplinary class offerings, small interactive classes, educational extra-curricular activities, attendance at conferences, and funding for study abroad. The Honors Concentration Program is open to talented students in every major and college at Greenwich University and includes these enhanced learning experiences. Through these active learning opportunities and experiences, students are encouraged to become accomplished independent thinkers, researchers, and learners prepared for successful graduate study or professional careers and contributing members of their communities.

International Center and Study Abroad

When honors students want to study abroad, they must, as must all students, work with the University's International Center. The International Center at Greenwich University supports all international initiatives, including study abroad. Through its

numerous programs and activities, the International Center provides leadership and assistance to Greenwich University's students, faculty, and professionals. The International Center is responsible for offering support services to the University's students, faculty, and staff engaged in international education and research, study abroad, and international exchange activities. Additionally, the International Center provides support services to international students and scholars and collaborates with institutions and organizations engaged in international initiatives.

History of Study Abroad at Greenwich University

The history of the International Center at Greenwich University is also not documented. Therefore, the faculty member responsible for founding the International Center at Greenwich University reconstructed the history of the International Center through phone conversations and email.

The International Center was founded in the fall of 2004 by a faculty member in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. The faculty member became the first Director of the International Center and reported to the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences. From fall 2004 to the present, students participating in study abroad at Greenwich University increased an average of 10% annually. By 2007, approximately 30-40 Greenwich University students studied abroad during the academic school year, with the addition of approximately 30 students participating in study abroad during the summer semester. Prior to 2004, summer study abroad was not an option for Greenwich University students, but was instituted by the Director of the International Center.

In July 2007, the position of Director of the International Center became a full-time position. The Director of the International Center remained the same and the Center

continued to develop new study abroad opportunities for Greenwich University students, including short-term study abroad opportunities, and increased awareness of international opportunities by working with various departments and units on campus.

On July 1, 2010, the International Center was made a Cost Center. The revenue necessary to support the Center was derived from international students. Therefore, a mandate to dramatically increase the number of international students attending Greenwich University was initiated. In July 2011, the first Director and founder of the International Center chose to return to his tenured faculty position in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. A new director for the International Center was hired in July 2011 and continues to be responsible for study abroad and international student services and actively participates in international initiatives at Greenwich University.

Current Study Abroad Program at Greenwich University

According to the Director of the International Center, during the 2010-2011 academic year, 100 Greenwich University students studied abroad, representing about 1% of the total undergraduate school enrollment. Of these students, 59 were female and 41 were male. Within these 100 students, there were no freshmen, 19 students were sophomores, 32 students were juniors, and 48 students were seniors. One student did not identify his current year in school. During the 2011-2012 school year, 93 students participated in study abroad at Greenwich University, representing about 1% of the total undergraduate school enrollment. A total of 67 study abroad students were female, and 26 students were male. Of the 93 students studying abroad, three students were sophomores, 30 students were juniors, and 38 students were seniors in college. Students studying abroad at Greenwich University were not asked to identify whether or not they

participated in the Honors Concentration. Identifying the history and demographics of Greenwich University, the Honors Concentration at Greenwich University, and International Center at Greenwich University is valuable to understanding and justifying the use of action research as an appropriate approach and utilizing quantitative and qualitative data as collection strategies.

Action Research Approach

Action research provided the foundation for my mixed methods study on honors students' awareness of study abroad and intercultural competence at Greenwich University. The goal of action research is to provide educators with a systematic way to research and reflect on specific students, classrooms, schools, and communities in an effort to resolve local problems and improve local conditions (Hinchey, 2008). Utilizing the action research paradigm will enable me to use systematic inquiry to identify actions that will generate improvement in honors students' awareness of study abroad and intercultural competence at Greenwich University.

The usefulness of action research can be applied to all levels of education, from pre-kindergarten through graduate school, in order to better understand an area the researcher considers important (Hinchey, 2008). Essential characteristics of action research include: (a) research conducted by those inside a community, (b) research that pursues improvement or a better understanding in some area significant to the researcher, (c) research that involves systematic inquiry, including information gathering, analysis, and reflection, (d) research that leads to an action plan that often creates a new cycle of the process (Hinchey, 2008). The data collected throughout this action research project, including journal writing, surveys, focus groups, interviews, and fieldnotes were

repeatedly used in a systematic reflective process that enabled me to rethink and redesign how study abroad information is provided to students. Additionally, making use of action research helped me to develop a framework for change that was grounded in the literature and my leadership theories.

Within the action research paradigm, I used a mixed methods research approach with both quantitative and qualitative data collection strategies. According to Creswell (2003), a mixed methods approach is a collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, and using combined methods allows the researcher to better understand the concept being tested or explained. Multiple data-collection methods also contribute to the trustworthiness of the data (Glesne, 2006). Furthermore, a mixed methods approach is desirable in order to triangulate the data and make it more reliable. The mixed method methodology implemented in this study provided quantitative and qualitative data to assist in answering the research questions. According to Glesne (2006), the more sources researchers tap for understanding, the richer the data and the more credible the findings. Both quantitative and qualitative research methods were chosen for the study in an effort to contribute to trustworthiness and to gain greater insight into the experiences and interests of honors students regarding the awareness of study abroad and intercultural competence.

Mixing quantitative and qualitative data in a single study has resulted in the development of more explicit procedures that help create understandable designs for data collection and analysis (Creswell, Clark, Gutmann, & Hanson, 2003). Utilizing a mixed methods approach in this study required a specific strategy for data collection. Definite criteria were employed for selecting a mixed methods strategy of inquiry. The four

decisions that were considered when selecting a mixed methods strategy of inquiry identified by Creswell, et al. (2003, p. 211) include:

1. What is the implementation sequence of the quantitative and qualitative data collection in the proposed study?
2. What priority will be given to the quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis?
3. At what stage in the research project will the quantitative and qualitative data and findings be integrated?
4. Will an overall theoretical perspective (e.g., gender, race/ethnicity, lifestyle, class) be used in the study?

With consideration to the four factors; implementation, priority, integration, and a theoretical perspective, I selected the sequential explanatory strategy. This strategy of inquiry is characterized by the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Creswell, 2003). The sequential explanatory strategy gives priority to the quantitative data, and the two methods are integrated during the interpretation phase of the research. The steps of the sequential explanatory strategy begin with quantitative data collection, followed by quantitative data analysis, qualitative data collection, qualitative data analysis, and interpretation of entire analysis. A theoretical perspective may or may not be integrated in this strategy of inquiry. Using qualitative results to assist in explaining and interpreting the findings of a primarily quantitative study is the main purpose of the sequential explanatory design. As a result of the forthright nature of the sequential explanatory design, the steps are in clear, separate stages (Creswell, 2003). Therefore, utilizing the sequential explanatory strategy was

appropriate in this study and assisted in clarifying my intent to employ multiple methods of data and multiple forms of analysis.

Research Questions

This action research project sought to answer questions about how to increase honors students' awareness of study abroad programs. Based on the literature and my leadership theories, the research questions focused on two areas: honors students and my leadership.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What levels of intercultural competence do honors students have?
2. What are honors students' interests and perceived barriers regarding studying outside of the United States?
3. How can existing programs offered by Greenwich University be promoted to increase awareness and reduce perceived barriers for honors students?
4. To what extent and how has the implementation of the online study abroad information availability affected honors students' awareness of and interest in study abroad?
5. To what extent and how has the implementation of the study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness of and interest in study abroad?

The study sought to answer the following question about my leadership:

1. What leadership traits did I develop and utilize in my role as a catalyst for promoting honors students' awareness of study abroad?

Research Methods and Instrumentation

Quantitative methods were used for data collection and analysis in Cycle 1, Cycle 2, and Cycle 3 of the study. The quantitative aspect of the research included the analysis of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), a survey focused on the barriers to study abroad, and three surveys utilized to collect data about the online study abroad information link and student demographics. The IDI was used to demonstrate honors students' need to study abroad in order to increase their intercultural competence, and served to measure an individual's and the group's intercultural competence. The IDI Instrument was analyzed using the IDI CD-ROM and addressed the 1st research question. The barriers to study abroad survey served to obtain, measure, and compare opinions regarding the causes of the decision to not study abroad. The surveys were administered to gauge perceptions of the online study abroad information link and collect student demographics information. The surveys were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences II Software (SPSS II), and addressed the 2nd and 3rd research questions.

Qualitative methods of data collection and analysis were used in Cycle 3 of the study. According to Creswell (1998), qualitative research should be conducted if it is evident that a strong rationale exists for such a design. I created an online study abroad information link and helped implement a study abroad information session and explored honors students' reactions to it and how the information affected their awareness of study abroad programs. Creswell (1998) affirms that the research questions in a qualitative study often begin with how or what so that the initial inquiry in the topic describes the current situation. The qualitative aspect of the research included individual interviews and two focus groups in Cycle 3 in order to gain insight into how the implementation of

the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness of study abroad. The focus groups and interviews addressed the third, fourth, and fifth research questions. Qualitative data enabled me to gain a comprehensive look into themes that may have an influence on an honors student's decision regarding study abroad. Additionally, the qualitative research method gave participants an opportunity to detail and discuss different themes when deciding whether or not to study abroad and how the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness of study abroad.

Cycle 1

Cycle 1 began in the summer of 2010. During this time, I administered the IDI to 40 honors students at Greenwich University. The IDI was administered to measure honors students' intercultural competence. Data collection and analysis were used to explore whether there was a need to increase honors students' awareness and participation in study abroad.

Population and Sample Selection

An email was sent to a total of 301 students enrolled in the Honors Concentration at Greenwich University. Of those students, 40 responded, which established a convenience sample (Patten, 2001). The 40 students agreed to complete the survey, constituting a response rate of 13%, which, although low, is comparable to other online survey administrations (Petchenik & Watermolen, 2011; Yu & Cooper, 1983). The students included 20 females and 20 males. A total of 39% of respondents completing the IDI were freshmen, 44% were sophomores, 7% were juniors, and 10% were seniors.

Instrumentation

The instrument used to measure intercultural competence is called the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI). The IDI was used to measure intercultural competence. It was administered to honors students who volunteered. The IDI is an existing instrument, which I chose as the most efficient means of gathering data to answer the research question: What levels of intercultural competence do honors students have? Due to copyright regulations, I am not permitted to include a copy of the IDI instrument, but I have permission to use it and am certified to administer it (See Appendix A).

The IDI instrument was developed as a valid, accessible, self-assessment instrument that would provide feedback based on the theoretical framework conceived by Dr. Milton Bennett and Dr. Mitchell Hammer (1998). Bennett and Hammer based the IDI instrument on Dr. Bennett's (1986, 1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) and uses grounded theory to measure an individual's orientation toward cultural difference. The IDI is a 60-item theory-based measure of intercultural competence. The IDI is not a survey, but an inventory specifically designed to measure the DMIS.

In order to develop the IDI items, Bennett and Hammer (1998) developed a qualitative interview designed to identify how respondents made sense out of their experiences with cultural differences. The responses from the interviews were examined in terms of the six stages and 13 forms of intercultural sensitivity. Next, Bennett and Hammer generated an item pool and removed redundant, unclear, or ambiguous questions. Through factor analysis, it was determined the items constituted six discrete

dimensions that corresponded to five of the six DMIS stages (Denial, Defense, Minimization, Acceptance, Cognitive Adaptation, and Behavior Adaptation). The last stage, Integration, was not measured. Items within each of the stages found to be unreliable were removed from the instrument.

Bennett and Hammer (1998) had an expert panel review the item pool and evaluate the IDI instrument. Items in each stage were measured and found reliable in reflecting the stage that they were representing from the DMIS model (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). The content and construct validity of the IDI instrument was addressed in two ways. First, content validity was ensured by using actual statements drawn from respondents. The second way construct validity was established was by using both raters' and experts' statements to ensure reliable categorization of the items.

The development and testing of the IDI instrument for reliability and validity affirms that the instrument is measuring the cognitive states described by the DMIS. Additionally, the relationship between cognitive states and certain stable orientations towards cultural difference, and the development of intercultural sensitivity and competence occurring in the sequence suggested by the DMIS model affirms reliability and validity of the IDI (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

The IDI scoring software is part of the DMIS theory and IDI instrument. The IDI CD-ROM provides an overall developmental profile that enables the researcher to view the scores and interpret respondents' sensitivity score.

Data Collection Procedures

The IDI was administered to 40 honors students using individual username and password codes. Students completing the IDI accessed and completed the survey instrument online, <http://v3.idiassessment.com>.

Data Analysis

A student's IDI was analyzed using the IDI scoring software that is part of the DMIS theory and IDI instrument. The IDI CD-ROM provides an overall individual developmental profile that enabled me to view the scores and interpret respondent's sensitivity score.

Cycle 2

Cycle 2 of this action research project was completed during the fall of 2010. During this time, I identified honors students who had not participated in a study abroad program. Access to students was gained through the Honors Concentration Program with permission from the Director of the Honors Concentration. During this phase, I collected data using a study abroad survey administered to 44 honors students not participating in a study abroad program. The survey was used to identify study abroad barriers that honors students encounter (Appendix B).

Population and Sample Selection

The study population consisted of all undergraduate honors students at Greenwich University who had not participated in study abroad. A list containing all undergraduate honors students not participating in a study abroad program was used to identify potential participants. The survey was sent to a total of 301 students, all undergraduate honors students not participating in study abroad, which constituted a convenience sample

(Patten, 2001). Students voluntarily completed the survey by clicking on the link provided. A total of 44 students completed the survey, constituting a response rate of 15%, which, although low, is comparable to other online survey administrations (Petchenik & Watermolen, 2011; Yu & Cooper, 1983). Through the survey, students were asked about their views regarding study abroad and determinants influencing their decision to not participate in a study abroad program.

Instrumentation

A survey instrument was administered to the respondents. The survey was administered to 44 honors students and measured personal, social, and institutional barriers that honors students encountered in their decision to not study abroad. The design of the survey is modeled after Kasravi's (2009) survey instrument researching the factors influencing students' decisions to study abroad. I received permission to utilize the survey.

The survey, modeled after Kasravi's (2009) survey instrument, consists of 29 close-ended items and seven open-ended items. Kasravi (2009) administered pilot tests with a convenience sampling of 30 participants. Additionally, I administered online pilot tests in November 2009 to undergraduate education majors at Greenwich University. The reliability and validity of the survey instruments were addressed through analyzing the pilot test data and through peer review for each survey. The survey consists of five parts. The five parts of the survey collected data on: 1) demographic information 2) background information, 3) sources of information and influential messengers, 4) institutional support and resources, and 5) personal characteristics and social factors influencing participation in study abroad.

Data Collection Procedures

Through email, I asked the 301 undergraduate honors students at Greenwich University to complete a survey as part of my doctoral work. The surveys were administered by email. Participation in the survey was voluntary and students were not required to answer any of the questions. Participating in the survey constituted informed consent and their willingness to participate.

Data Analysis

The quantitative data was analyzed using the SPSS II software to calculate frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations (Patten, 2001). The results from the Cycle 2 survey were utilized in Cycle 3 as described below. The results from the Cycle 2 survey were used to create an online study abroad information link and study abroad information session. The online study abroad information link and study abroad information session informed honors students about study abroad and the programs offered through Greenwich University.

Cycle 3

Cycle 3 extended from September 2010 to December 2012. Data collection and analysis from Cycle 2 was used to create an online study abroad information link in September 2010, evaluate the link in fall of 2010, summer of 2012, and fall of 2012, and promote a study abroad information session. The study abroad information link provided honors students with study abroad information online. In November 2010, I surveyed and interviewed eight students to evaluate the study abroad information link (Appendix C). Following the initial implementation of the link in September 2010 and data collection in November 2010, I relocated abroad due to employment changes and planned to re-

evaluate the online study abroad information link and implement improvements upon my return. When I returned in the spring of 2012, a new Honors Concentration director was in place and under her direction updates and improvements had already been made to the online study abroad information link. I met with the director and we agreed that I would contact honors students in the Summer of 2012 who had studied abroad while I was away and survey (Appendix D) and interview them (Appendix E) about the online study abroad information link. Five students were contacted to collect this information. Additionally, I surveyed 76 incoming freshmen honors students and 45 mentors in August 2012 during an ice cream social orientation session. The survey asked honors students and mentors about their interest in study abroad and the extent to which they had examined the online study abroad link (Appendix F). Following that, the director agreed to have me work with her to promote a study abroad information session specifically for honors students. I emailed honors students who had studied abroad and requested their participation at the September 2012 study abroad information session (Appendix G). I also designed a flyer advertising the September 2012 study abroad information session that was distributed to all honors students via email (Appendix H). The study abroad information session took place September 2012 and informed honors students about study abroad opportunities at Greenwich University and the benefits of participating in study abroad. Following a study abroad information session, I held a focus group for workshop attendees. The focus group consisted of 14 volunteers.

Instrumentation

In order to gain a better understanding of an honors student's awareness of study abroad at Greenwich University, quantitative and qualitative methods were employed

(Creswell, 1998). Honors students participated in focus groups, surveys, and interviews in an effort to understand how the online study abroad information link and study abroad workshop affected awareness of study abroad. The 2010 focus group consisted of eight honors students. Focus group questions were semi-structured and the protocol consisted of four questions. The 2010 focus group participants also completed a five question survey. The August 2012 survey questions semi-structured and the protocol consisted of seven questions. A total of 76 incoming honors students and 45 mentors completed the survey. The 2012 individual interviews consisted of three students who recently returned from study abroad. Questions were semi-structured and the protocol consisted of seven questions. Additionally, five honors student who recently returned from study abroad completed a survey consisting of 11 questions. The focus group, surveys, and interview questions used a protocol modeled after the five sections of the barriers to study abroad survey instrument.

During the focus groups, surveys, and interviews, I served as the principal moderator. I gave a brief description of the research to participants and allowed participants to read a consent form and ask questions prior to their agreement to participate in the study. Triangulation of data assured the reliability and credibility of the qualitative data collected in the study. According to Glesne (1999), triangulation is a measure of validity through the “use of multiple data-collection methods, multiple sources, multiple investigators, and/or multiple theoretical perspectives” (p.32). Triangulation was achieved through multiple sources and multiple data-collection methods. To triangulate data, during focus groups, interviews, and surveys I took notes, audio recorded, and member checked the data. The focus group, surveys, and interviews

provided detailed information about honors students' reactions to the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session.

Triangulation of data was used to seek corroboration and correspondence of results from the mixed-methods approach utilized. Collectively, qualitative and quantitative data were utilized in this study. Creswell's (2003) sequential explanatory strategy was used to clarify my intent to employ multiple methods of data and multiple forms of analysis. Cycle 1 and cycle 2 involved the collection and analysis of qualitative data. Results from the qualitative data were used to help explain the quantitative data in cycle 3 and cycle 4. Creswell's (2003) sequential explanatory strategy assisted in explaining and interpreting the qualitative data findings.

Data Collection Procedures

I conducted two focus groups, three surveys, and three interviews in an effort to seek understanding about how the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session affected awareness of study abroad. The 2010 and 2012 focus group questions were semi-structured. I tape-recorded and transcribed the focus groups. The taped focus groups were semi-structured, open-ended questions, and focused on student insight obtained from the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session. The 2010 survey consisted of five questions, the August 2012 survey consisted of seven questions and the survey for honors students who studied abroad consisted of 11 questions. The interview questions were semi-structured and the protocol consisted of seven questions. Three students who recently returned from study abroad in the summer of 2012 were interviewed. I tape recorded and transcribed the interview

questions. The interviews focused on student insight obtained from the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session.

Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis consisted of a multistep process of coding and sorting for emergent themes (Glesne, 2006). The primary method of analysis for the data collection was a continuous coding process (Creswell, 1998). I transcribed the tape recordings obtained from the focus groups and highlighted themes in order to recognize visible patterns (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Interviews were tape recorded, systematically organized, coded for themes, and summarized (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Following open-coding analysis was the analysis of axial coding. I utilized axial coding to make conceptual connections between a category and its subcategories (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Themes were highlighted to provide the Honors Concentration Director with feedback and recommendations to revise and strengthen the online study abroad information link based on data collected from the focus groups and interviews in Cycle 3. Recommendations gathered from honors students participating in the focus groups and interviews became suggestions for revising the online study abroad information.

Validating the Accuracy of Findings

Validation of findings occurs throughout the steps in the process of research. Specific steps were taken in order to check for the accuracy and credibility of the findings. Creswell (2003) recommends a procedural perspective in an effort to check the accuracy of the findings. The eight primary strategies suggested by Creswell (2003) were utilized in order to instill trustworthiness and validity of data.

I ensured trustworthiness through data triangulation, piloting of focus group questions, and member checking. I triangulated data using surveys, focus groups, and interviews (Glesne, 2006). Piloting focus group questions ensured that the questions gave honors students an opportunity to accurately and precisely evaluate the online study abroad information link and study abroad information sessions. I utilized member checking by focus group and interview participants to make certain their feedback was represented accurately (Glesne, 2006). Triangulating data helped to increase research validity of the study and decrease subjectivity (Glesne, 2006).

Cycle 4: Leadership Assessment

I assessed my leadership throughout all of the cycles by using student feedback from the focus groups and interviews, faculty feedback from the Honors Concentration Director and Program Assistant, journaling, the Leadership Practice Inventory (LPI), and the Emotional Intelligence Skills Assessment (EISA). Transcribed and coded feedback notes and journal entries, along with reflective practice helped me to assess my application of my espoused theory of leadership and answer the research question pertaining to my leadership.

Limitations

The study explored different methods of increasing study abroad awareness and participation in honors students. As with any study that focuses its efforts in analyzing a specific population, an increase in the student population is recommended for further investigation. The study participants were undergraduate students enrolled in one Honors Concentration program at one university. The study focuses on the freshman, sophomore, and junior population because these students have more opportunities, and are less

restricted due to course requirements, to take advantage of short-term study abroad programs, as well as semester-long study abroad programs.

This study was conducted at one four-year University in the mid-Atlantic region and concentrated on the honors student population. Expanding the number of universities to be studied may provide additional information on the determinants found to be significant on honors students' decisions regarding study abroad. Additionally, increasing the duration of the study would add to the number of participants. More study participants would provide additional information to the results that will be discovered in this study.

Confidentiality

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) granted approval for the project and the survey instruments on December 16, 2009. A request for revisions and a one-year extension was granted by the IRB on April 24, 2012. All data obtained during the project was kept confidential and no personally identifiable information was requested.

Conclusion

This mixed methods research study sought to answer questions about honors students' awareness of study abroad and intercultural competence and my leadership in implementing and researching the change project. I used journal entries to reflect and assess the effectiveness of my leadership strategies. I also reflected on my leadership strategies by transcribing and coding the focus group and interview responses. Reflective practice helped me to connect with the honors students and staff. As a result, reflecting and assessing these areas helped to ensure that I effectively communicated and shared my

vision that study abroad can play a critical role in an honors student's development. The following chapters provide results of each cycle.

Chapter 5

Cycle 1 Analysis

Introduction

Action research provided the foundation for my study on honors students' awareness of study abroad and intercultural competence at Greenwich University. Hinchey (2008) defined action research as a "process of systematic inquiry usually cyclical, conducted by those inside a community with the goal to identify action that will generate some improvement" (p.4). Often a collaborative activity among colleagues, action research seeks out solutions for problems in an educational setting, or explores ways to improve instruction and increase student achievement (Ferrance, 2000). Additionally, action research helps researchers address concerns that are important to them, as well as problems they can influence and make change (Ferrance, 2000). Through this action research study, I sought to positively influence honors students' awareness of study abroad and intercultural competence.

Generating change relied on collaboratively working with those inside the community. Once a need was established to increase honors students' awareness in study abroad at Greenwich University, I assisted in the implementation of online study abroad information and a study abroad information session for honors students. Cycle 1 of my study represented my experiences, interest, reflection, and inquiry into the need to promote study abroad. Cycle 1 consisted of becoming a certified administrator of the Intercultural Competence Inventory (IDI) and administering the IDI to 40 honors students at Greenwich University. The IDI was utilized as a quantitative tool designed to evaluate individual and group levels of intercultural competence. This cycle included personal

training, observations, planning, and acting that Kemmis and McTaggart (2000) describe as a spiral of self-reflective cycles. Cycle 1 represented the initial stages of my research utilizing the cyclical stages of action research. In cycle 1, I trained to become a qualified administrator of the IDI, gathered information, administered the IDI, shared my information with the Honors Concentration Director at Greenwich University, communicated my ideas for change, considered her ideas and feedback, and sought more information that helped drive the framework for cycle 2.

Through the initial stage of my research, I learned the process of action research may not be as well-ordered and planned as the cyclical process suggests, and often stages overlap and initial plans transform as a result of the learning and reflection that occurs throughout the process (Kemmis & McTaggart, 2000). Utilizing action research required me to become more open and responsive to change and adapt quickly to different situations I encountered.

Overview

The main objective of cycle 1 was to understand honors students' levels of intercultural competence in order to determine whether there was a need to promote study abroad. Since the onset of globalization, specific skills and competencies, such as intercultural competence, are necessary for students to succeed in the 21st century. Therefore, it was essential to determine honors students' level of intercultural competence in order to establish a need to promote students' awareness in study abroad.

To identify how competent honors students at Greenwich University were in terms of working across cultures, I administered the IDI to 40 students. Although the study population completing the IDI in this cycle was low, it is comparable to other

online survey administrators (Petchenik & Watermolen, 2011; Yu & Cooper, 1983).

Cycle 1 data results helped to drive the actions in cycle 2 and cycle 3, which included the development of online study abroad information and the implementation of a study abroad information session.

Profile of the IDI

The IDI is a 50-item online assessment tool used to help individuals and groups assess and reflect on stages of cultural sensitivity (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). The inventory is an individual assessment designed to produce an Individual Profile Report or a Group Profile Report. The Individual Profile Report identifies the way an individual experiences cultural differences and commonalities. The Group Profile Report identifies the way an identified group of three or more people collectively experiences cultural differences and commonalities. For example, these groups can include specific work teams, departments, divisions, functional areas, headquarter and subsidiaries, or the organization as a whole (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). The IDI generates a graphic profile of an individual's or a group's predominant level of intercultural competence, as well as a comprehensive textual explanation of that level of intercultural development. For this study, a Group Profile Report was generated in order to gain insight about how honors students at Greenwich University as a group make sense and respond to cultural differences and similarities.

Developed by Dr. Mitchell Hammer and Dr. Milton Bennett (1998), the IDI is an empirical measurement of intercultural sensitivity as conceptualized by Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). According to Bennett (1986), intercultural understanding is defined as a continuum of different levels of development

in the recognition and acceptance of cultural differences. Based on Bennett's (1986) theoretical framework, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) was constructed to measure the orientations toward cultural differences described in the DMIS. The result of this work is a 50-item (with 10 additional demographic items), paper-and-pencil measure of intercultural competence. Confirmatory factor analyses, reliability analyses, and construct validity tests validated five main dimensions of the DMIS. The five dimensions were measured using the following scales: (1) DD (Denial/Defense) scale (13 items, $\alpha=0.85$); (2) R (Reversal) scale (9 items, $\alpha=0.80$); (3) M (Minimization) scale (9 items, $\alpha=0.83$), (4) AA (Acceptance/Adaptation) scale (14 items, $\alpha=0.84$; and (5) an EM (Encapsulated Marginality) scale (5 items, $\alpha=0.80$) (Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman, 2003). Figure 2 shows the intercultural development continuum, identifying specific orientations for both individuals and groups that range from more monocultural to more intercultural or global mindsets.

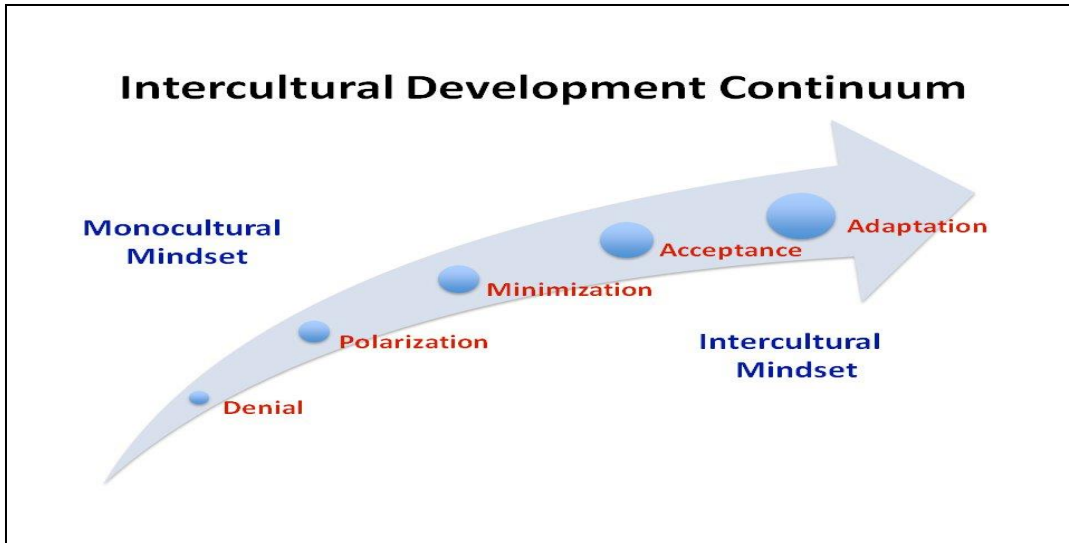


Figure 2. Intercultural Development Continuum

Milton Bennett's Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS)

Each stage of the DMIS indicates a specific perceptual mode and behavior. The first three stages of the DMIS demonstrate monocultural mindsets and the remaining two stages are categorized as intercultural or global mindsets. Characteristics of monocultural mindsets include making sense of cultural differences and commonalities based on one's own cultural values and practices, using broad stereotypes to identify cultural differences, and supporting less complex perceptions and experiences of cultural differences and commonalities. Characteristics of intercultural or global mindsets include making sense of cultural differences and commonalities based on one's own and other cultures' values and practices, using cultural generalizations to recognize cultural differences, and supporting more complex perceptions and experiences of cultural differences and commonalities. According to the continuum, those who have a greater intercultural mindset have an increased capability for responding effectively to cultural differences.

Bennett's (1986) framework for intercultural sensitivity explains what an individual or group goes through when developing intercultural competence. Table 1 describes the specific competence orientations identified as Denial, Polarization, Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation.

Table 1

IDI Orientations

Measure	Description
Denial	An orientation that likely recognizes more observable difference (e.g. food) but, may not notice deeper cultural differences (e.g. conflict resolution styles), and may avoid or withdraw from cultural differences.
Polarization	A judgmental orientation that views cultural differences in terms of “us” and “them.” This can take the form of : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Defense: An uncritical view toward one’s own cultural values and practices and an overly critical view toward other cultural values and practices. 2. Reversal: An overly critical orientation toward one’s own cultural values and practices and an uncritical view toward other cultural values and practices.
Minimization	An orientation that highlights cultural commonality and universal values and principles that may also mask deeper recognition and appreciation of cultural differences.
Acceptance	An orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference and commonality in one’s own and other cultures.
Adaptation	An orientation that is capable of shifting cultural perspective and changing behavior in culturally appropriate and authentic ways.

Interpreting the IDI

The IDI Profile Report provides information about how an individual or a group makes sense of and responds to cultural differences and commonalities (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). Along with providing demographic and statistical summaries, the IDI Profile Report gives information on Perceived Orientation, Developmental Orientation, Orientation Gap, Trailing Orientation, Leading Orientation, and Cultural Disengagement.

Perceived orientation. Perceived Orientation reflects where an individual or group as a whole places itself along the intercultural development continuum. The Perceived Orientation can be Denial, Polarization (Defense/Reversal), Minimization, Acceptance, or Adaptation (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Developmental orientation. The Developmental Orientation indicates an individual or group's primary orientation toward cultural differences and commonalities along the intercultural development continuum as assessed by the IDI. The Developmental Orientation is the perspective an individual or group is most likely to use in situations in which cultural differences and commonalities need to be bridged (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). The Developmental Orientation can also be Denial, Polarization (Defense/Reversal), Minimization, Acceptance, or Adaptation (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Orientation gap. The Orientation Gap is the difference along the intercultural development continuum between the Perceived Orientation and the Developmental Orientation. A gap score of seven points or higher indicates a meaningful difference between the Perceived Orientation and the Developmental Orientation. The larger the gap, the more likely the individual or group may be surprised by the inconsistency

between the Perceived Orientation and the Developmental Orientation score. A Perceived Orientation score that is seven points or higher than the Developmental Orientation score indicates an overestimation of the individual's or group's intercultural competence. A Developmental Orientation score that is seven points or higher than the Perceived Orientation score indicates an underestimation of the individual's or group's intercultural competence (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Trailing orientation. Trailing Orientations are orientations that are “in back of” the individual's or group's Developmental Orientation on the intercultural development continuum that are not resolved. When an earlier orientation is not resolved, the “trailing” orientation may be used to make sense of cultural differences at particular times, around certain topics, or in specific situations. When trailing orientations arise, they often pull people back from their Developmental Orientation for dealing with cultural differences and commonalities. When a trailing issue arises, a specific situation or decision is then made from the perspective of the earlier orientation rather than the Developmental Orientation that characterizes the predominant way the group deals with cultural difference challenges. For example, if the group's Developmental Orientation is Minimization, the group may have a Reversal Trailing Orientation. When this happens, there is often a sense that the group has moved one step forward and now two steps backward (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). When a group has a Trailing Orientation, it is not uncommon to have a back and forth quality in the group as these orientations arise. As the group resolves these Trailing Orientations, a sense of progress and shared focus amongst group members emerges. The IDI identifies the level of resolution groups have attained regarding possible Trailing Orientations (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Leading orientation. Leading Orientations are orientations that are immediately “in front” of the Developmental Orientation. A Leading Orientation is the next step to take to further develop intercultural competence. If an individual or group’s Developmental Orientation is Minimization, then the individual or group’s Leading Orientation would be Acceptance and Adaptation (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Cultural disengagement. The Cultural Disengagement score indicates how connected or disconnected the group feels toward their own cultural community as defined by each individual within the group. Cultural Disengagement is not a dimension on the intercultural development continuum. It is a separate dimension of how disconnected or detached people feel toward their own cultural group. The Cultural Disengagement scale, while not located on the Intercultural Development Continuum, has the same score range as the developmental orientations on the continuum and relates most strongly with Reversal, consistent with conceptualization of Cultural Disengagement as a disconnection with one’s own culture (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Scoring of the IDI

The IDI is a 50-item inventory in which individuals are asked to rate the level of their agreement with a series of statements about their connection to and assessment of cultural difference on a five-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932). The five-point response scale has these options: 1- disagree, 2- disagree somewhat more than agree, 3- disagree some and agree some, 4- agree somewhat more than disagree, 5- agree. Different sets of statements measure individuals’ orientation toward Denial, Polarization (Defense and Reversal measured as separate scales), Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation. The overall IDI scores range from 55-145 and follow a normal distribution with a mean of

100 centered in Minimization, and a standard deviation of 15. A score below 85 indicates that a person is primarily operating in the realm of Polarization; 85-114.99 represents a primary orientation in Minimization, and scores of 115 and above indicate Acceptance and Adaptation. The individual scales have final scores ranging from one to five on a five-point Likert scale (Likert, 1932) and are identified as Trailing orientations. Trailing orientations are those orientations that are found before or prior to the assessed Developmental orientation score. Scores below 4.0 are reflective of an unresolved Trailing orientation and scores of 4.0 and above indicate that an individual has resolved that particular Trailing orientation in developing their intercultural competence (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Derivation of the Perceived Orientation and Developmental Orientation Scores

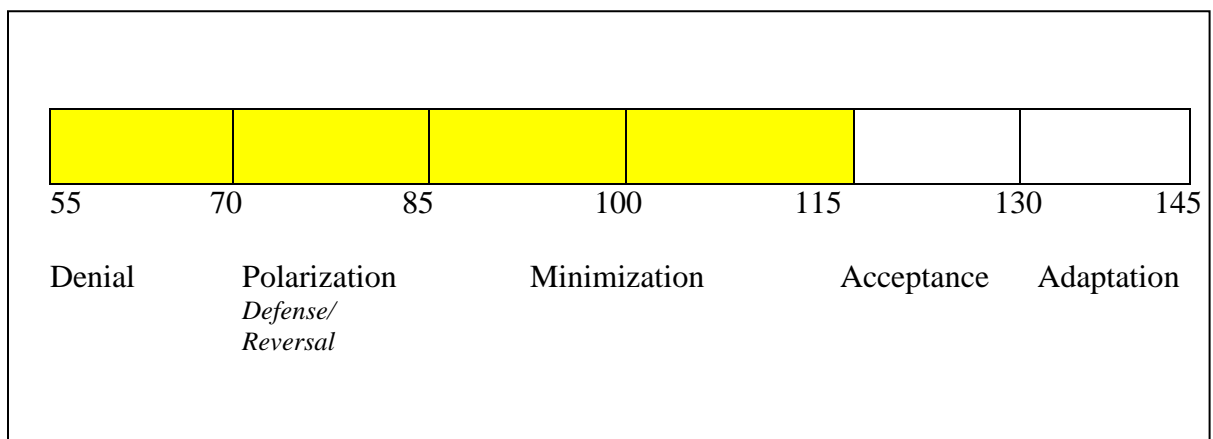
The Perceived Orientation and the Developmental Orientation scores are formulated using proprietary formulas that were validated with a sample of 766 respondents. Later, the proprietary formulas were validated a number of times with samples over 4,000 respondents. To calculate the Perceived Orientation score, an unweighted formula is used based on the mean scale values of Denial, Defense, Reversal, Minimization, Acceptance, and Adaptation. The Developmental Orientation score is produced using a weighted formula in which scale means scores of Denial, Defense, Reversal, and Minimization are weighted and calculated compared to scale mean scores of Acceptance and Adaptation scale means. The Perceived Orientation and the Developmental Orientation scores represent standardized (z-score) scores. A score of 100 indicates the mean with a standard deviation of 15 (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Perceived Orientation

For this study, a Group Profile Report was generated to identify the way honors students at Greenwich University collectively experience cultural differences and commonalities. The first section of the IDI focused on the group's Perceived Orientation. A group's Perceived Orientation reveals where the group as a whole places itself along the IDI. The Perceived Orientation can be Denial, Polarization, Minimization, Acceptance, or Adaptation (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). Table 2 illustrates that honors students completing the IDI have a Perceived Orientation group score that indicates the group rates its own capability in understanding and appropriately adapting to cultural differences within Acceptance. This reflects an orientation that recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference in one's own and other cultures in values, perceptions, and behaviors (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Table 2

Perceived Orientation = 115.9



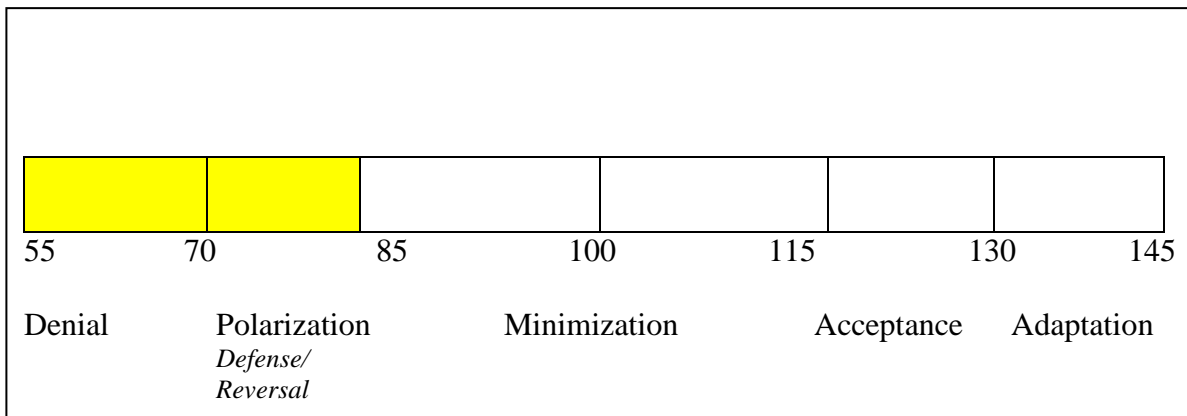
Developmental Orientation

The second section of the IDI focused on group's Developmental Orientation. The Developmental Orientation shows the group's primary orientation toward cultural differences and commonalities along the IDI continuum. The Developmental Orientation is the viewpoint the group is most likely to use in circumstances in which cultural differences and commonalities need to be joined. The Developmental Orientation can also be Denial, Polarization, Minimization, Acceptance, or Adaptation (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Table 3 shows that the honors student's Developmental Orientation score indicates their primary orientation toward cultural differences is within Polarization. This reflects an us and them judgmental viewpoint toward cultural differences. This can take two forms. It take the form of Defense, in which different values, perceptions, and behaviors related with a culturally different group of people are measured negatively and values, perceptions, and behaviors of one's own group are judged more positively. Or, it can take the form of Reversal, in which other cultural practices are less critically evaluated and cultural practices within one's own group are likely to be judged from an overly critical standpoint (Bennett & Hammer, 1998).

Table 3

Developmental Orientation= 81.03



Orientation Gap

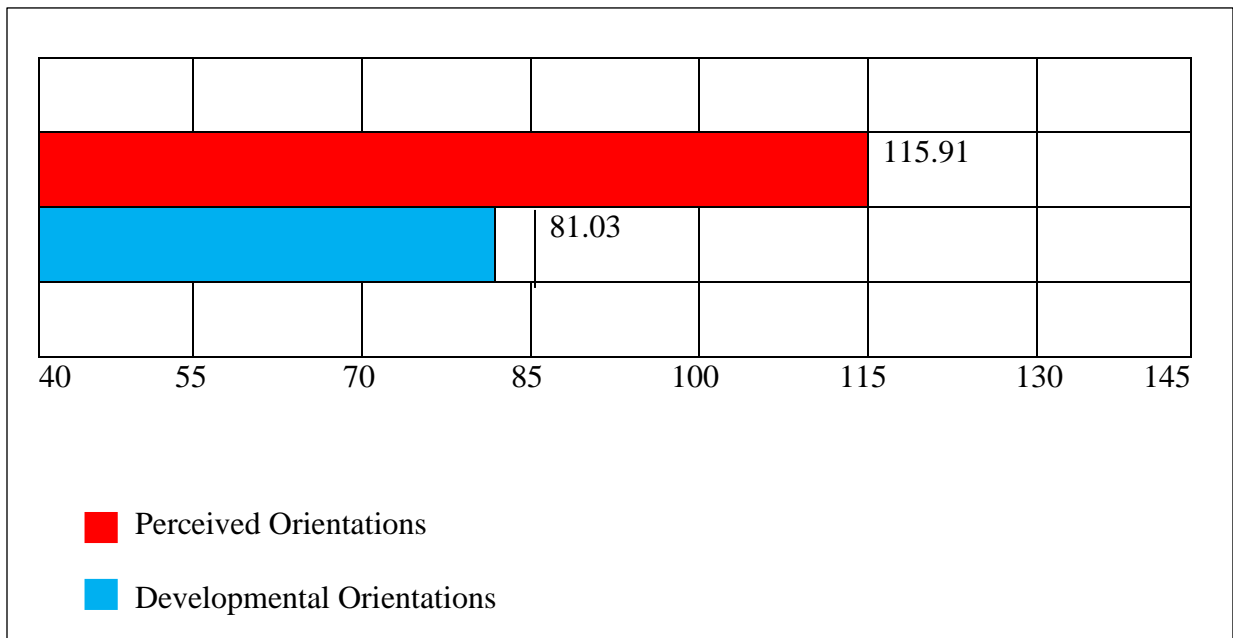
The third section of the IDI focused on the group's Orientation Gap. The Orientation gap is the difference along the IDI continuum between the Perceived and Developmental Orientation. A gap score of seven points or higher indicates a meaningful difference between the Perceived Orientation and the Developmental Orientation. The greater the gap between the Perceived Orientation and the Developmental Orientation, the more likely the group may be surprised by the difference. A Perceived Orientation score of seven points or higher than the Developmental Orientation score suggests an overestimation of the group's intercultural competence. A Developmental Orientation score that is seven points or higher than the Perceived Orientation score suggests an underestimation of the group's intercultural competence.

Table 4 shows that the group's Orientation Gap between its Perceived Orientation score and its Developmental Orientation score is 34.88 points. A gap score of seven points or higher is considered a meaningful difference between where the honors students perceive they are on the developmental continuum and where the IDI places the group's

level of intercultural competence on the continuum. A Perceived Orientation score of seven points or higher than the Developmental Orientation indicates the honors students have overestimated their level of intercultural competence. With a difference of 34.88 points, the honors students have substantially overestimated their level of intercultural competence.

Table 4

Orientation Gap= 34.88



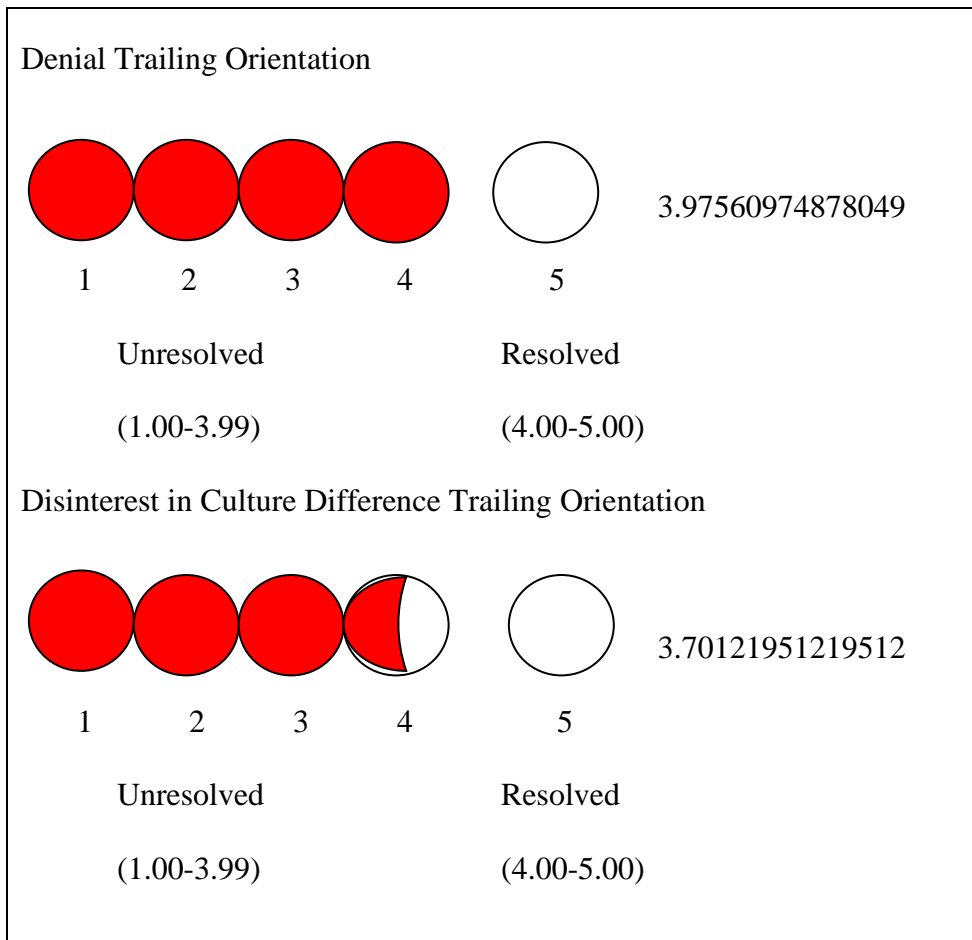
Trailing Orientation

The fourth section of the IDI focused on Trailing Orientations. Trailing Orientations are those orientations on the IDI continuum that are in back of the group’s Developmental Orientation and are not resolved. The group’s trailing orientation is Denial and Disinterest in Culture Differences. When confronted with cultural differences, the trailing perspective is often used to make sense of cultural differences at certain

times, around certain topics, or in specific situations. Trailing Orientations often pull people back from their Developmental Orientation for handling cultural differences and commonalities. According to Bennett and Hammer (1998), it is common for progress in building intercultural competence to have a back and forth quality in the school setting. As the group begins to resolve the trailing orientations, a more consistent sense of progress and shared focus emerges. The IDI identifies the level of resolution the honors students have reached regarding likely Trailing Orientations. According to an IDI representative, “Since the trailing orientations are close to being resolved, perhaps the score won’t take long to overcome. However, it is a red flag and something for the group to be aware of.” Table 5 identifies the Trailing Orientations for the honors students.

Table 5

Trailing Orientations



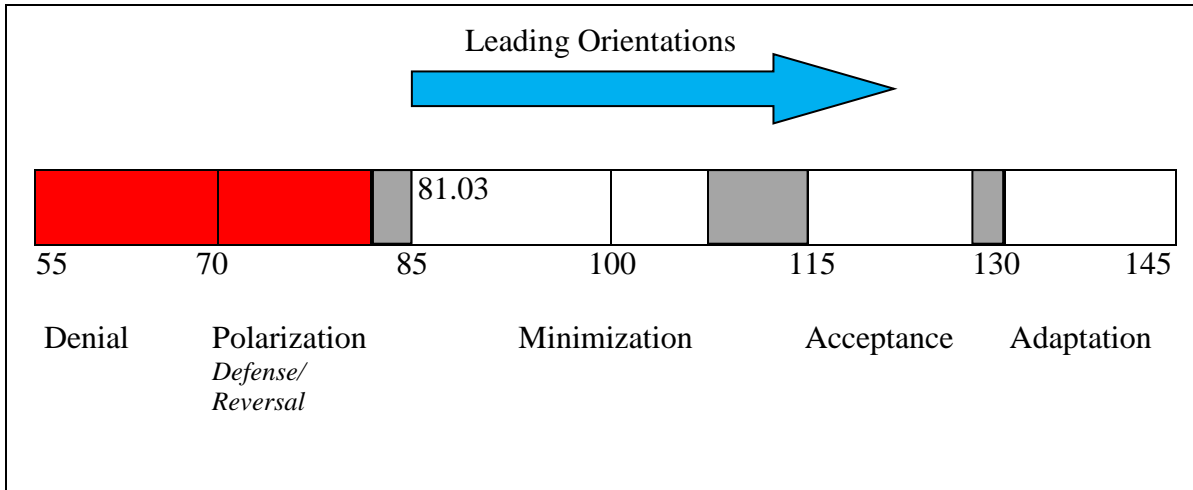
Leading Orientation

The fifth section of the IDI focused on Leading Orientations. Leading Orientations are described as those orientations that are immediately in front of the Developmental Orientation. A Leading Orientation is the next step in furthering development of intercultural competence. Table 6 shows the Leading Orientation for the honors students is Minimization through Acceptance. As honors students examine cultural differences and commonalities, the group can begin to focus on deeper cultural

patterns of difference that may have previously been unnoticed by utilizing leading orientations.

Table 6

Leading Orientations

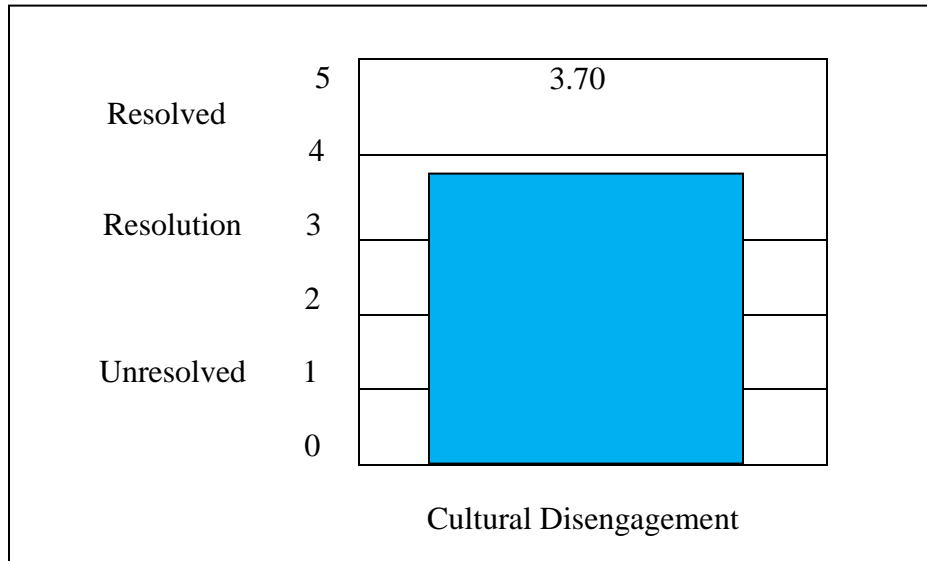


Cultural Disengagement

The sixth section of the IDI focused on Cultural Disengagement. The Cultural Disengagement score indicates how connected or disconnected the honors students feel toward their own cultural community. Cultural Disengagement is not represented on the IDI continuum. Instead, it is a distinct dimension of how disconnected or detached the honors students feel toward their own cultural group. Table 7 shows the honors students Cultural Disengagement mean. Scores of less than 4.00 indicate the honors students are not resolved and are experiencing to some degree a lack of involvement in core aspects of being a member of a cultural community. Overall, the honors students' Cultural Disengagement score is 3.70, indicating the group has some lack of involvement toward their membership in a cultural community.

Table 7

Cultural Disengagement= 3.70



Profile of the Sample

Along with providing the IDI continuum, the Intercultural Competence Inventory also gives a demographic summary of the honors students. The sample used for cycle 1 consisted of undergraduate students enrolled in the Honors Concentration at Greenwich University. A total of 301 honors students were emailed a request to participate in the survey. Of those students, 40 responded and agreed to complete the survey. The students included 20 females and 20 males. A total of 39% of respondents completing the IDI were freshmen, 44% were sophomores, 7% were juniors, and 10% were seniors. The sample size constituted a response rate of 13%. All of the participants identified North America as the primary world region they lived in during their formative years to age 18. The United States was considered their primary country of citizenship by 95% of respondents, 2% identified Pakistan as their country of citizenship, and 2% identified

Mexico as their primary country of citizenship. A total of 83% of respondents have never lived in another country.

Accompanying the IDI are four open-ended contexting questions individual respondents may answer. Completing all or some of the four contexting questions is optional for the respondent. The objective of the four open-ended questions is to further capture the respondent's experiences around cultural differences. The open-ended questions are not scored. The responses are used as a conversational platform within which to engage the group in a deep and genuine conversation around cultural diversity concerns (Bennett and Hammer, 1998). Appendix I illustrates the questions and the student responses.

The first open-ended question asked students to describe their background (e.g. nationality, ethnicity) around cultural differences. All 40 students who were administered the IDI answered the first open-ended question. This constituted a response rate of 100%. When asked about their background around cultural differences, 48% of students described a background originating outside of the United States. One student replied, "I am Caucasian; a third generation member of Polish, Irish, German, and English decent." Another student stated, "I am a Jewish American female. My family is from Eastern Europe, mainly Poland, Russia, and Austria. Because of my background, I am pretty much used to having two identities; my identity as an American, and my identity as an Ashkenazi Jew." A total of 15% of respondents described interactions with cultural groups other than their own. One student stated, "I have worked at a garden center, so I have worked with many Mexican immigrants. In addition, I have traveled quite frequently to the Caribbean and surrounding nations and witnessed many different

cultural backgrounds.” Another student responded, “I myself do not feel that I have any cultural differences from those I live with but I have many friends from the U.A.E., Egypt, Japan, and China that have allowed me to see cultural differences along with the tolerance from people of my own culture.” Additionally, 13% of students responding to the first open-ended question identified parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or themselves as having been born somewhere other than the United States. One student replied, “I was raised by my mother who was born in and still a citizen of Denmark and my father who was raised in an Italian and Irish family.” A student stated, “My uncle is from Morocco. My aunt is from Hungary.” Another student commented that “both grandparents are from the Middle East on my father’s side and my mother’s side is German. We have relatives from Germany stay with us on a few occasions.” The responses from the first open-ended question strongly suggest that the 40 honors students completing the IDI had been exposed to cultural differences through family and friends.

The second open-ended question asked students to identify what is most challenging when working with people from other cultures. A total of 36 students out of 40 responded to the second open-ended question. This constituted a responses rate of 90%. Of the 36 respondents, 61% identified verbal and non-verbal language as a barrier when working with people from other cultures. One student stated, “The only problem I have in dealing with people from other cultures is the language barrier. I find at times that it is hard to understand people from other cultures.” Other students replied, “speech barriers,” “understanding accents or language barriers,” and “knowing what gestures they find offensive.” Views, values, and perspectives were identified by 28% of the students as most challenging when working with people from other cultures. One student stated,

“Figuring out what their morals and normal ways of living are and trying to work with them while still remembering what my morals and normal ways of living are.” Other responses included, “being able to relate to one another,” “religion and political views,” and “understanding the difference between their values and my own.” The response rate and answers to the second open-ended question strongly suggest that the honors students have encountered challenges when working with people from other cultures.

The third open-ended question asked students to identify personal goals, responsibilities, or tasks they may have in which cultural differences need to be successfully navigated. Of the 40 students completing the IDI, 21 responded to the third open-ended question. This constituted a response rate of 53%. A total of 52% of the students answering the third question identified accepting other cultures as a goal, responsibility, or task they have in which cultural differences need to successfully be navigated. One student stated, “Maintaining a degree of fairness, understanding, and appreciation between members of different backgrounds. Also, to promote tolerance between members of different cultures.” Similarly, another student commented, “Respect and tolerance for one another regardless of our cultural differences.” Another student wrote, “A key goal is to treat everyone with respect and to try and understand someone who may be from a different culture.” A total of 24% of the students stated that working together was a key goal, responsibility, or task they had in which cultural differences need to be successfully navigated. One student commented, “Coming together to accomplish a common task.” Other students stated, “To work cooperatively with groups of all cultures,” and “addressing commonalities to bridge.” Collectively, the students expressed positive goals, responsibilities, and tasks for navigating cultural differences.

The fourth open-ended question asked students to give examples of situations they were involved with or observed where cultural differences needed to be addressed and the situation was successfully resolved, as well as a situation that ended negatively. For this question, students had the option of giving one example of a positive or negative situation or an example of a positive situation, as well as an example of a negative situation. A total of 25 students responded. This constituted a response rate of 63%. Since students had the option of providing one or two examples, the total number of examples provided by the students was 43. A total of three students replied to the question, but wrote “I do not have any,” and “I cannot think of any.” Of the 43 examples provided by the students, 58% described situations that were resolved negatively, and 42% were resolved positively.

Although the four open-ended contexting questions were optional, all of the students completing the IDI responded to at least one open-ended question. The students provided numerous examples of positive interactions and experiences with cultural differences, as well as many examples of situations where cultural differences were challenging or situations ended negatively. Along with the IDI score, these responses provide information on honors students exposure, experiences, and viewpoints on cultures other than their own.

Discussion

As discussed in the literature review, one of the goals of studying abroad is to increase students’ intercultural competence, as well as their ability to adapt to cultural differences while studying abroad and generalize those skills upon return (Bates, 1997; Cushner & Mahon, 2002). A developmental model like the DMIS provides a visual

explanation for the forward movement through the stages of the intercultural development continuum toward and intercultural mindset. Utilizing the IDI as an assessment measure has found that students participating in study abroad have an overall shift toward an intercultural mindset (Paige, Cohen, & Shivey, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2004).

The findings from cycle 1 indicated that the honors students rated their own capability as understanding and appropriately adapting to cultural differences within acceptance (Table 2). As shown in Table 1, the Acceptance orientation suggests that the honors students recognize and appreciate patterns of cultural difference and commonality in one's own and other cultures. However, as shown in Table 3, the honors students' developmental score indicates their primary orientation towards cultural differences is within polarization. Table 1 describes polarization as a judgmental orientation that views cultural differences in terms of us and them. The polarization orientation suggests that cultural differences are experienced as divisive and threatening (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). Additionally, the polarization orientation puts forward that students view cultural differences as an obstacle to be overcome, often leading to a sense of superiority and overconfidence and a view that our way of doing things is the best way (Bennett & Hammer, 1998). The group's Orientation Gap between its Perceived Orientation score and its Developmental Orientation score is 34.88 points. A gap score of seven points or higher is considered a significant difference between where the honors students perceive they are on the developmental continuum and where the IDI places the group's level of intercultural competence on the continuum. As a result of a 34.88 point difference, it has been determined that the honors students have substantially overestimated their level of

intercultural competence. The IDI results clearly point to the fact that honors students significantly overestimate their level of intercultural competence, and, in fact, reflects an us and them judgemental viewpoint toward cultural differences.

According to Bennett and Hammer (1998), the key resolution issue is to acknowledge the stereotypic nature of one's perceptions and experiences of the other culture and to actively identify commonalities between one's own views, needs, and goals and that of the other. Identifying honors students' intercultural competence helped me to answer my first research question, what levels of intercultural competence do honors students have? Since study abroad programs offer students direct access to other cultures and promote the development of intercultural competence (Paige, Cohen, & Shivey, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2004), I was also able to identify a need to promote honors student's awareness in study abroad due to their low Developmental Orientation score on the IDI.

The findings from cycle 1 helped me to develop a next step for cycle 2. Part of the study was to find out why many honors students do not study abroad. Study abroad gives students cross-cultural immersion experiences (Cushner & Mahon, 2002) and an overall shift toward an intercultural mindset (Paige, Cohen, & Shivey, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2004). Student participation in study abroad programs is also cited as a valuable tool for internationalizing campuses and helping students prepare for living in the 21st century (Bates, 1997; Cushner & Mahon, 2002). Therefore, it was important to determine why honors students at Greenwich University did not take advantage of study abroad. The next step in this research was cycle 2, in which I identified honors students' interests and barriers regarding study abroad.

Chapter 6

Cycle 2 Analysis

Introduction

Cycle 1 of the study focused on understanding honors students' level of intercultural competence in order to determine a need to promote study abroad. Once a need was established, cycle 2 was designed to explore and identify barriers that Greenwich University honors students encountered when deciding whether or not to study abroad. Data collection and analysis of perceived study abroad barriers from cycle 2 was used to create an online study abroad information link and assist in the promotion and speaker recruitment for the study abroad and internship information session.

Cycle 2 of the study utilized quantitative methods for data collection and analysis. The focus of cycle 2 was to identify determinants influencing honors students' decisions to not participate in study abroad. Honors students who had not participated in a study abroad program were identified and sent a survey via email in June 2010. The data collected assisted me in creating an online study abroad information link and promoting a study abroad information session.

The study population in cycle 2 consisted of 44 undergraduate honors students at Greenwich University who had not participated in study abroad. A survey was sent to 301 students, with a total of 44 students completing the survey. This constituted a response rate of 15%. Although the response rate contained in this cycle was low, it is comparable to other online survey administrators (Petchenik & Watermolen, 2011; Yu & Cooper, 1983).

Findings

Part of the study was to find out why many honors students did not participate in study abroad at Greenwich University. To promote study abroad awareness, it is necessary to understand what study abroad barriers exist and offer effective and relevant study abroad information for honors students. A survey instrument was administered to 44 honors students in order to investigate the specific barriers honors students come across when deciding whether to or not to study abroad. In cycle 3, I address these barriers in order to increase awareness in study abroad and promote a study abroad information session.

The survey used in cycle 2, Factors Influencing the Decision To or Not to Study Abroad, is divided in six parts: demographic information, background information, sources of information, institutional factors, obstacles to study abroad, and personal characteristics (See Appendix B). The survey is based on Kasravi's (2009) survey instrument researching the factors influencing students' decisions to study abroad. Permission was received from Kasravi to utilize the survey instrument.

Part 1: Demographic Information

The first part of the survey identifies the demographics of the population. The majority of survey respondents were female, 80%, while 20% were male. Most of the students were born in the United States, with 2% of the students born outside of the United States. About half of the honors students, 52%, have previously traveled to another country, and 48% had never traveled to another country for personal, business, or academic purposes. Of those students who have traveled to another country, 48% were abroad for one week or less, 26% for more than one week but less than 3 weeks, and 26%

traveled abroad for longer than three weeks. Only two of the respondents had lived in another country. Almost all of the students spoke English as a first language, with 5% not speaking English as a first language. Table 8 represents a summary of the honors student demographics by response count and percentage.

Table 8

Demographics (in frequency and percentage)
June 2010 Survey Results
(n=44)

Question:		Frequency	Percent
What is your gender?	male	9	20
	female	35	80
What is your current year in college?	freshman	26	59
	sophomore	5	11
	junior	11	25
	senior	2	5
Have you previously traveled to another country?	yes	23	52
	no	21	48
If yes, for how long?	one week or less	11	48
	more than one week, less than 3 weeks	6	26
	more than 3 weeks	6	26
Have you previously lived in another country?	yes	2	5
	no	42	95
If yes, for how long?	more than one year	1	50
	less than one year	1	50
Is English your first language?	yes	42	95
	no	2	5

Within the survey population, 26 students were freshmen, five were sophomores, 11 were juniors, and two were seniors. The current majors of the participants varied from education, humanities, social sciences, physiological and biological sciences. The following table presents the honors student's majors by response count and percentage.

Table 9

*Academic Majors (in frequency and percentage)
June 2010 Survey Results
(n=44)*

Question:	Frequency	Percent
What is your current major?		
Elementary Education	10	23
Secondary Education	10	23
Biology	8	18
Electrical Engineering	3	7
Chemical Engineering	2	5
English	2	5
Marketing	2	5
Biochemistry	1	2
Business Finance	1	2
Civil Engineering	1	2
Computer Science	1	2
Journalism	1	2
Political Science	1	2
Psychology	1	2

Of the respondents, 23% were elementary education majors and 23% were secondary education majors. The next most popular major was biology with 18%.

Part 2: Background Information

Survey participants were asked to identify the year they were in college at Greenwich University when they first visited the International Center Office. Table 10 represents the response to this question by frequency and percent.

Table 10

*Year First Visited International Center (in frequency and percentage)
June 2010 Survey Results
(n=44)*

Question:	Frequency	Percent
What year were you at [Greenwich] University when you visited the International Center office?		
Freshman	1	2
Sophomore	2	5
Junior	0	0
Senior	0	0
Never	41	93

Part 3: Sources of Information

Part three of the survey identified honors students sources of information with regards to study abroad. Students were asked how they first heard about study abroad and if any friends or family ever studied abroad. Table 11 represents the responses to these survey questions by frequency and percent.

Table 11

Sources of Information (in frequency and percentage)
June 2010 Survey Results
(n=44)

Question		Frequency	Percent
How did you first hear about study abroad?	Academic flyer	0	0
	Study abroad adviser	0	0
	Professor	1	2
	Study abroad flyer	4	9
	Classroom presentation	0	0
	Flyer	0	0
	Family member	10	23
	Email	13	30
	Study abroad website	0	0
	Study abroad catalog	0	0
	Former participant	0	0
	Friend/Significant other	16	36
	Other	0	0
Has anyone in your family studied abroad?	Yes	12	30
	No	27	61
	Don't know	5	9
Have any of your friends previously studied abroad?	Yes	25	57
	No	14	32
	Don't know	5	11

Part 4: Institutional Factors

Part four of the survey asked students to determine the degree to which an institutional factor affected their decision to not study abroad. Students were asked to respond to a four point Likert scale regarding statements about study abroad (Patten, 2001). Though it was not an option on the survey, some students responded “don't know.” Table 12 represents the response to these survey questions by percent.

Table 12

Institutional Factors (in percentages)
June 2010 Survey Results
(n=44)

Question: To what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
Information readily available	0	4	55	41	0
Types and number of study abroad programs offered are good	2	25	71	0	2
Eligibility requirements are not strict	7	52	27	0	14
Good source of funding offered by University	6	29	45	16	5
University encourages international experiences	23	52	23	2	0
Study abroad advisers were helpful in advising about study abroad	9	45	30	5	11
Academic advisers were helpful in advising about study abroad	9	36	39	7	9
Professors encouraged study abroad	16	34	30	11	9
I felt comfortable talking to study abroad advisers about study abroad	11	53	23	2	11
I felt comfortable talking to my academic advisers about study abroad	18	41	30	0	11
I felt comfortable talking to my professors about study abroad	14	52	2	2	11
Overall, I felt that my needs and concerns were met	9	48	30	2	11

According to results, 96% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed that study abroad information is readily available. Additionally, 71% of honors students disagree that the types and numbers of study abroad programs offered are good.

Part 5: Obstacles to Study Abroad

Survey participants were asked to identify the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with specific obstacles they may have encountered when deciding not to study abroad. Table 13 represents the responses to these survey questions by percent.

Table 13

Obstacles to Study Abroad (in percentages)
June 2010 Survey Results
(n=44)

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
Program cost	41	32	18	7	2
Lack of family support	0	20	46	32	2
Study abroad courses not fitting into academic program	32	30	30	4	4
Lack of foreign language knowledge	9	48	34	7	2
Not meeting GPA requirements for program	0	5	34	52	9
Family obligations	7	25	36	32	0
Work/Internship obligations	14	34	27	20	5
Extracurricular obligations	14	27	30	23	6
Study abroad delaying graduation	32	16	36	14	2
Not wanting to be away from home	11	16	45	23	5
Fear of traveling to a new country	7	16	32	43	2
Fear of racism in other countries	0	9	39	52	0
Fear of safety in other countries	5	23	34	36	2
Fear of getting lower grades while abroad	2	21	39	36	2
Citizenship/Passport requirements	7	11	46	34	2
Restrictions on financial aid for study abroad	20	30	30	16	4
Complications with test preparation	7	21	41	27	4

A total of 73% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that program costs were an obstacle to studying abroad. Additionally, 62% agreed or strongly agreed that study abroad does not fit into their academic program, 50% agreed or strongly agreed there are restrictions on financial aid for study abroad, 48% agreed or strongly agreed that studying abroad would delay graduation, and 48% agreed or strongly agreed that work or internship obligations interfered with study abroad.

Part 6: Personal Characteristics

The final part of the survey, Personal Characteristics, included questions regarding adjustment to college, both academically and socially. Students were also asked if they planned to study, work, or volunteer abroad after graduation. Table 14 represents the responses to these questions by percent.

Table 14

Personal Characteristics (in percentages)
June 2010 Survey Results
(n=44)

Question:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?				
I did not have a difficult time meeting University admissions requirements	75	23	0	2
I did not have a difficult time adjusting to the academic rigor of courses	48	45	7	0
Overall, I did not have a difficult time adjusting academically	48	45	7	0
Overall, I did not have a difficult time adjusting socially	36	55	7	2
Question:				
Do you plan to go study, work, or volunteer abroad after graduation?				
Yes	57			
No	43			

Discussion

When examining the cycle 2 survey results, many significant obstacles and barriers were acknowledged by honors students. The findings from the survey indicate that honors students at Greenwich University shared similar opinions in regards to study abroad obstacles to what was identified in the literature review (Open Doors, 1998, 2009, 2013). Of the 44 respondents, 73% strongly agreed or agreed that program costs were an obstacle to study abroad and 50% agreed or strongly agreed that restrictions on financial aid were an obstacle. According to Open Doors (1998, 2009, 2013), a major factor influencing a student's decision to study abroad is cost, especially for public university

students who may not have the resources available for additional higher education costs. In the literature review, Open Doors (1998, 2009, 2013) identify transferring course credits as a financial obstacle to students studying abroad. According to Open Doors (1998, 2009, 2013), U.S. students may encounter difficulties transferring credit from foreign institutions to the home university. Consequently, students must pay for the study abroad experience as well as make-up courses that were not accepted by the home institution or was missed while studying abroad.

Another study abroad obstacle identified by Greenwich University honors students was international programs not fitting into their academic program. Participation in the Honors Concentration at Greenwich University requires students to fulfill specific requirements. Some of these requirements include participating in at least three types of extracurricular activities each semester, attending at least one educational speaker event and one art/theatre/musical event each academic year, completing eight Honors courses to earn the Honors Concentration designation, and participating in 14 hours of service activities per semester (Honors Concentration, 2012). Consequently, a total of 62% agreed or strongly agreed that study abroad does not fit into their academic program, 42% agreed or strongly agreed that extracurricular obligations were an obstacle, and 48% agreed or strongly agreed that work and internship obligations were an obstacle. The literature review states that students enrolled in honors programs often have anxiety and a need to excel in all academic subjects in addition to the added pressure related to the requirements of the honors program (Lowery, 2004). As a result, these characteristics create specific implications for how higher education institutions should provide services

for honors students to ensure growth and development, including overcoming these obstacles to study abroad (Lowery, 2004).

According to results, 96% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed that study abroad information is readily available. A total of 71% of honors students disagreed that the types and numbers of study abroad programs offered are good, and 57% agreed or strongly agreed that lack of foreign knowledge was an obstacle. These institutional barriers and obstacles to study abroad are addressed in the literature review. According to the literature, difficulties in promoting study abroad include the lack of information and few studies documenting the changes students undergo as a result of studying abroad. Therefore, these factors work against widespread acceptance of study abroad, including reluctance of U.S. higher education personnel advocating for study abroad (Open Doors, 1998, 2009, 2013). The lack of information available to students that addresses these barriers and obstacles to study abroad may result in low participation. The findings from cycle 2 assisted me in identifying how honors students received information regarding study abroad, barriers that prevented them from studying abroad, and institutional factors that impacted honors students decision to not study abroad. I used this information in formulating a next step for cycle 3.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The results of the survey indicated that the top reasons honors students do not study abroad is because of program costs, not fitting into their academic program, restrictions on financial aid, delaying graduation, and interference from work or internship obligations. This finding gave me the data needed to answer the research question regarding honors students perceived barriers regarding study abroad. Overall,

57% of honors students did plan to study, work, or volunteer abroad after graduation. This finding provided the data to help answer the question regarding honors students' interest in studying or working abroad. Additionally, the findings from the survey offered insight into how existing programs offered by Greenwich University could be promoted to increase awareness and reduce perceived barriers for honors students. The survey revealed how honors students were informed of study abroad, specifically, the role the institution plays in encouraging study abroad participation. Of the 44 respondents, 36% were first informed about study abroad through friends or significant others, 30% were first informed through email, and 23% were first informed about study abroad from family members. The survey also concluded that 96% of students disagreed or strongly disagreed that study abroad information is readily available. Additionally, 71% of honors students disagree that the types and numbers of study abroad programs offered are good. The results from the Institutional Factors and Obstacles to Study Abroad parts of the survey offered insight into how existing programs offered by Greenwich University can be promoted and how to reduce perceived study abroad barriers for honors students.

The next step in this research, cycle 3, used data collection and analysis from cycle 2 to create an online study abroad information link that at the time of the study did not exist on the honors web page. Additionally, the data from cycle 2 was used to promote a study abroad information session for honors students. Cycle 3 evaluated how the implementation of the study abroad information link and study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness and interest in study abroad.

Chapter 7

Cycle 3 Analysis

Introduction

Cycle 3 involved extensive data collection extending September 2010 – December 2012. Prior to the start of cycle 3, data collected from cycle 2 was used to create an online study abroad information link and conduct a study abroad information session for Greenwich University's undergraduate honors students. The main objective of cycle 3 was to determine how the online study abroad information link and the promotion of the study abroad information session affected awareness of study abroad. I collected both quantitative and qualitative data to gain a better understanding of the effects the study abroad information link and the study abroad information session had on students' awareness of study abroad. The multiple data-collection method contributed to the trustworthiness of the data (Glesne, 2006).

Cycle 3 began in September 2010 and concluded in December 2012. During this cycle, I relocated abroad for one year. While abroad, I took time to reflect on my research, my leadership attributes, and the leadership qualities of others I encountered. It was my goal to incorporate these insights into my research when I returned in an effort to strengthen my practices, beliefs, values, and goals as a leader and researcher. According to Burns (2003), leaders are neither born nor made; instead, leaders evolve from a structure of motivation, values, and goals. Engaging in reflective practice while abroad helped me to strengthen and clarify my values and practices as a leader, and motivated me to accomplish my goals as a researcher.

Study Abroad Information Link Design

Based on the findings from cycle 2, I created an online study abroad information link in September 2010. The main objective of the study abroad link was to provide honors students with relevant online study abroad information. According to cycle 2 data, 96% of Greenwich University honors students disagreed or strongly disagreed that study abroad information was readily available. Therefore, the study abroad link included a student study abroad handbook, step-by-step guide to studying abroad, frequently asked questions, a study abroad application, and a direct link to the International Center home page for more detailed information. Cycle 2 data also revealed that 71% of honors students disagreed that the types and numbers of study abroad programs offered were good. As a result, information was included on the study abroad information link that provided detailed information about where Greenwich University honors students could study abroad, and gave direct links to faculty led programs and Greenwich University's bilateral and direct programs. Also in cycle 2, Greenwich University honors students identified barriers to study abroad. The results of the survey from cycle 2 indicated that the top reasons honors students did not study abroad was because of program costs, because it did not fit into their academic program, because of restrictions on financial aid, because it delayed graduation, and because it interfered with work or internship obligations. These concerns were addressed on the study abroad information link by providing questions and answers to the barriers honors students identified. To supplement this information, a link was provided that explained how honors students could overcome study abroad barriers. I concluded the study abroad information link with a step-by-step guide for getting started with the study abroad process.

Promoting Study Abroad Information Session

Based on the findings from cycle 2, I also promoted a study abroad information session for undergraduate honors students at Greenwich University. Cycle 2 data revealed that honors students first found out about study abroad from friends or significant others (36%), email (30%), family (23%), and study abroad flyers (9%). Therefore, I created a Study Abroad and Internship Information Night flyer that highlighted the benefits to study abroad. With the help of the Greenwich University Honors Director, the Study Abroad and Internship Information Night flyer was emailed to all Greenwich University undergraduate honors students. Additionally, I recruited the study abroad presenters for the information session which included seven honors students who had recently returned from study abroad. In cycle 3, I determined how the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness of study abroad.

Cycle 3 Overview

For cycle 3, I administered surveys and conducted interviews and focus groups to gauge perceptions of the online study abroad information link. Following the initial implementation of the study abroad link in September 2010, I held a focus group with eight undergraduate honors students and surveyed the eight focus group participants. Due to employment changes, I then relocated abroad for one year. When I returned in the spring of 2012, I continued with my data collection. While abroad, a new Honors Concentration director was hired and under her direction, updates and improvements had already been made to the online study abroad information link. With the director's assistance, I continued with my data collection, which included additional surveys, a

focus group, and individual interviews. Since the study abroad information link was updated, the additional data collected from spring 2012 – December 2012 was essential in determining the extent to which honors students examined the online study abroad link and how helpful that link was for students. The results collected from this cycle were used to provide feedback and recommendations to revise and strengthen the online study abroad information link.

Study Abroad Information Link Findings

Prior to September 2010, the Greenwich University Honors Concentration home page did not offer access to study abroad information. The results from cycle 2 were used to create an online study abroad information link accessible through the Honors Concentration home page. The goal for the study abroad link was to provide study abroad information and inform honors students about study abroad programs offered through Greenwich University. In cycle 2, 93% of Greenwich University honors students completing the survey indicated that they never visited the International Center. According to the survey, 96% disagreed or strongly disagreed that study abroad information was readily available. Therefore, my intention was that adding a study abroad information link to the Honors Concentration home page would provide honors students access to study abroad information without having to visit the International Center.

Focus Group 2010 Findings

In order to gather initial data on students' reactions to the study abroad information link, I held a focus group in November 2010. During the focus group a survey was also distributed. The survey consisted of nine questions designed to identify

demographic information and evaluate the online study abroad information link that was added to the Honors Concentration home page in September 2010. Eight undergraduate honors students participated in the focus group and completed the survey. The survey was administered first and the students elaborated on survey questions six, seven, eight, and nine during the focus group.

Part of the survey administered during the focus group requested students to identify background information and the extent to which they visited the Greenwich University International Center's website and the Greenwich University's Honors Concentration home page. Of the eight participants, six were female honors students and two were male honors students. One student was a freshman, two students were sophomores, and the remaining five students were junior honors students at Greenwich University. The eight students' majors included engineering, biology, finance, political science, psychology, history/secondary education, and elementary education/writing. Two students indicated that they visited the International Center home page monthly, five students visited the home page a few times a year, and one student stated that he never visited the home page. The fifth and last background question asked students to identify how often they visited Greenwich University's Honors Concentration home page. Four students stated that they visited the Greenwich University's Honors Concentration home page weekly, three students visited the home page monthly, and one student visited the home page a few times a year.

The remaining four questions on the survey were designed to evaluate the online study abroad information link that was added to the Honors Concentration home page in September 2010. The sixth survey question, which was also discussed during the focus

group, asked students if they understood the writing and meaning of the study abroad information link and asked students for comments or suggestions for improving the link's readability. Participants had the option of selecting a great deal, much, somewhat, little, and not at all, when asked if they understood the link's writing and meaning. Of the eight participants, 12% understood the writing and meaning of the study abroad link a great deal, 63% selected much, and 25% selected somewhat. The sixth survey question was also discussed and elaborated on during the focus group. During the focus group, students offered many suggestions for improving the link's readability and meaning. One student in the focus group commented "cost is often deceiving. It typically costs much more. Have prices listed. Also, for frequently asked questions, have student testimonies." Another student expanded on that comment and stated "I need more cost information and comparisons amongst programs." A student suggested "a link for pictures that were taken by students who have gone abroad." Another student stated "I need more visuals and a link of countries you can go to abroad." Two student suggested more information on how it fits into their academic programs at Greenwich University. One student stated "I need more information on how it fits into my program. Be more specific. How can it fit into specific majors?" Another student added "I'm an engineering major and we have a hard time to study abroad." The most common responses for improving the link's writing and meaning included more information on cost, how it fits into students' academic programs, and including testimonies and pictures from past study abroad participants.

The seventh survey question, which was also discussed during the focus group, asked participants if they were more aware of study abroad after reviewing the study abroad information link. Of the eight students, one student replied a great deal, two

students replied much, four students replied somewhat, and one student replied little. The seventh question was also discussed and elaborated on during the focus group. During the focus group, one student commented that “it didn’t tell me anything I didn’t already know. The link is broad and needs to include student testimonies and pictures.” Another student stated:

I am more aware of study abroad now, and realize that if I am at all interested, I need to start looking into it so I can set my schedule. A timeline would help me so I could save a lot of general education classes. People should know that. Advisors aren’t really versed on the topic.

One student commented:

I had to rule study abroad out because I didn’t start early enough. I didn’t know where to start. This might help other students, but it’s too late for me. I’m a Psychology major and there’s not much to do overseas.

Another student commented “I know more about the processes, the step-by-step. It looks like all the information you need to be more aware of how to study abroad is there.”

The eighth survey question, which was also discussed and elaborated on during the focus group, inquired about participants’ interest in study abroad after reviewing the link. Of the eight students, one student replied a great deal, four students replied much, two students replied somewhat, and one student replied not at all more interested in study abroad. When this question was elaborated on during the focus group, one student stated that “I am more interested. I knew nothing before this. It was my first time on the honors website.” Another student stated that “I always wanted to go. This helped me know the steps I need to take.” One participant stated that “I’ve always been interested, but the link

was not too enthusiastic.” Another student stated that “No, I’m not more interested. There needs to be more information. There’s not enough.” Another student commented “No, I’ve never wanted to study abroad. It’s not my thing.”

The ninth survey question, which was also during discussed and elaborated on during the focus group, asked students what comments or suggestions they had for improving the study abroad information link. Three students suggested making the study abroad link more appealing. One student stated “Make it more appealing. There’s not much specific information like other students experiences who have studied abroad.” Another student suggested “make it more attention grabbing. Make the step-by-step a time line so you know when to start.” A student also offered “change the fonts. Make it more fancy. Put in random interesting facts. Maybe stuff from other students who studied abroad.” A student stated that “I wouldn’t really know what to do with the first step. I still would be asking around about what to do.” A student stated that “There needs to be more examples of cost. Also, how much honors would contribute.” A student expanded on this comment by stating “The link should explain how you get credits in honors program. Explain how it fits into the honors program.”

The focus group and survey helped me understand the extent to which and how the implementation of the online study abroad information availability affected honors students’ awareness of and interest in study abroad. After gathering and analyzing initial data on students’ reactions to the study abroad link, I administered additional surveys, conducted a focus group, and interviewed honors students who participated in study abroad in order to gain a better understanding of the effects the study abroad information

link and the study abroad information session had on student's awareness of study abroad.

Data from Students who Studied Abroad 2012

A total of 14 honors students studied abroad during the 2011-2012 school year. Of those 14 students, six graduated from Greenwich University in May 2012. Of the eight continuing honors students who studied abroad, seven agreed to give a presentation about their experience during the Study Abroad and Internship Information Night. This was the second year the Study Abroad and Internship Information Night was held. According to the Honors Director, there were approximately eight attendees for the 2011 Study Abroad and Internship Night session. The 2012 Study Abroad and Internship Night had over 50 attendees. I asked the seven students presenting at the information night if they would participate in a survey and interview. Five students agreed to complete a survey. The surveys took place in August 2012. Of those five students, three students also volunteered to participate in an interview. The interviews took place in September-November of 2012.

August 2012 Survey

The August 2012 survey consisted of five questions and requested background information, the extent to which they visit Greenwich University's International Center home page and Honors Concentration home page, and how well they understood the content on the study abroad link. Students were also given the opportunity to offer comments or suggestions for improving the study abroad link content.

Of the five students participating in the survey, four were female and one student was male. Four students stated that they were juniors, and one student was a senior. The

students' majors included Spanish/Special Education K-12, Graphic Design, Communication Studies, Public Relations, and Education. Four students stated that they visited the home page a few times a year, and one student never visited Greenwich University's International Center's home page. One student stated he visited the Greenwich University's Honors Concentration home page weekly, one student stated monthly, and three students visited the home page a few times a year.

September-November 2012 Interviews

Three honors students participated in phone interviews in September–November 2012. All participants completed a study abroad program in 2012. The interview questions were semi-structured and the protocol consisted of seven questions. The interview questions were modeled after the five sections of the barriers to study abroad survey instrument administered in cycle 2.

Since there were few honors students who studied abroad during the 2011-2012 school year, and only three honors students participating in the interview, it was important to capture each individual's responses. Reoccurring themes during the interviews included utilizing the International Center for help, starting the process early, and the overall satisfaction with their experiences abroad.

The findings from the interviews indicated that the students shared similar experiences when planning and preparing to study abroad. One student stated "For me, I'm kind of an odd bird because I received a scholarship in order to study abroad. So, I didn't go through the typical process like going to the International Center and trying to investigate what programs were provided so I didn't really have a choice on where I was going to go." Another student said:

Originally, I was going to do an internship in London but it ended up being more than a semester at [Greenwich] which is crazy, so instead of doing that I was kind of really sad about not being able to do it so my Mom was like why don't you just study abroad. So, we started looking for stuff but I had a summer job so we were looking for a shorter program. So, what we did was Google search one month study abroad summer programs and then I ended up finding out about ISA. So, they do one month... they have like summer session.

The third student interviewed stated:

The process seemed very overwhelming at first because it seemed like I had so many different things to do for so many different parties. After going to the International office they gave me a checklist that helped me understand the process. The study abroad provider I chose also had their own checklist so that helped a lot as well.

Collectively, the students interviewed put forth ideas for how Greenwich University, particularly the Honors Concentration, could bring more awareness to study abroad. One student stated:

Definitely the information session with the presentations I thought was great. I think there should definitely be more of those. I'm not sure if there have been more of those in the past, but this is the first one I obviously attended because I was one of the presenters, but I thought that was a great way. Maybe if there was even some type of focus group or some type of club, Honors club, that would get together and discuss where people have traveled or something of that nature, or if there was a section on the Honors website encouraging people, like maybe

students can post images when they studied abroad to try to inspire people that way.

Another student stated:

The reason I guess I did it was because it was able to fit into my schedule. I was told if there's a class you can't take at [Greenwich], you can take it on study abroad and it can count as your Honors course, so it was kind of like, I think that's true. So, if people know that, then I think they will be much more likely to study abroad because the Honors classes are what we make room for, for a lot of people like education majors and engineering majors, they just don't have room for a lot of things in their class schedule, but they make room for one Honors class a semester. So, if they can take that one Honors class during study abroad in the summer or in an intersession, then that frees them up for more courses to have during the semester for their major.

The third student stated:

I think the study abroad fairs the International Center does are a pretty good way of bringing attention to study abroad. From people I've talked to, I've discovered that most people had decided they wanted to study abroad before they even got to college. I think perhaps reaching out to high schools would be a good way to increase awareness and interest.

Each student discussed how they discovered study abroad at Greenwich

University. One student stated:

Well, like I said, it was through this scholarship through the [Greenwich] Arts Department. That's how I first heard about study abroad. And then I said, wow, this is something I would love to do. That's why I went after it.

Another student commented:

I heard about it originally at the first open house that I ever went to like before I was even at [Greenwich]. My parents talked to one of the ambassadors who had gone on a semester at sea, so I was looking into that for a while. It was super expensive and a lot of time. It was like right away I heard about it at [Greenwich] and my parents were like you need to do this.

The third student stated, "I learned about [Greenwich] University's study abroad opportunities through the study abroad fair the International Center regularly holds. They advertise these fairs on their webpage and through email and have them in convenient locations for students." Students described what made them interested in participating in study abroad. One student stated:

The scholarship was for me to study abroad for one semester at an art school in Florence, Italy. There were requirements for the scholarship. You had to have certain things taken care of before you left. But then the great part about my international school was that all of my credits were transferable back to [Greenwich]. So, I ended up getting credit for all of the courses I took when I was in Italy, which was really good. So, that helped.

Another student commented:

My bucket list is to go to every continent, even Antarctica, so I have a real passion for traveling and I figured that now would be a great time to do it

especially with my parents still being able to help me out financially and stuff like that. And, I thought it would be a good opportunity. I would love to go back again. As soon as I came back I started looking at new programs and my dad told me I had to stop.

The third student interviewed stated that “I’ve been interested in studying abroad since I was little when my mom told me stories of her studies in the UK.”

In addition to describing how they found out about study abroad and what caught their interest, students described things they would do differently before or during the study abroad process. One student stated:

I would do it again. I wouldn’t say differently. Had I had prior knowledge about what I needed to do in advance to study abroad, that would have helped. I had to get my passport quickly because I had less than four months in order to get prepared to go. So, that would have been nice if I just had more time. I would definitely encourage other students looking to do this... go get all that stuff taken care of and then there will be less stress for you.

Another student stated:

I don’t really think so. I think I would just nap less while I was there. I had class five days a week and then I napped afterwards instead of going to museums and stuff. I would definitely take less naps.

The third student stated:

I would have started the process sooner. I got my application process done very last minute, to the point of panic and requesting deadline extensions from

GlobaLinks. I did it so late I missed all of the scholarship deadlines, which I was rather unhappy about.

The findings from the interviews indicate that the overall study abroad process was positive for the students. One student stated:

It was definitely eye opening for me and it helped me mature as a person actually because I had never studied abroad or gone overseas or gone out of the country, so it helped me become more independent, that's for sure. So, there's definitely those aspects.

Another student stated:

It was great, it was wonderful. Like everyone was so helpful. [Barbara] and the International Center were so helpful. It was so easy. I guess in the beginning people don't know what really to do and then as soon as you get into it like step your foot in, they tell you everything. Like, you don't really need to know... you don't need to do anything by yourself so it was great.

The third student stated:

The process was a bit hurried and stressful for me personally because I did everything so last minute. It was a bit confusing at times. However, my contacts both in the International center and at GlobaLinks were always there to help with everything I needed and were very patient, understanding, and willing to compromise.

Freshmen/Mentor Survey Findings

In September 2012, a survey was administered to 76 incoming honors freshmen and 45 honors students' mentors at an ice cream social orientation session. The objective

of the seven question survey was to determine the extent to which incoming honors freshmen and mentors examined the online study abroad link, how they first heard about study abroad, whether they planned to study abroad, and whether they were aware that honors students receive honors course credits for studying abroad. Tables 15-20 represent the responses to these survey questions by percent.

Table 15

September 2012 Freshmen/Mentor Survey
(*n = Freshmen = 76, Mentors = 45*)

Question:	
Are you an incoming freshman or mentor?	
<hr/>	
Freshmen	76
Mentors	45

Table 16

September 2012 Freshmen/Mentor Survey (in frequency)
(n= Freshmen= 76, Mentors= 45)

Question:	Freshmen	Mentors
How did you first hear about study abroad? (check all that apply):		
Academic flyer	11	7
Study abroad adviser	3	4
Professor	5	22
Fair	3	20
Classroom presentation	5	7
Flyer	17	18
Family member	18	9
Email	14	40
Study abroad website	13	4
Study abroad catalog	4	4
Former participant	14	11
Friend/Significant other	14	20
Other	9	11

Table 17

September 2012 Freshmen/Mentor Survey (in percentages)
(n= Freshmen= 76, Mentors= 45)

Question:	Yes	No	Maybe
Do you plan to study abroad while an undergraduate student at [Greenwich] University?			
Freshmen	55	37	8
Mentors	27	73	0

Table 18

September 2012 Freshmen/Mentor Survey (in percentages)
(n= Freshmen= 76, Mentors= 45)

Question:	Yes	No
Did you know Honors students receive Honors course credits for studying abroad?		
Freshmen	42	58
Mentors	71	29

Table 19

September 2012 Freshmen/Mentor Survey (in percentages)
(n= Freshmen= 76, Mentors= 45)

Question:	Freshmen	Mentors
How often do you visit [Greenwich] University's International Center home page?		
Daily	1	0
Weekly	3	0
Monthly	11	4
A few times a year	14	20
Never	71	76

Table 20

September 2012 Freshmen/Mentor Survey (in percentages)
(n= Freshmen= 76, Mentors= 45)

Question:	Freshmen	Mentors
How often do you visit [Greenwich] University's Honors Concentration home page?		
Daily	0	0
Weekly	16	9
Monthly	34	27
A few times a year	28	44
Never	22	20

Table 21

September 2012 Freshmen/Mentor Survey (in percentages)
(n= Freshmen=76, Mentors= 45)

Question:	Freshmen	Mentors
How often do you visit [Greenwich] University's Honors Concentration study abroad link?		
Daily	0	0
Weekly	3	0
Monthly	7	2
A few times a year	18	22
Never	72	76

Focus Group 2012

Also in September 2012, a group of 14 undergraduate honors students volunteered to participate in a focus group. The focus group followed the Study Abroad and Internship Night information session. Although the group was large, it was beneficial because it enabled me to interact with many honors students and elicit information on a range of norms and opinions over a relatively short time. The objective of the focus group

was to identify honors students' exposure to study abroad, their knowledge of the benefits and requirements of study abroad, barriers they encountered, and the extent to which they had examined the online study abroad link. The student sample consisted of nine females and five males. All students responded to six questions.

The findings from the focus group indicated that students have had exposure to the concept of study abroad. Of the student population represented in the sample, eight identified family members responsible for exposing them to study abroad. One student commented that "I've had family who has benefited from a study abroad program. My cousins did it during their college years." Another student stated that "my cousin from Austria studied abroad in England this summer and said it was the best thing ever, so I want to do it." Expanding on this, another student stated:

Study abroad is something my parents have talked about for me. My family travels extensively. Not for study abroad, but for vacations. My parents have always said since I was five, if you get a chance to study abroad, you should go out and see the world and see new stuff.

Three students identified a friend as the person who introduced them to study abroad.

One student stated:

No one in my family has really ever been abroad, but I have a best friend in high school who went to Africa over the summer. It got me really interested in doing that. Ever since then, I've been really interested in leaving the country and seeing different perspectives.

A total of three students stated that they had very little exposure to study abroad. One student claimed "I really haven't had any exposure until tonight's information session.

It's cool to hear it's more in reach than I thought it was." Another student stated, "I haven't really been talked to about it or shown it really is possible to go, so it's really cool to hear it's something you can do."

The findings from the focus group also indicated that the students shared similar opinions as other authors have found regarding the benefits of study abroad (Bates, 1997; Cushner & Mahon, 2002; Emert, 2008). The most popular response regarding the benefits of study abroad was learning about a new culture and being in a new environment. One student stated "I just want to see different cultures." Two more students agreed with that comment, and one student added "I want to meet new people, learn a new language, and be immersed in the culture." One student stated a benefit to student abroad was "to get a new perspective on life" and another student said "I want to build up my resume by studying abroad."

Similar to the findings found in the literature, several factors work against widespread acceptance of study abroad, including cost and course restrictions (Open Doors, 1998, 2009, 2013). Students identified numerous barriers and constraints to studying abroad. Specifically, they identified things that made going abroad difficult for honors students. Twelve participants identified money as study abroad barrier. Participants also identified their parents as a barrier to study abroad. Seven students stated their parents would make it difficult for them to study abroad. One student stated "My mom worries too much," and another student added "My Mom's a nervous wreck." Two students stated that course constraints and scheduling were barriers to studying abroad. One student stated that "some honors courses are only offered in the fall or spring." Another student commented that "finding time in my schedule" was a constraint.

When working together with the honors director to create questions for the focus group, the director expressed interest in knowing whether honors students were aware of the requirements for honors study abroad participants. Three students were aware of the requirements. One student stated “I didn’t know there were requirements. I thought you could just go abroad, do your class work, and be done. I am guessing honors students have to give a presentation to other students like tonight.” Another student added “How would we know what the requirements were? Since we are honors students, are they different for us?” Another student stated that “My friend just got back from studying abroad and she’s an honors student. She said she found out she had to write a paper and give a presentation after she came back.” Additionally, nine honors students were aware of the funds available to honors students who participate in study abroad. One student commented “They say you get funding, but they don’t tell you how much or if you have to do something to get it.” Another student said “if my parents knew I’d get money to study abroad, they might let me go.”

Since the support that undergraduate students receive from their higher education institutions is a major factor in their adjustment and growth (Noldon & Sedlacek, 1998), it was imperative to identify the extent to which these students accessed the study abroad information link on the honors home page. Five students stated that they accessed the link at least once a week. Four students stated that they access the study abroad link about once a month. The remaining five students stated that they did not know a study abroad link existed on the honors home page. One student stated “I accessed the link to look for engineering programs abroad.” Another student commented “I saw the link on the honors

home page and wanted to see what it was all about. I'm still confused about how to start it, like who do I talk to?"

Since participation in study abroad immerses undergraduate students, widens their worldviews, and strengthens their cultural awareness (Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Jurgens & McAuliffe, 2004; Le Roux, 2002; Martin, 1987) students identified what they need to hear or learn before they would participate in study abroad. Five students stated that they wanted to know more about course work abroad. One student stated "I want to know if it relates to my major." Another student added "I want to know if the courses match the level of Greenwich University or if they are better." One student was concerned that "it might mess up my major." While another student wanted to know "how will I benefit from the courses?" Three students wanted to know more about financing study abroad. A student commented "if you are spending all of this money, I want to make sure I enjoy it." Additionally, one student wanted "more information for my parents" and one student wanted to know "what the living arrangements would be."

Throughout the focus group, students were eager to express their opinions and listen to those of others. The responses to the questions helped to identify the group's exposure to study abroad, their knowledge of the benefits and honors requirements of study abroad, barriers they have encountered, and the extent to which they had examined the online study abroad link.

Perceptions of Study Abroad Link

The main goal of the study abroad link created in September 2010 was to offer honors students relevant online study abroad information accessible on the honors concentration home page. The link provided students with a student study abroad

handbook, step-by-step guide to studying abroad, frequently asked questions, a study abroad application, and a direct link to the International Center home page for more detailed information. After reviewing data collected from cycle 3, it was clear that additional information on the study abroad link is necessary, as well as additional methods of getting study abroad information to the students. Overall, honors students are not accessing the study abroad link. Data suggests that additional information provided on the study abroad link and other methods of getting study abroad information to the students may increase honors students' awareness and interest in study abroad.

Surveys and focus groups were utilized to collect data about the study abroad information link. During the November 2010 focus group, 75% of participants understood the writing and meaning of the link a great deal or much. The remaining 25% selected somewhat. A similar question on the August 2012 survey asked five students how well they understood the content on the study abroad link. Two students replied much, two students replied somewhat, and one student replied not at all. A follow-up question on the August 2012 survey asked students how much additional information they would like after reviewing the link. Three students responded much more information and two students responded somewhat more information. The data suggests the study abroad link needs to be revised to include more study abroad information that adheres to the needs of the honors students. Additionally, other methods need to be utilized for getting study abroad information to the students because students are not accessing the study abroad link. Data collected in cycle 3 suggests honors students would like additional information on the study abroad link and offers student recommendations for improvements.

Data from cycle 3 offer suggestions for improving the study abroad link, along with requests for additional information to be provided on the link. On the August 2012 survey, students responded to an open-ended question that requested additional comments or suggestions for improving the study abroad information link. One student wrote, “The website could be better organized and concise in general. Places- where? Add links to programs.” Another student responded, “Include better financial opportunities and clarify requirements. Put information in multiple places.” The students’ responses correlate to research found in the literature review. Several factors work against widespread acceptance and participation in study abroad, including cost and lack of information (Open Doors, 1998, 2009, 2013). The data collected from the surveys and focus group suggests honors students want more detailed information online and through other sources. Further developing the study abroad information link to include financial information, locations where students can study abroad, and programs offered, as well as providing other means of access to study abroad information may further increase honors students’ awareness and interest in study abroad.

Perceptions of Study Abroad Information Session

In addition to the online study abroad information link, the study abroad information session aimed to provide more access to study abroad information. Providing more access to study abroad may affect honors students’ awareness and interest in study abroad. Data collected from cycle 3 helped to answer the research question: To what extent and how has the implementation of the study abroad information session affected honors students’ awareness of and interest in study abroad?

The findings from the quantitative and qualitative data collected in cycle 3 suggest that honors students shared similar views to what was found in the literature review. The main goal of cycle 3 was to determine how the online study abroad link and information session affected honors students' awareness and interest in study abroad. With a total higher education enrollment approximately 20 million students, researchers agree that although there is a large unmet need to increase U.S. students' international experience, there is an even greater challenge to ensure study abroad is accessible to all U.S. students in higher education (Obst et al., 2007). Enhancing the existing online study abroad information link with the suggestions put forth by the honors students may help in increasing accessibility to study abroad. The goal of creating an online study abroad information link and the study abroad information session was to provide more access to study abroad, resulting in more awareness and interest in study abroad.

Conclusion and Recommendations for Cycle 3

The surveys, focus groups, and interviews from cycle 3 contained valuable feedback and recommendations for revising and strengthening the online study abroad information link. The data gathered from the honors students participating in cycle 3 are being used to offer suggestions for revising and strengthening the online study abroad link. Cycle 4 is a follow-up to cycle 3. Cycle 4 consisted of drafting feedback and recommendations for the honors director for revising and strengthening the study abroad link. In addition to website recommendations, other suggestions were offered for promoting study abroad to increase awareness and interest. Cycle 4 also answers the research question about my leadership: What leadership traits did I develop and utilize in my role as a catalyst for promoting honors students' awareness of study abroad? I use

journal entries, interviews, and self-administered surveys to reflect on my leadership strategies. The next chapter, chapter 8, provides an overview of my research and reflects on change that occurred. Each research question is examined and literature is revisited. Making connections and reflecting on my research as a whole helped me to see how my vision evolved and the overall significance of my work. Cycle 4 follows in chapter 9.

Chapter 8

The Big Picture

Since action research provided the foundation for my study, I was able to systematically research, reflect, and create new cycles as I progressed through my project. As my research developed, I reflected on the process and was able to rethink and redesign my plan accordingly. Being absorbed into the specific components of each cycle was beneficial in achieving my goal of raising awareness in study abroad. As I concluded my research, it was equally important and valuable to look at the study as a whole, in order to not lose sight of the big picture: creating meaningful change and growing as a leader. In chapter 8, I reflect on my research as a whole and the change implemented by revisiting literature, my espoused leadership traits, and my research questions.

From the Beginning

Early on, I commented numerous times in my journal about my past experiences studying abroad and how these experiences abroad shaped my research. In my journal, I wrote, “Excited, overwhelmed, and determined. Want other students to experience what I did. Want this to work, but am having a hard time getting others on board.” As I reflected on my journal entries from fall 2009, I saw a pattern of determination and enthusiasm as I tried to get approval from others. In September 2009, I wrote, “Always need a plan. I need to get better at being okay with the unknown and be more flexible.” In October 2009, I commented, “Feel more confident. I know that if I am turned down, I’ll find another path to take.” As a transformational leader, I possessed inspirational motivation and was optimistic about future research goals (Bass, 1997). However, I was having difficulty engaging others toward committed and empowered participation.

Along with feeling excited and determined, I also encountered many obstacles when trying to find a department that identified with a need to raise study abroad awareness. Similar to literature documenting difficulties promoting study abroad in higher education, few studies verify that study abroad students undergo change, and there is little recognition of future benefits from studying abroad (Open Doors, 1998, 2009, 2013). I was discouraged during the initial stages of my research because I could not clearly define a need for my project. These setbacks made me question my ability to effectively lead my research. Rereading my espoused leadership reminded me of my experiences that brought me to where I am today, the leader I wanted to be, and theories of effective leadership. In my journal, I wrote, “Feeling discouraged because Dr. [X] did not get back to me yet. I need to realize that this is my project that I am putting my heart into. Not someone else’s project to worry about and put first. Just need to find other avenues to get things moving.” In a journal entry, I wrote, “Leadership qualities I need to focus on: Getting people on board, how to work around resistance, keep enthusiastic.” Opening new doors, taking different paths, and redirecting my research were things I did frequently. Reflecting on my journals and my research, I recognize that my persistence and positive attitude remained consistent.

It was not until I collected data from cycles 1 and 2 that I gained the confidence and data I needed to tackle difficult issues I encountered in my research. Previously, a faculty member at Greenwich University declined to pursue my research, and stated in an email, “There has been no research presented concerning why there is a need for [Greenwich] University students. For example, what existing problems would this change address?” At the time, I felt deflated, confused, and lost. However, as I reflected on my

research as a whole, I realized this was a turning point for me. All along, I acknowledged and wrote about how I was going to get others on board, elevate others to a higher level. However, I lacked clarity and detail in my vision.

Finally, in April 2010, the honors department director at Greenwich University agreed to let me work with honors students in an effort to raise awareness in study abroad. Prior to meeting with the honors concentration director to discuss my research ideas, my dissertation chair reminded me to be clear and precise with the details of my research, and to be organized and prepared when presenting the information. Her recommendations, similar to Fullan's (2001) for change, helped me to move forward with my research. On June 7, 2010, I wrote,

When trying to implement change, particularly as an outsider, it is critical to utilize Fullan's 4 key factors in effective leadership. I need to establish (or be able to prove) a making a difference sense of purpose. I failed to state a clear purpose when attempting my first change project. I did not instill clarity and detail in my vision and promote a shared commitment to explicit values, as Fullan states. Failure to do this caused those in leadership positions to question my motives and purpose, thus rejecting my topic and participants. Also, I did not communicate a sensible vision. After revisiting my actions and my failed change project, I realize I am now more knowledgeable and able to face challenges in the future. I realize the value of reflective practice, self-reflection, and learning from mistakes and failures. Ready to move forward.

Moving forward with a positive attitude full of hope is exactly what I did. I continued to reflect on my research as a whole as I looked at the change implemented by revisiting research questions one, two, three, four, and five.

Research Question #1

In order to identify a need to increase honors' students' awareness of study abroad at Greenwich University, I first explored honors students' levels of intercultural competence. Researchers agree that study abroad programs offer students cross-cultural immersion experiences that integrate travel with academic experiences, resulting in students gaining a global perspective (Cushner & Mahon, 2002). Although numerous researchers (Hollins & Guzman; Jurgens & McAuliffe, 2004; Le Roux, 2002; Martin, 1987) identify many benefits of study abroad, other researchers critique study abroad programs (Bolen, 2001; Hayden, 1976; Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002; Wilkinson, 1998). Concerns for study abroad include the number of possible combinations of programs, host culture, and participant factors (Bolen, 2001; Hayden, 1976; Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002; Wilkinson, 1998), yet as a result of studying abroad, students are also provided with intellectual and cultural opportunities that can positively affect personal development (Bates, 1997; Emert, 2008). In cycle 1, I administered the IDI to 40 Greenwich University honors students. Cycle 1 helped answer my first research question: What levels of intercultural competence do honors students have? The findings from cycle 1 indicated that, collectively, honors students had a low intercultural competence level. Similarly, a review of my journal, interviews with honors students, and focus groups throughout my research confirmed the data collected from the IDI. Reflecting on my research as a whole, reoccurring themes were relevant. Honors

students at Greenwich University possessed many of the essential components identified by researchers (Bennett & Bennett, 2004; Martin & Nakayaman, 2004; Ting-Toomey, 1999). These characteristics included motivation, knowledge, and effectiveness in realizing personal goals. However, the majority of honors students at Greenwich University lacked opportunities to utilize these essential components of intercultural competence in an intercultural environment, such as study abroad provides. For example, one student commented prior to starting the September 2010 focus group that “study abroad is on my bucket list, but I just can’t find the time or money to do it right now.” Similarly, a student commented during the focus group that “this is a good way to get the ball rolling; study abroad is something I’ve always wanted to do.” In a journal entry I wrote following the study abroad information session in September 2012, I wrote, “Amazed by the students’ enthusiasm and willingness to participate in a focus group. Students were genuinely interested in what I had to say and were eager to share their stories.” Collectively, the honors students at Greenwich University whom I interacted with were motivated and intelligent with a clear understanding of their goals. Yet, the majority of Greenwich University honors students that I worked with had not participated in a study abroad program. As a result of honors students’ low IDI scores and data from journals, interviews, and focus groups, I established a need to promote honors student’s awareness in study abroad. Therefore, my next step would be to identify honors students’ interests and perceived barriers in study abroad.

Research Question #2

The next step in my research, exploring honors students’ interest and perceived barriers regarding study abroad, was a necessary step in determining why honors students

at Greenwich University decided not to study abroad. Similar to literature citing few higher education students studying abroad each year (Wheeler, 2000), only an estimated 2.5% of Greenwich University honors students study abroad each year. Therefore, part of this study was to find out why many Greenwich University honors students do not study abroad. The second research question was designed to answer this question and states: What are honors students' interests and perceived barriers regarding studying outside of the United States. Data from a survey administered in cycle 2 and focus groups identified obstacles students encountered when deciding not to study abroad.

The results from the survey distributed in June 2010 to 44 undergraduate honors students at Greenwich University closely related to data from focus groups and literature (Open Doors, 1998; Wilkinson, 1998). The survey revealed that the top reasons honors students do not study abroad is because of program costs, not fitting into academic program, restrictions on financial aid, delaying graduation, and interference from work or internship obligations. These reasons have also been cited in the literature (Open Doors, 1998; Wilkinson, 1998). Reflecting on my journal entries, it did not come as a surprise to me that honors students were not studying abroad due to program costs. In a November 2009 journal entry, I wrote:

Just read a newspaper article about college students rethinking foreign study. Article suggests that over the last year, there have probably been some very important dinner table discussions about using the resources a family has. Study abroad participation is falling because students have to use all their financial aid for the regular semesters. Students are interested in studying abroad, but every one of them asks about funding.

In April 2010, I met with the director of sponsored programs at Greenwich University to request information about applying for a faculty-led study abroad grant. My journal entries reveal that I was concerned about study abroad costs and believed they could be a barrier to study abroad.

Data collected from cycle 2, along with journal entries, helped me to answer the second research question and identify the top reasons honors students at Greenwich University do not study abroad. Using data collection and analysis from cycle 2, I created an online study abroad link and promoted a study abroad information session for honors students. Research questions four and five sought to answer how the implementation of the online study abroad information session and the study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness of study abroad.

Research Question #3

Through surveys, focus groups, and interviews, I collected the data I needed to answer research question three: How can existing programs offered by Greenwich University be promoted to increase awareness and reduce perceived barriers for honors students? Data suggests that although a small percentage of students were accessing the study abroad information link, additional information provided on the study abroad information link is necessary and may increase honors students' awareness and interest in study abroad. Along with adding more information to the study abroad information link, it is necessary to supplement with additional information sources since many honors students report they do not access the online link. Perhaps a Greenwich University honors study abroad Facebook page and an Instagram account could be utilized. Developing a Facebook page devoted to honors students and study abroad and a study abroad

Instagram account can help increase traffic to the study abroad information link. For example, including the study abroad information link in the Instagram profile and including the link in the description when uploading pictures allows the study abroad information link to be more accessible. Similarly, a Greenwich University honors study abroad Facebook account can provide updated content, a discussion board for students, and a link that directly accesses the study abroad information link. Incorporating social networking platforms with a regularly updated study abroad information link will encourage Greenwich University honors students to stay connected and share ideas that may increase study abroad awareness and accessibility.

Research Questions #4 and #5

During cycle 3, I used data collected from cycle 2 to create an online study abroad information link and promoted a study abroad information session for Greenwich University honors students. Furthermore, I investigated how the online study abroad information link and study abroad information session affected awareness of study abroad. Through surveys, focus groups, and interviews, I collected the data I needed to answer research question four: To what extent and how has the implementation of the online study abroad information availability affected honors students' awareness of and interest in study abroad? I was also able to answer research question five: To what extent and how has the implementation of the study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness of and interest in study abroad?

Online Study Abroad Information

The study abroad information link, implemented in September 2010, aimed to provide honors students with relevant study abroad information. Since 96% of Greenwich University honors students disagreed or strongly disagreed that study abroad information was readily available, I believed online study abroad information may increase honors students' awareness and interest of study abroad. Following the implementation of the study abroad information link on the Honors Concentration home page, I collected data through surveys and focus groups to determine the extent to which the availability of the online study abroad information affected honors students awareness of and interest in study abroad.

During the November 2010 focus groups, students commented about the recently implemented study abroad information link. One student stated that "I am more aware of study abroad now, and realize that if I am at all interested, I need to start looking into it so I can set my schedule." Another student commented, "I know more about the process, the step-by-step. It looks like all the information you need to be more aware of how to study abroad is there." Additionally, another student stated, "I am more interested. I knew nothing before this. It was my first time on the honors website." During the September 2012 focus group, five of the 14 participants stated they accessed the study abroad link at least once a week, and four students stated that they accessed the study abroad link about once a month. During the September 2012 focus group, one student stated, "I saw the link on the honors concentration home page and wanted to see what it was all about. I'm still confused about how to start it, like who do I talk to? Although the study abroad link appeared to be affecting honors students' awareness of and interest in study abroad, it

was evident that the honors students desired more information. For example, during the November 2010 focus group, one commented that “it didn’t tell me anything that I didn’t already know. The link is broad and needs to include student testimonies and pictures.” Another student stated, “No, I am not more interested. There needs to be more information. There’s not enough.” The 2012 Freshmen/Mentor Survey revealed how often students access the study abroad information link. A total of 72% freshmen respondents had never visited the study abroad information link, and 76% mentors had never visited the study abroad information link.

Collectively, the data collected from surveys and focus groups suggested that the study abroad information link was affecting honors students’ awareness and interest in study abroad, however, additional information on the study abroad link was desired by the students.

Study Abroad Information Session

Similar to my goal for the study abroad information link, the study abroad information session aimed to increase honors students’ awareness of and interest in study abroad. I believed that in addition to providing study abroad information online, additional access to information through a study abroad information session may affect honors students’ awareness of and interest in study abroad. Data collected in cycle 3 through a focus group, interviews, and journal entries suggested that the study abroad information session did increase honors students’ awareness of and interest in study abroad.

Following the study abroad information session in September 2012, 14 students participated in a focus group. One student stated, “I really haven’t had any exposure until

tonight's information session. It's cool to hear it's more in reach than I thought it was." Another student commented, "I haven't really been talked to about it or shown it really is possible to go, so it's really cool to hear it's something you can do." Similarly, during an interview with a student who recently studied abroad, the student stated, "definitely the information session with the presentations I thought was great. I think there should be more of those. A similar theme was identified in my journal entries. Following the study abroad information session, I wrote, "Students were eager to express their experiences to study abroad. The student audience asked many questions, and the presenters appeared anxious and excited to answer them. I didn't expect so many students to turn out for the session!" Collectively, the data suggests that the study abroad information session affected honors students' awareness of and interest in study abroad.

The main objective of cycle 3 was to determine how the online study abroad information link and the study abroad information session affected honors students awareness of and interest in study abroad. The data collected helped to answer the fourth and fifth research questions. The study abroad information link and the study abroad information session positively affected honors students' awareness of and interest in study abroad. However, reflecting on data from surveys, focus groups, interviews, and journal entries, I believe regularly enhancing and updating the online study abroad information link and providing more study abroad information sessions will offer honors students increased access to study abroad, resulting in heightened awareness of and interest in study abroad.

Chapter 9

Cycle 4 Leadership Theories in Use

As I concluded my study, I explored my leadership during this action-based dissertation (Glesne, 2006) and compared it to my espoused theory described in Chapter 2. My leadership throughout this study, frequently referred to as one's theory-in-use (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004), focused on transformational and moral leadership. Along with these leadership theories, I incorporated emotional intelligence and reflective practice to help me refine my leadership style and practices. In cycle 4, I compared the similarities and differences between my espoused leadership described in Chapter 2 and my theory-in-use. Cycle 4 answered the following research question about my leadership throughout my dissertation: What leadership traits did I develop and utilize in my role as a catalyst for promoting honors students' awareness of study abroad?

Multiple data collection methods were used to answer the leadership question. First, I reread Chapter 2 in order to recall the type of leadership skills I hoped to possess during my study. Next, I compared it to data I collected from faculty and student interviews, journals, emails, and the results of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) (Appendix H) and Emotional Intelligence Skills Assessment (EISA) (Appendix K). The primary method of analysis for the data collected was a continuous coding process. First, analysis of data began with open coding (Creswell, 1998). All tape-recorded interviews, journal entries, and emails were systematically organized, coded for themes, and summarized. Open-coding analysis frequently leads to "refining and specifying any borrowed extant concepts" (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Therefore, following open-coding analysis was the analysis of axial coding. The goal of axial coding is to make conceptual

connections between a category and its subcategories. For axial coding, I selected the core category, systematically related it to other categories, and validated those established relationships through literature. The selected codes and identified categories were sorted, compared, and contrasted until all data was accounted for (Creswell, 1998; Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

A goal throughout my study was to develop into an effective leader. Initially, I envisioned assessing my leadership against a competency model and attacking my weaknesses with a development plan. However, after revisiting Chapter 2 along with the data collected throughout my study, I realized that leadership involves transformation. It is not “doing” leadership that ultimately measures one’s effectiveness, it is figuring out who one is and who one wants to be as leader. In Chapter 8, I examine my past, present, and future leadership traits in order to discover the true meaning of who I am as a leader.

Espoused Theories of Leadership

As I began my dissertation, I described my espoused leadership theories. These beliefs and intentions described in my leadership platform are what I believed to best describe my leadership style at the time. However, it was not until I completed and reflected on my data that I confirmed some of my espoused leadership styles and practices, and acknowledged change or deficit in others I previously prescribed to.

My leadership platform focused on my espoused theories of transformational (Bass, 1997; Burns, 2003) and moral leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992; Walker & Donlevy, 2005). In addition to my two main theories, I also integrated emotional intelligence and reflective practice to help me understand my past experiences as a learner and leader (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). I identified with these theories after examining

incidences from my past. I was able to piece together patterns of lessons learned that helped me define what was important to me as a leader. Recounting these lessons in Chapter 2 helped me to define my values, principles, and motivations. I became self-aware as a learner and aspiring leader. As I moved further along in my research, I realized that my values, principles, and motivations have driven my behaviors. They became my compass throughout this dissertation, and guided my decisions as a researcher and leader. Although I was able to connect with specific leadership theories, putting these theories into practice was challenging. Reflecting on open coding and axial coding analysis from journals, feedback from others, and self-assessments, I realized that not only was my action-based research a cyclical process (Creswell, 2003), but my leadership style and practices needed to be constantly implemented, reflected on, and adjusted when needed.

In Chapter 2, I described Fullan's (2001) framework for change. I relied on Fullan's framework for change when initiating my research, however, I did not revisit these strategies when I initially encountered obstacles and sudden change during the beginning phase of my study. According to Fullan (2001, pp. IX-XIII), "Leadership required in a culture of change is not simple and straightforward. We are living in chaotic conditions. Leaders must be able to operate under complex, uncertain circumstances." Throughout my research, I encountered obstacles and changes that required me to redirect my research. These obstacles and changes required me to alter the path of the research. These obstacles and changes included organizational leadership personnel changes, relocating abroad for one year, and altering my research project goals due to evolving organizational needs. Although I attempted to address these challenges, I did not

continuously and sometimes effectively instill Fullan's (2001) framework for change. As a result, I encountered resistance that may have been avoidable had I consistently reflected on and implemented Fullan's (2001) framework for change. For example, Fullan (2001) identifies four key factors in effective leadership. First, leaders need to have a clearly stated "making a difference" sense of purpose. Reflecting on my journal, I realize that I did not clearly define a need for change. As a result, I was met with resistance and lack of support. Fullan (2001) also asserts that leaders need to empower others to act on a vision and gather a guiding coalition in order to cultivate effective change. Without a clearly defined "making a difference" sense of purpose and vision, I was unable to gather a guiding coalition that supported and valued my research. Although I did not initially reflect on Fullan's (2001) framework for change, I reread my journal entries and my espoused leadership, recognized a pattern that was not working for me, and changed gears. I recalled the value of Fullan's (2001) framework for change, and implemented those strategies as I moved forward. As a result, I achieved the support I needed from a Greenwich University department that enabled me to continue with my research.

As I reflected on my open coding and axial coding data from journals, feedback from others, and self-assessments, I confirmed my leadership actions and theories-in-use (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Reflecting on and learning from the obstacles and changes I encountered during this study, including organizational resistance, leads to transformation (Burns, 1978). This included figuring out who I am and who I want to be as a leader. According to Fullan (2001), building on differences and respecting resisters enhances the learning process and an organization's effectiveness. As I explored my

theories-in-use, I sought to answer my last research question: What leadership traits did I develop and utilize in my role as a catalyst for promoting honors students' awareness of study abroad? I utilized my espoused leadership theories, transformational and moral, as well as emotional intelligence and reflective practice, to explore myself as a leader and how my leadership shaped the change project.

Theory-In-Use: Transformational Leadership

According to Burns (1978), transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers engage in a reciprocated process of elevating one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. In chapter two, I espoused to use transformational leadership when engaging and promoting students to be the best they can be in order to continue to advance academically and grow personally. I acknowledged the significant role education plays in our society, and the great importance of an educator's leadership styles and practices. When reviewing my journal entries, interview data, and leadership inventories, I identified specific aspects of transformational leadership.

As a transformational leader, I promoted amiable interactions amongst students, staff, and myself that supported teamwork and collaboration (Burns, 2003; Walker & Donlevy, 2005). For instance, GH, a faculty member at Greenwich University who worked with honors students, commented in her interview, "What I particularly liked about your project was that you wanted to understand it from the students' point of view. You wanted to know their reactions and perceptions of this idea." GH also commented, "What I liked about you was that you were very sensitive to how people may react to what you were trying to do. Whenever you were presenting your ideas you were always thinking about the listener's perceptions of what you were saying." Additionally, JH, an

administrative assistant at Greenwich University who worked with honors students commented, “We were both on the same page. You were clear. And I think I was clear. So, we understood each other.” During an interview with an honors student who had recently studied abroad, the student stated, “I think it’s great that you’re raising awareness of study abroad and reaching out to the students. We need more of this. Someone who is asking us about our experiences to get others interested.”

As a leader in my research project, I identified a vision and a clear purpose that extended beyond short-term goals and focused on higher order intrinsic needs. For example, GH, in her interview commented, “I think you had an excellent plan and vision of what you wanted to accomplish and what you were interested in. And I was very impressed with that. I liked that you had a very clear concept in your mind of what you wanted.” During her interview, JH commented, “You sort of had to do things in ways and words that would engage students to want to participate. You were able to organize a focus group even though it was a busy time of year. You were still able to engage students. So, I think that was definitely a strength on your part.” This resulted in the students participating in my research project to identify with the needs I set forth (Burns, 2003).

As I reflected on the data I collected relating to my leadership, I also identified with Bass’ (1997) model of transformational leadership. Bass’ model of transformational leadership includes four dimensions: idealized influences (or charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. However, it took some time for me to learn from my mistakes, reflect on my actions, and observe the behaviors

of others in order to effectively utilize Bass' model of transformational leadership to get the results I was seeking.

Originally, my vision for my dissertation was to promote and develop intercultural competence and self-efficacy in preservice teachers through study abroad. I pursued this topic effortlessly through numerous departments at Greenwich University, however, I was unable to gain support. As I reviewed my journal entries, I realized I did not initially reflect on Bass' model of transformational leadership when attempting to gain support for my research. I did not portray inspirational motivation or individual consideration to others when seeking their support. At times, I lacked charisma and motivation due to my inability to connect with others. For example, in early journal entries, I wrote, "Every time I get excited about a door opening for me, it quickly shuts in my face. Having a hard time being patient and clearly communicating my ideas and goals." After expressing my concerns with my dissertation chair, I was reminded to be patient, and was encouraged to reach out to a department that had already identified a need for my research. In my journal, I commented, "After meeting with my dissertation chair, I feel like I am back on track. She helped move things along, very proactive, and knows the right questions and answers to get me back on track." While attending an ICI conference in April 2010, a speaker identified important leadership qualities that need to be strong when implementing a new idea. These qualities included: successfully getting people on board, working around resistance, and remaining enthusiastic throughout the process. Additionally, the speaker stated, "When trying to get buy-in, remember, if I want you to listen to me, I must listen to you first." It was these interactions with others that helped me to positively transform the direction I was heading with my research. My

journal entries reflected this transformation. As my research progressed, I commented, “Very excited. Reflecting on my leadership and how I finally have a change project, I realize that I attacked this potential change project differently than past ideas. Possibly why this one worked. Am excited to move forward!” As I reflected on my failed attempts to obtain a change project, I wrote, “I have really learned a lot from observing the behaviors of my professors. When I encounter a problem or obstacle, I act quickly to look for a solution. My chair has mastered the art of patience, telling me to hold tight when she is trying to work out something for me.” Reflecting on my past experiences and observing the leadership traits of others ultimately helped me to obtain a change project and proceed with my research.

Throughout my research, I took risks, and consistently asked others for ideas and for their opinions on various activities I was working on. As I communicated my vision and ideas with the honors concentration staff and students, I appealed to them on an emotional level. For instance, GH commented in her interview, “I thought it was not just empathy, it was an attempt to see the situation from the point of view of those who would be affected by the change. I thought it was excellent.” Overall, as a transformational leader, I was seeking to satisfy a greater need of an individual when promoting the awareness of study abroad.

During my research, I interacted with numerous individuals and organizations. Collectively, these interactions were positive; however, I encountered situations that made me question my leadership skills and my ability to effectively communicate with others. For example, when I returned from my year abroad, a new honors concentration director was in place. During our initial meeting, she agreed to allow me to continue my

research with the honors students and a new plan to proceed was devised. Initially, communications with the new honors director were positive. We routinely exchanged emails and had meetings to discuss upcoming honors events that I was involved with. Six months following my return from a year abroad, I relocated out of state. Due to this move, I communicated with the honors director by email. Although I thought communicating by email would help me to effectively proceed with my research plans, I now realize that solely relying on email ultimately caused misunderstandings and a communication breakdown. Unfortunately, by not dealing with the situation by phone or in person when it occurred, I created friction between the new honors director and myself. As a result, I have reflected on this situation with hopes of improving my communication and listening skills and ultimately minimizing the level of conflict I have as a leader moving forward.

In order to reflect on my own behavior and attitudes, I reread my email exchanges between the new honors director and myself and reviewed my journal entries. Although I did not always have face-to-face interactions with the new honors director, I was exchanging emails and received valuable information and feedback from her. It was my responsibility to be a proactive listener when reading her emails in order to learn and understand her needs and concerns. During our email exchanges, the new honors director wrote, “things are crazy as the semester gets under way.” Another time she wrote, “much of my time was taken up with meetings this week and will be next week,” and later she wrote, “sorry to take so long to answer- things got totally crazy.” As I reread our email exchanges, I realize that although my main focus and goal at the time was to collect my data and prepare for the next step in my research, I needed to be less demanding and

persistent with my requests from the new honors director. For example, in an email to me, the new honors director wrote, “I understand that you may be anxious about making this work, especially from a distance. However, some statements in your last few emails convey the sense that I am not doing enough on your behalf and that I don’t know how to do my job, or worse, that I am your secretarial help.” Rereading this email still brings tears to my eyes and the feeling of failure and disappointment. First, I failed to effectively communicate my ideas and plans with the new honors director. Instead of relying on email, I should have called her on the phone when I realized there was a misunderstanding. At the time, I did not want to give her excuses for why the surveys I promised her arrived a day late in the mail. I thought an email apology with no explanation would be best. Second, I did not listen and reflect on the new honors director’s emails. The honors concentration had recently changed due to greater student enrollment and new faculty. Upon return from my year abroad, I did not reevaluate and understand the new changes and challenges within the honors concentration. According to Bolman and Deal (2003), it is important to understand the challenges in one’s organization in order to effectively accomplish goals. Third, I should have been more honest with myself about the responsibilities I had as a leader. Effective leadership requires time and commitment. It was unfair to others involved with my research when I lacked clarity, detail, and commitment because I was unable to devote the time needed to effectively instill these qualities in my vision and research. According to Fullan’s (2001) *Framework for Change*, leaders need to have clarity and detail in their vision in order to promote shared commitment to explicit values.

In my espoused leadership platform, I wrote that it was my aspiration as a leader to understand organizational culture and articulate and communicate a clear vision as I investigated honors students' relationship to study abroad. Despite the many excuses I could give myself for failing to consistently do so, I failed to understand and incorporate the changes occurring in the honors program and communicate a clear and effective vision with the new honors director. Failing to do so ultimately affected my communication and relationship with the new honors director. Reflecting on relationships through journal entries, emails, and interviews helped me to gain valuable feedback about my leadership. I continued to explore my leadership utilizing self-administered surveys.

Leadership Practice Inventory

I reviewed the results of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) (Appendix J) to further explore my leadership development. The LPI is a 30 item questionnaire developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003) that measures five practices of exemplary leadership: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. Self-administered, and using a Likert response scale, each of the five practices is measured using six statements. I chose to use the LPI because it is an empirical assessment tool which has been used by over 250,000 leaders and more than a million of their constituents. Additionally, more than 120 scientific studies have confirmed the reliability and validity of the LPI.

Leadership practice: Modeling the way. The first practice, modeling the way, is an extension of Schein's (1992) strategies for leaders involved with cultural change. According to Schein (1992), leaders must continuously strive to model desired behaviors from their followers through their actions. I received an average score of 29 out of 100 on

the LPI evaluation for this practice. My score for modeling the way was the lowest of the five exemplary leadership practices evaluated.

Reflecting on my espoused leadership theories, I identified with transformational (Bass, 1997; Burns, 2003) and moral leadership (Sergiovanni, 1992; Walker & Donlevy, 2005) because these theories seek to satisfy a greater need of an individual by behaving in an admiral way that encourages others to follow by optimistically modeling what is right. I was surprised that I received a low score for this practice. However, reflecting on journal entries, I realize that I lacked confidence when seeking out a change project. As a result of having difficulty finding a department at Greenwich University that accepted and utilized my research, I doubted my ability to model behaviors that others would want to follow. I believe the result of this is reflected in my LPI score for this practice.

Leadership practice: Inspiring a shared vision. The second practice, inspiring a shared vision, requires the leader to communicate a vision in a way that motivates others to work towards achieving it. Similarly, Burns (2003) asserts that transformational leadership is a process in which leaders and followers engage in a reciprocated process of inspiring one another to higher levels of morality and motivation. According to Fullan (2001), empowering others to act on a vision is a necessary element of effective change. I received a score of 31 out of 100 on the LPI for the inspiring a vision practice. In this section, I scored 8 out of 10 on the question: Talks about future trends influencing our work. Additionally, I received 6 out on 10 on the following questions: Describes a compelling image of the future and appeals to others to share a dream of the future.

From the beginning, I had a vision that I was unable to clearly communicate to others. According to Burns (2003), leaders with inspirational motivation articulate a

vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers. Once I relied on Fullan's (2001) framework for change, I was able to empower others to act as a result of instilling clarity and detail in my vision. Also, I relied on moral leadership to empower others to act by leading from within and doing what is right (Walker & Donlevy, 2005). I believe with continuous reflection and practice and instilling the qualities of transformational and moral leadership, I will continue to develop and improve upon the leadership practice of inspiring a shared vision.

Leadership practice: Challenging the process. The third practice evaluated on the LPI was challenging the process. According to Kouzes and Posner (2003), leaders challenge the process when they seek out opportunities, take the initiative, and look outward for new ways to improve. Additionally, leaders experiment and take risks by continuously producing small wins and learning from experiences (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). For this practice, I received a score of 37 out of 100. Of the five exemplary practices evaluated, the score of 37 in challenging the process was my highest.

Challenging the process, seeking out opportunities, and looking for new ways to improve were consistent themes in my journal entries and emails to others when seeking out a change project. I realized that, similar to transformational leadership, I had to go beyond short-term goals and focus on higher order intrinsic needs. Consequently, followers identify with the needs of the leader (Burns, 2003). I was able to engage others in a reciprocated process of challenging the process, seeking out opportunities, and elevating others' morality and motivation (Burns, 2003). I believe I was willing to take risks, accept failure, and learn from these experiences. As a result of my determination, I was able to successfully implement a change and grow as a leader. I continue to develop

in this practice by implementing Bass' (1997) theory of transformational leadership that includes challenging myself and others with high standards, optimistic future goals, and giving meaning to tasks at hand.

Leadership practice: Enabling others to act. The fourth practice, enabling others to act promotes collaboration by building trust and enabling relationships (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). I received a score of 35 out of 100 on the LPI for this practice.

Establishing and maintaining relationships throughout my dissertation became challenging as a result of traveling abroad, changes in faculty, and relocating to another state. Reflecting on journal entries, I communicated most frequently with others through email. Although building trust and establishing relationships through email was often effective, it did create a breakdown in communication with others when problems occurred that would have been better resolved by face-to face communication or a phone call. The theory of moral leadership asserts that leaders take responsibility for their leadership and aspire to satisfy the needs of the followers (Burns, 2003). Similar to characteristics of transformational and moral leadership, I realize the benefit of using multiple forms of communication when building relationships and attempting to enable others to act. I take responsibility for my actions when leading and enabling others and will make necessary changes when leading in the future.

Leadership practice: Encouraging the heart. The last practice evaluated on the LPI is encouraging the heart. Leaders demonstrate encouraging the heart by acknowledging contributions and celebrating values and victories (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). I received a score of 36 out of 100 on the LPI for this section. I believe I did acknowledge and celebrate values and victories, but often times I was too eager to move

on to the next step. Leadership encompasses more than leading others and having influence. Incorporating transformational and moral leadership, I plan to lead from within and adhere to my moral principles: integrity, fairness, and respect. Moving forward, I recognize and appreciate the value of taking time to reflect and plan my next course of action instead of moving forward too quickly. I plan to respect and celebrate the individual contribution that each follower makes to the team (Bass, 1997). I now realize the value of stopping to smell the roses when leading others.

Discussion

In an effort to become an effective leader, it is essential that I continuously reflect and invest time and effort into my personal growth. Confucius stated, “by three methods we may learn wisdom: first be reflection, which is noblest; second, by imitation, which is easiest; and third by experience, which is bitterest. I have utilized the results of the LPI self-administered survey as an opportunity to reflect on my experiences modeling and imitating leadership qualities in order to grow and develop my own leadership skills. The LPI results indicate modeling the way as my lowest scored practice, and challenging the process as my highest scored practice. The scores from all five practices of exemplary leadership were much lower than I anticipated. I believe this is a result of my lack of confidence in my ability to be an effective leader. With the exception of this research project, I have not been in a leadership role for six years due to family obligations. Lacking recent experience and exposure to leadership roles has caused me to question many of my actions as a leader in my research. Since my scores conflict with some of the feedback I received from interviews with others, it is important for me to reflect on my

LPI scores, along other data I gathered on my leadership, and devise an action plan for personal improvement. I describe my personal action plan at the conclusion of cycle 4.

The data gathered from journal entries, interviews, and the LPI revealed to me that I did exhibit certain characteristics of transformational leadership. After reviewing my data, I felt more confident and aware of the leadership skills I developed throughout this dissertation, and the improvements I can make to further my leadership growth. Combining transformational leadership with moral leadership helped me overcome barriers and take responsibility for my leadership, and ultimately satisfy the needs of the students participating in my research project.

Theory-In-Use: Moral Leadership

According to Walker and Donlevy (2005), moral leadership requires one to look at what is right and lead others toward that. Throughout my research, I relied on Walker and Donlevy's (2005) foundational approach to moral decision making. Upholding my moral principles; integrity, fairness, and respect, helped me to navigate the complexities of time management and communication with others. Utilizing moral leadership both personally and professionally, I was able to maintain a safe, fair, and engaging learning environment for the students who participated in my research. Promoting amiable interactions that fostered teamwork and collaboration (Burns, 2003; Walker & Donlevy, 2005) from the students and staff throughout my research helped me to realize the importance of instilling and upholding my values and beliefs. When encountering situations that required me to test my moral beliefs, I reflected on my espoused theories in chapter two, and my past experiences that have instilled in me the belief and strength to do what is right, and always treat people the way you would like to be treated.

The results from the LPI ranked leadership behaviors in order from most frequent to least frequent (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). My most frequent behaviors, scoring a 10 out of 10 were: Following through on promises and commitments and treating people with dignity and respect. Similarly, during my interview with JH, she commented, “And, what I promised you, you got. And, what you promised to me, I got.” After further reflection, I realized many of moral beliefs were affirmed by others I interacted with throughout my dissertation. For example, when discussing important characteristics leaders should possess, GH stated, “Honesty. I think you need to be honest. People are very sensitive. They will feel if you are not being forthright with them.” As I reviewed my journal entries and my interactions with others, I realized I am responsible for my own actions and the way I react to others. I often reflect on a quote my grandfather would say to me: At the end of the day, you have to be able to look at yourself in the mirror and be proud of the person you see looking back at you. As I continue to reflect and grow as a leader, I hope to implement many of the moral behaviors I developed and observed throughout my dissertation (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004; Walker & Donlevy, 2005)

Reflective Practice and Emotional Intelligence

Examining and reflecting upon experiences has helped me to piece together patterns of lessons learned and lessons yet to be learned. Using reflective practice has helped me to define my values, principles, and motivations both professionally and personally (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Becoming more self-aware throughout my dissertation has helped me define what is important to me today. Ultimately, my values, principles, and motivations drive my behavior and become my compass in life.

Reflective practice helped me to make tough decisions during my dissertation. In the midst of my research, my husband was offered a work opportunity which required our family to relocate abroad for one year. I knew this move would benefit him professionally, however my initial concern was for the delay of my research due to this move. Reflective practice helped me identify the benefits the move would have for my husband, our family, and surprisingly, my research. Reflecting on my past experiences abroad as a student and teacher that I documented in chapter two, I realized the break in my research would enable me to focus on my growing family while simultaneously experiencing a new culture and enhancing my intercultural competence. While abroad, I wrote in my journal:

If I hadn't lived abroad a few times before, I would probably be on a plane home right now. But, I know from experience that the first few weeks in a new country are always the hardest. In the beginning, I always regret deciding to go abroad.

However, after getting situated with my new surroundings, I begin to really enjoy the new adventure I am on and wish I could extend my stay. Remember this!

As I reflect on my journal entry now, I realize this applies to all new experiences. The unknown and new is difficult at first to accept, appreciate, and not regret. However, reflecting on the overall experience is one I would not change for anything. During our first weeks abroad, we participated in a "Global Passport" Intercultural Training Program offered by my husband's company in order to build skills and adopt strategies for managing and coping with change. During the intercultural training course, we gained a deeper understanding of our new culture, adopted strategies for coping with culture shock, and reflected on our own cultural background and our ability to adapt to a new

culture. I translated these acquired skills to my research when I returned from our overseas assignment. As a result of reflective practice, I was able to adapt better to the changes I encountered when I returned. Along with reflective practice (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004) and emotional intelligence (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002), I became more attuned to my values, principles, and motivations both professionally and personally.

Combining reflective practice (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004) with emotional intelligence (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002), helped me to connect with the honors students and staff. Reflecting on past experiences helped me to define the values, principles, and motivations I wanted to possess as a leader. Throughout my research, I often questioned my ability as a leader in my research and how others viewed me. In an interview with JH, she stated:

You did all of the work. For me, the way we used the data base worked. I took the information you gave me and just distributed it. So, it wasn't any big deal. You took care of everything from within. The text led the students back to you. So, you really took ownership. You were the leader.

It was this comment that made me realize that I owned this change project and I was, in fact, a leader. I was responsible for the outcomes, both positive and negative. Emotional intelligence helped me to gain support, effectively conduct focus groups, interviews, and surveys, and positively interact with others. Along with emotional intelligence, reflective practice helped me to examine situations that did not play out the way I had hoped. The process of growth begins with awareness, and therefore gaining insight into my current

level of emotional intelligence helped me to identify what course of action was necessary to understand and work through situations that did not result positively.

In order to gain insight in my emotional intelligence, I completed the Emotional Intelligence Skills Assessment (EISA) (Appendix K). The EISA, developed by Stein, Mann, Papadogiannis, and Gordon (2009), measures emotional intelligence on five scales: Perceiving, Managing, Decision Making, Achieving, and Influencing. Using a Likert response scale, each of the five scales provides a score ranging from 1 to 10. The scores are shown as standard scores on a bar graph.

In the Perceiving section, I scored 6.90. According to the results, my score suggests that I am very good at gauging my own emotions and the emotions of others. I am proficient at understanding what emotions mean and the difference between them. Similar to this conclusion, during an interview with GH, she stated, “You were very good at thinking about, well this is what I am interested in, but how will this look from the point of view of those who will be affected by the change?” Utilizing the characteristics of transformational and moral leadership, I aspire to lead from within and incorporate my own emotions and the emotions of others in my decisions, actions, and behaviors (Sergiovanni, 1992).

In the Managing section, my score of 6.0 indicated that I am highly proficient at managing, controlling, and expressing emotions in a socially acceptable and constructive manner. After reviewing my journal entries, I realized that I effectively managed my emotions when faced with criticism. When faced with obstacles, I discovered that reflecting on the situation and not reacting instantly proved to be beneficial. As a transformational leader, I managed my emotions by behaving in an admirable way and

maintaining optimism throughout my research project (Bass, 1997; Burns, 2003; Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; Sergiovanni, 1992).

In the Decision Making section, I scored a 5.49. Reflecting on my journal entries, I effectively managed change when moving abroad and deciding to put my research on hold. I was aware of the change and demands of the situation, and utilized effective decision-making (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). However, when I returned from my year abroad, I became overwhelmed with the demands of my growing family and my research, and made a quick decision to stop my research with hopes of alleviating my work load. Reflecting on my journal entries, I realized that when I did something, I wanted to give it all of my time and effort. In a March 2012 journal entry, I wrote, “Having a hard time balancing everything. Feel very overwhelmed, but know I will regret not finishing what I started if I stop.” I also recalled a presentation given by a student who was finishing up her dissertation. The student presented to our class prior to us beginning the dissertation process, with the purpose of informing us about her experiences from start to finish. The student made the comment that she had to miss Thanksgiving dinner to work on a chapter. Another student that presented on the same topic commented that she had to drop some hobbies like gardening and cooking to work on her research. At the time, I felt like I had no hobbies left to drop in order to devote more time to my research. With two children, and another one on the way, all of my energy and time was given to them. It was at this time that I also had difficulties effectively communicating with the new honors director. As I reflected on my journal entries written during this time, I realize that I needed to pass certain responsibilities on to others, slow down, and prioritize the next steps in my research (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). Fortunately, my dissertation chair

helped me to reflect on my decision. I realized that I adopted unsuccessful strategies for effective decision making when faced with change and adaptation. I reflected on Fullan's (2001) framework for change, transformational leadership (Bass, 1997; Burns, 2003), and emotional intelligence (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002), and realized this could also be applied to my personal life. I needed to establish clarity and detail in my vision and how I could make my personal and professional endeavors work simultaneously. Additionally, I needed to recruit family members to help me tackle difficult problems, such as time management and home responsibilities.

For the Achieving section, I scored a 5.98. The achieving section reflects the ability to self-motivate and to bring about the emotions necessary to pursue realistic and meaningful goals (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). My score suggests that I am goal directed but with a tendency to focus on the end result. Similar to data collected from the LPI, I am often times too eager to move on to the next step, and overpass the emotions and reflection time needed to effectively plan a next course of action. Reflecting on journal entries, I realized I took many unnecessary steps that prolonged my ability to find an effective research project because I was too focused on the end result (Kouzes & Posner, 2003).

In the Influencing section, I scored a 6.62. The influencing category identified my ability to recognize, manage, and bring about emotion within myself and others to promote change (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). My score suggests that I often use my emotions and the emotions of others to my benefit. As a result, this skill may be apparent when inspiring others to obtain greater goals, influencing the creativity of others, improving collaboration, or bringing about change (Kouzes & Posner, 2003). Throughout

my research project, I believe I used positive emotions to engage others, and remained energized and motivated when overcoming different obstacles. I was able to effectively recruit honors students who studied abroad to present at the study abroad information session because I was able to describe what needed to be done, and set a proper direction and tone for the students to follow. When I did encounter resistance from others, I often utilized positive emotions to make things happen successfully (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002).

Collectively, my standard scores for all five emotions evaluated were above the average of 5. As I reflected on my change project, I realized that without reflective practice and emotional intelligence, I would not have had effective decision-making skills necessary to carry-out and complete my research (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004). For example, while living abroad, I often reread my journal entries to remind me of my enthusiasm and desire to encourage others to study abroad. I was reminded of how I utilized emotional intelligence to inspire and motivate honors students at Greenwich University to begin talking about the possibility of studying abroad like I once had (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002). Without my journal, I would not have been able to reflect on the ups and downs I had experienced so far in my research, and realize that bad days were easily turned around with optimism and hope. Reflective practice and emotional intelligence gave me the insight and strength to reconnect with my research upon my return with the same determination and optimism that I had at the start of this experience (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002; (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004).

Feedback and Recommendations for Honors Director

Along with answering the research question about my leadership, cycle 4 also consisted of drafting feedback and recommendations for the honors director for revising and strengthening the study abroad link. Furthermore, the feedback and recommendations for the honors director answers research question three: How can existing programs offered by Greenwich University be promoted to increase awareness and reduce perceived barriers for honors students? In addition to website recommendations, other suggestions were offered for promoting study abroad to increase awareness and interest. Recommendations were based on data collected from Greenwich University honors students in cycles 2 and 3. Greenwich University honors students' experiences, interests, and challenges regarding study abroad influenced the types of social media and communications I suggested the program to use in order to raise awareness and interest in study abroad. Ultimately, the goal of the feedback and recommendations is to create a community of engaged Greenwich University honors students who share similar interests and goals, therefore increasing awareness and interest in study abroad.

The study abroad link was added to the honors concentration website in September 2010. In spring 2012, the new honors director made changes to the study abroad link. Utilizing data collected from cycles 2 and 3, the following is a list of suggestions for updating the existing study abroad webpage.

1. Include testimonies from previous study abroad honors students about their experiences.
2. Describe financial options and break down cost of study abroad.
3. Include a list of places previous honors students have studied abroad.

4. Provide links to study abroad Facebook, twitter, and blog.
5. Include a frequently asked questions link that addresses concerns identified by students in cycles 2 and 3. These concerns include:
 - a. types and number of study abroad programs
 - b. financial aid help
 - c. funding available
 - d. honors concentration capstone project
 - e. how study abroad fits into academic program
 - f. lack of foreign knowledge concerns
 - g. effects study abroad may/may not have on graduation

In addition to study abroad webpage suggestions, other social media ideas may aid in increasing honors students' awareness and interest in study abroad at Greenwich University. I suggest creating a Facebook Greenwich University honors study abroad page owned by the honors concentration director and administered by the honors concentration director, secretary, and current honors study abroad students. A Facebook link can be added to the honors concentration study abroad webpage for easy student access. Another social media tool that can be developed is a Greenwich University honors students' study abroad twitter account. The twitter account can be owned by the honors concentration director and administered by the honors concentration director, secretary, and current honors study abroad students. A link accessing the twitter profile can be added to the honors concentration study abroad webpage for easy student access. Next, carrying out an email campaign consisting of one email a month for one school year. The goal of the monthly email is to bring awareness to study abroad. Emails are to

be sent to all undergraduate honors students attending Greenwich University. Emails can carry a theme of “Did you know study abroad facts/information...”, and “Register for a specific study abroad information session.” Email campaigns aim to deliver valuable content, build trust, and create positive actions on the recipients end. Also, email campaigns are an inexpensive channel of internet marketing. I also recommend requiring honors students who are participating in a study abroad program to contribute to an honors concentration blog. The honors concentration director can govern all communication channels. All content contributed by study abroad students should be meaningful and educational and communicate the study abroad experience. The goal of the blog is to increase study abroad awareness and interest in prospective Greenwich University students and current Greenwich University honors students.

Other traditional communication channels that can be utilized to increase awareness and interest in study abroad include requesting presentations/information sessions delivered by the International Center geared towards honors students and study abroad. Holding the Study Abroad and Internship Information night in the fall and spring may help increase awareness and interest in study abroad. Expanding the explanation of the capstone project to include presenting at the Study Abroad and Internship Information night, and contributions to social media (Facebook, twitter, blog) while studying abroad may increase study abroad participation. Currently, on the Greenwich University honors application, prospective honors students must answer two open-ended questions. I suggest adding a third open-ended question to the existing two questions. The third question would relate to study abroad. For example: Honors students at Greenwich University receive funding for participating in study abroad. Do you intend to study

abroad at Greenwich University? If yes, why do you want to study abroad? If no, why do you not plan to study abroad? Do you adapt easily to new circumstances? Explain why. If you do not want to study abroad, explain why not? It is important to note that on the September 2012 Freshmen/Mentor survey, 37% of freshmen indicated that they did not plan to study abroad while an undergraduate at Greenwich University, and 73% of mentors indicated that they did not plan to study abroad while an undergraduate at Greenwich University. Asking prospective honors students why they want to or do not want to study abroad may help identify additional ways to increase honors students awareness and interest in study abroad.

Another way to increase honors students' awareness in study abroad is to target parents of incoming freshmen and current honors students at Greenwich University by sending postcards, letters, and emails regarding study abroad information. Lastly, I recommend advertising and communicating study abroad announcements on Greenwich University's school radio station. It is my intention that the suggestions and recommendations offered are realistic and cost effective ideas that may increase honors students awareness and interest in study abroad.

Conclusion

This dissertation began as a desire to expand on my experiences as a student and teacher abroad. The initial process of obtaining a change project helped me to face challenges, become more patient, reflect on past experiences, and ultimately appreciate and value the change project I finally obtained. According to Fullan (2001), despite an individual's style, every effective leader must possess and improve upon his moral purpose. I believe my experiences throughout my dissertation have not only helped me to

identify my specific leadership styles, but also my values and beliefs that I continuously work to uphold and improve upon.

Cycle 4 sought to answer the following research question about my leadership: What leadership traits did I develop and utilize in my role as a catalyst for promoting honors students awareness of study abroad? I utilized transformational and moral leadership, along with emotional intelligence and reflective practice to promote honors students awareness of study abroad. As a result of my leadership, honors students engaged in focus groups, surveys, and interviews focusing on study abroad. Additionally, honors students critiqued a new study abroad link on the honors concentration homepage and participated in a study abroad information session. These activities were designed to raise awareness in study abroad.

This research project has provided me the opportunity to further grow and develop my leadership skills. As I move forward, I realize that my leadership skills and practices will continue to evolve and improve through the use reflective practice and Fullan's (2001) Framework for Change (Figure 1). Using these components to overcome obstacles in the future will serve as valuable tools as an educational leader striving to serve as an agent for change.

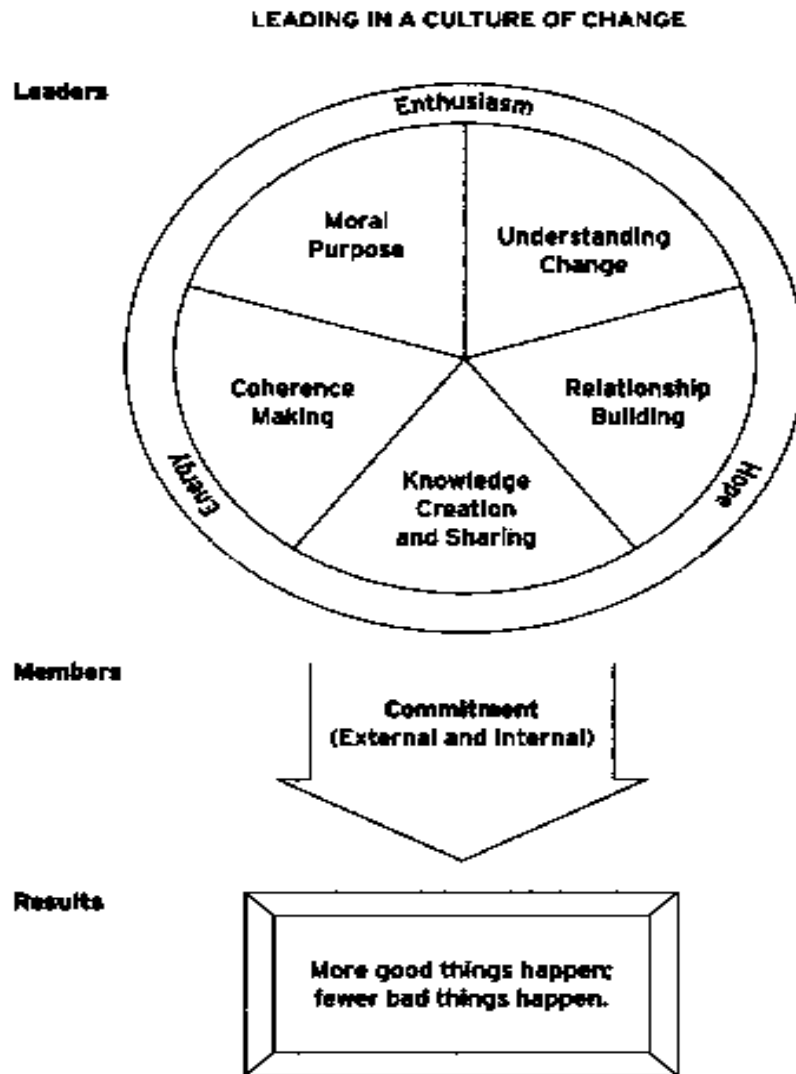


Figure 1.1. A Framework for Leadership.

Figure 1. A Framework for Leadership

During data collection, which included interviews, surveys, and focus groups, I realized change starts with a conversation. I faced many emotions throughout my research, with many ups and downs. Interacting with Greenwich University honors students during interviews and focus groups made me realize that the fear and resistance I often encountered could be overcome by powerful conversation. Similar to Fullan's

(2001) Framework for Change, powerful conversation included understanding and verbalizing the change I wanted to implement and my moral purpose, and building relationships through knowledge sharing. Instilling transformational and moral leadership qualities, listening to a student's point of view, slowing down, and prioritizing my next steps in my research, enabled me to develop strong leadership skills, resulting in powerful conversation. Change did not happen as I expected. Initially, I expected my research would result in policy changes or a surplus of students rushing to the International Center to sign up for study abroad. The change that ultimately resulted from my research was starting a conversation, raising awareness in study abroad, and change within myself. I now know a leader is someone willing to help, who identifies something that needs to change, and who initiates the first steps to influence that situation. As a leader, I recognized a need for change, started to act, and tried different approaches until I succeeded. A professor once said to me, "You sure persevere." Determined to proceed with my research despite obstacles, more students joined in the conversation. I did not create a movement involving thousands of people. However, I persevered, learned from my mistakes, and started a conversation that may lead other students to seek out study abroad opportunities like I once did. Reflecting on Fullan's (2001) Framework for Change, successful change can be measured by more good things happening and fewer bad things happening.

Along with implementing reflective practice (Osterman & Kottkamp, 2004) and Fullan's (2001) Framework for Change, I devised a personal improvement action plan. When constructing my personal improvement action plan, I first defined what I want to achieve in the future and set a career goal for myself. In the future, I want to utilize my

experiences teaching and researching study abroad, and living abroad, in a higher education environment. Next, I identified the leadership actions I need to undertake to achieve my career goal. By outlining the leadership actions I needed to possess, I was able to reflect upon my research and make connections between leadership actions I need and specific leadership qualities I need to improve upon and develop. Reflecting on my journals, interviews, and self-administered surveys, three leadership action themes were recurrent. These themes included: my personal relationship with others around me, my ability to communicate with others, and time management. These three themes became my leadership action goals as described on my personal improvement action plan (Table 22). By identifying my leadership goals and areas that I need to strengthen in order to achieve these goals, I reflected on my journals to identify competencies and personal strengths I needed to achieve my leadership goals. Throughout my journal entries, I commented on my interactions with other leaders and the qualities that they possessed that I believed made them successful. For example, in summer 2010, I wrote, “Impressed with Professor [Smith’s] ability to get everyone on board. The entire cohort was able to get everyone to agree to the same project. He did not take sides, instead he was understanding and sympathetic to everyone’s needs.” I utilized my journal entries and my experiences throughout my coursework to identify specific competencies and personal strengths I need to achieve my leadership goals. The development actions listed on my personal improvement plan are the actions I intend to take in order to develop and ultimately achieve my leadership goals. The development activities are similar because they are activities that have worked for me in the past. The development activities will be altered and adjusted according to specific skills and circumstances that I encounter.

Lastly, I list specific indicators of success that I will use to determine if I development activities are helping me to develop the competencies I need to achieve my leadership goals. Ultimately, the purpose of my personal improvement action plan is to expand, shape, and improve upon my abilities and effectiveness. In order to continue to grow as a leader and achieve my career goal, I plan to implement my personal improvement action plan moving forward.

Table 22

Personal Improvement Action Plan

Leadership Goal	Problem	Competencies and personal strengths to meet goal	Development Activities	Indicators of Success
1. Effective Communicator verbal/nonverbal	1. Selecting appropriate mode of communication 2. improve listening skills	1. experience 2. utilize different forms of communication 3. emotional intelligence 4. reflection	1. reflection 2. read books on communication 3. attend leadership conferences 4. journal 5. find a mentor	1. ask others to complete the Leadership Profile Inventory 2. interview others
2. Positive relationships with those around me	1. growing relationships 2. maintaining positive interactions despite conflict	1. experience 2. confront problems immediately 3. emotional intelligence	1. reflection 2. read books on relationship building 3. attend leadership conferences 4. journal 5. find a mentor	1. ask others to complete the Leadership Profile Inventory 2. interview others
3. improve time management	1. Taking on too many projects/responsibilities 2. disorganized thoughts 3. feeling overwhelmed	1. organization 2. journaling 3. reflection	1. keep and maintain a calendar of events 2. reflection 3. prioritize projects 4. read books about management	1. reflection 2. review calendar

As I conclude my research, I reflect on the changes that have occurred both professionally and personally. I realize that change is inevitable. It is my goal to continue

to embrace change, utilize the tools I have acquired and developed throughout this change project, and learn from my experiences.

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Appendix A
Intercultural Development Inventory
Qualified Administrator Certification



Appendix B

Survey

Factors Influencing the Decision to Not Study Abroad

Date: _____

Survey

Factors Influencing the Decision to Not Study Abroad

PART 1- DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your gender?

Male Female

2. What is your current year in college?

Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

3. What is your current major(s)? _____

4. Were you born in the U.S.?

Yes No

5. Have you previously traveled to another country?

(for either personal, business, or academic purposes)

Yes No

If yes, for how long: _____

6. Have you previously lived in another country?

Yes No

If yes, for how long: _____

7. Is English your first language?

Yes No

PART 2- BACKGROUND INFORMATION

8. What year were you at your current institution when you visited the International Center Office?

First year in college Third year in college
 Second year in college Fourth year in college

PART 3- SOURCES OF INFORMATION

9. How did you first hear about study abroad? (please check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Academic adviser | <input type="checkbox"/> Family member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Study abroad adviser | <input type="checkbox"/> Email |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Professor | <input type="checkbox"/> Study abroad website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Study abroad fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Study abroad catalog |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Classroom presentation | <input type="checkbox"/> Former participant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flyer | <input type="checkbox"/> Friend/Significant other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state): _____ | |

10. Has anyone in your family previously studied abroad?

- Yes No Don't know

11. Have any of your friends previously studied abroad?

- Yes No Don't know

PART 4- INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS

12. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

(Please put an "X" in the box corresponding to the row)

12a. Information on study abroad programs and opportunities is readily available to University students.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12b. The types and number of study abroad programs offered through the University are good.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12c. Eligibility requirements for the study abroad programs are not strict.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12d. The University offers good sources of funding for students wanting to study abroad.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12e. The University encourages international experiences such as study abroad for students like myself.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12f. The study abroad advisers were helpful in advising me about study abroad opportunities.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12g. My academic advisers were helpful in advising me about study abroad opportunities.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Not applicable

12h. My professors encouraged me to study abroad.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Not applicable

12i. I felt comfortable talking to the study abroad advisers about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

12j. I felt comfortable talking to my academic advisers about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Not applicable

12k. I felt comfortable talking to my professors about my study abroad options, concerns, and needs.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Not applicable

12l. Overall, I felt that my needs and concerns were met in discussing study abroad.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

PART 5- OBSTACLES TO STUDY ABROAD

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

The following things prevented me from studying abroad:

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Program cost	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of family support	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study abroad courses not fitting into academic program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of foreign language knowledge	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not meeting GPA requirements for the program	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family obligations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work/Internship obligations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Extracurricular obligations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Study abroad delaying graduation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not wanting to be away from home	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fear of traveling to a new country	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fear of racism in other countries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fear of safety in other countries	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fear of getting low grades while abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Citizenship/Passport requirements	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Restrictions on financial aid for study abroad	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Complications with test preparation such as GRE, MCAT, LSAT, GMAT. Etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

14. Please list the top three factors that affected your decision to not study abroad? (rank in order)

PART 5- Personal Characteristics

15. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

15a. I did NOT have a difficult time meeting the eligibility requirements for admission

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15b. I did NOT have a difficult time adjusting to the academic rigor of courses on the campus

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15c. Overall, I did NOT have a difficult time adjusting **academically** to being at a four-year institution

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

15d. Overall, I did NOT have a difficult time adjusting **socially** to being at a four-year institution

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

16. Do you plan to go study, work, or volunteer abroad after graduation?

Yes No

Appendix C

Focus Group Questions

November 2010

Purpose: The purpose of the study abroad information link is to increase honors students' awareness and interest in study abroad.

Focus Group Questions

1. Can you understand the writing and meaning of the study abroad information link?

A Great Deal	Much	Somewhat	Little	Not at all
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments or suggestions for improving website readability:

2. After reviewing the study abroad information link, are you more aware of Greenwich University's study abroad program?

A Great Deal	Much	Somewhat	Little	Not at all
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

3. After reviewing the study abroad information link, are you more interested in study abroad?

A Great Deal	Much	Somewhat	Little	Not at all
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

4. Overall, what comments or suggestions do you have for improving the study abroad information link?

Focus Group Survey

1. What is your gender?

Male Female

2. What is your current year in college?

Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

3. What is your current major(s)? _____

4. How often do you visit Greenwich University's International Center website?

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	A Few Times a Year	Never
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How often do you visit Greenwich University's Honors Concentration website?

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	A Few Times a Year	Never
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix D

Study Abroad Link Survey Summer 2012

Students Who Studied Abroad

Please review the study abroad information link on Greenwich University's Honors Concentration website. Complete the following questions and email responses to laheck@hotmail.com.

Thank you!

Purpose: The purpose of the study abroad information link is to increase honors students' awareness and interest in study abroad.

PART 1- DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. What is your gender?

Male Female

2. What is your current year in college?

Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior

3. What is your current major(s)? _____

4. How often do you visit Greenwich University's International Center website?

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	A Few Times a Year	Never
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. How often do you visit Greenwich University's Honors Concentration website?

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	A Few Times a Year	Never
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. How well do you understand the content on the study abroad link?

A Great Deal	Much	Somewhat	Little	Not at all
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments or suggestions for improving website readability:

7. Does the study abroad link provide you with the information you need to understand the capstone project requirement following the completion of a study abroad assignment?

A Great Deal	Much	Somewhat	Little	Not at all
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

8. Does the study abroad link provide you with the information you need to understand the Honors Concentration funding available to honors students studying abroad?

A Great Deal	Much	Somewhat	Little	Not at all
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. After reviewing the study abroad information link, what additional information would you like?

A Great Deal	Much	Somewhat	Little	Not at all
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. After reviewing the study abroad information link, are you more interested in study abroad?

A Great Deal	Much	Somewhat	Little	Not at all
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

11. Overall, what comments or suggestions do you have for improving the study abroad information link?

Appendix E

Interview Questions

1. How was the process when planning and preparing to study abroad?
 - a. Did you understand the process?
2. How does the process work?
3. How can we bring more awareness to study abroad?
4. How did you first hear about study abroad at Greenwich University?
5. What made you interested in participating in study abroad?
6. Are there things you would do differently before or during the study abroad process?
7. How was the overall process?

Appendix F

Honors Students and Study Abroad

September 2012 Survey

1. Are you an incoming freshman or a mentor?

Freshman

Mentor

2. How did you first hear about study abroad? (Please check all that apply)

Academic adviser

Family member

Study abroad adviser

Email

Professor

Study abroad website

Study abroad fair

Study abroad catalog

Classroom presentation

Former participant

Flyer

Friend/Significant other

Other (please state): _____

3. Do you plan to study abroad while an undergraduate student at Greenwich

University?

Yes

No

4. Did you know Honors students receive Honors course credits for studying abroad?

Yes

No

5. How often do you visit Greenwich University's International Center homepage?

Daily

Weekly

Monthly

A Few Times a
Year

Never

6. How often do you visit Greenwich University's Honors Concentration homepage?

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	A Few Times a Year	Never
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. How often do you visit the study abroad link located on the Honors Concentration homepage?

Daily	Weekly	Monthly	A Few Times a Year	Never
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Appendix G

Student Recruitment Letter

Honors Study Abroad Information Session

Dear Honors Student,

The coordinator of the Honors Program at Greenwich University has identified you as an Honors student who has participated in a study abroad program. As part of the Honors Program study abroad requirements, students must conduct a capstone project at the completion of their study abroad experience. The capstone project for Honors students who have studied abroad includes a short presentation at the **Study Abroad and Internship Information Night on Thursday, September 20th**.

Study Abroad and Internship Information Night presentation details:

1. Thursday, September 20th at 7:00pm, Greenwich Center
2. Each student will give a brief 3 minutes maximum PowerPoint presentation that includes pictures. Explain what you did and what you learned from your experience.
3. Students will receive service hours.

***To confirm your presentation, please email back the following information to**

laheck@hotmail.com by Friday, September 14th*

1. Name
2. Date and location of study abroad assignment
3. Area of study when abroad

Should you have questions or have an evening class that conflicts with the Information Night, please email the coordinator of the Honors Program to discuss alternative ways to participate.

Thank you,

Leslie Gassler

Appendix H
Study Abroad Information Night
Advertising Flyer

Learn a new language
Enhance your employment opportunities
Experience different cultures
Make friends from around the world



LEARN HOW

Honors Students:

Study Abroad

Research/Creative &

Internship Information

Night

Honors Wing

Center

September 20

7:00 PM

www.facebook.com/

Appendix I

IDI Open Ended Questions Responses

<p>1. What is your background (e.g., nationality, ethnicity) around cultural differences?</p>	
	<p>I went to a high school that had a large diversity of ethnic groups</p>
	<p>I am Caucasian; a third generation member of Polish, Irish, German, and English decent</p>
	<p>My Mom is 11% French Canadian and my Dad is 50% Polish and 50% Italian</p>
	<p>I am a Jewish American female. My family is from Eastern Europe, mainly Poland, Russia, and Austria. Because of my background, I am pretty much used to having two identities; my identity as an American, and my identity as an Ashkenazi Jew.</p>
	<p>Well, I'm white to begin with... My nationalities include Irish (75%) and German (25%) and I'm 100% American</p>
	<p>I am German and Irish and was born and raised in the United States</p>
	<p>African American background with a little bit of information about my own culture</p>
	<p>I have had many foreign friends and acquaintances</p>
	<p>I am an American who is Jewish</p>
	<p>I have worked at a garden center, so I have worked with many Mexican immigrants. In addition, I have traveled quite frequently to the Caribbean and surrounding nations and witnessed many different cultural backgrounds.</p>
	<p>On my Mom's side of the family, I have family roots from Russia and England. On my Dad's side of the family, I have family roots from Germany.</p>
	<p>White (non-Hispanic)</p>
	<p>Pakistani resided in Saudi Arabia for a few years have been in America since 13 years old</p>

	I was raised by my mother who was born in and is still a citizen of Denmark and my father who was raised in an Italian and Irish family
	White, large Italian culture, mostly American family
	No background regarding cultural differences other than daily interactions
	I am sort of a mutt, my ancestry is from all over Europe but I am only European, I personally do not personally experience any cultural differences, I have witnessed them but I do not have much prejudice towards other cultures nor do I witness many against me.
	I am Irish and German
	European (Paris), African American, Hispanic, Hungarian, Ukrainian, Asian
	Half Irish, half German
	White
	Italian, Roman Catholic
	I am a Caucasian American
	My background as a Caucasian around cultural differences is to accept other people who are different
	I am an American. I am Italian, Irish, and Hungarian
	White American
	White American Italian heritage
	I am American with a British, Irish, German, and Czech background
	My uncle is directly from Morocco. My aunt is from Hungary.
	Honestly, I'm not really sure. My background wasn't really brought up by my parents, and I was never curious enough about it to ask
	Both grandparents are from the Middle East on my father's side and my grandmother on my mother's side is German. We have had relatives from Germany stay with us on a few occasions.
	I am American and Caucasian
	American, German
	50% Italian, 25% Irish, 25% German

	<p>Mexican-Hispanic</p> <p>I come from a diverse family compared to average American standards. My mother is American but moved to Ireland when she was 18 and lived there for a number of years. My maternal grandmother is an Irish immigrant. My father's side of the family are Russian Jewish immigrants. Members of my family who have married into or been adopted into my family come from areas such as China to Algeria.</p> <p>Italian & Russian American</p> <p>I myself do not feel that I have any cultural differences from those I live with but I have had many friends from the U.A.E. Egypt, Japan, and China that have allowed me to see cultural differences along with the tolerance from people of my own culture.</p> <p>I am a white female American, and my town is pretty much all white. So, for elementary and middle school, there was little diversity. My high school was very diverse, since other towns were in my high school, and I was actually the minority there.</p> <p>I am Irish, Polish, and German. I have close friends of many different ethnicities</p>
<p>2. What is most challenging for you in working with people from other cultures (e.g. nationality, ethnicity)?</p>	
	<p>Understanding what they may find offensive or what they may perceive to be "right" or "wrong"</p> <p>I have never really had a problem when working with people from other cultures, nor have I really had many opportunities. I do not come from a very diverse area; my high school was 98% white.</p>

	The most challenging aspect is not having an understanding of how and why they think the way they think. For example, I look down upon cultures that treat women as “second class citizens.” Then again, my definition of a person who is a second class citizen or who is “degraded” is based on my cultural background
	Sometimes people from other cultures, who have come directly from that country have very heavy accents that can make it difficult to understand them
	Figuring out what their morals and normal ways of living are, and trying to work with them while still remembering what my morals and normal ways of living are.
	Nothing, only sometimes the accent/language barrier
	Being able to relate to one another
	Knowing exactly what gestures they find offensive
	The most challenging thing is the language barrier. If it is difficult to understand someone, it is difficult to work with them
	The most challenging thing I find difficult is using the appropriate gestures and hand signals. In certain cultures for example, it is rude to use your hand that you use to go to the bathroom, and then shake that hand with someone from that culture.
	Understanding a foreign language or heavy accent
	Religion and political views
	I have no difficulty working with people of other cultures
	Understanding accents or language barriers
	The language barrier is often the most challenging
	The only problem I have in dealing with people from other cultures is the language barrier. I find at times that it is hard to understand people from other cultures
	The most challenging part is the differences in custom, such as sayings, types of food, and dress. These are the most subtle and the least explained

	A small action done can cause extreme offense to the opposite party
	Getting others of my culture to be understanding of the people with other cultures
	Their accents and views
	Sometimes there are different perspectives, but otherwise, none
	Speech barriers
	I am most challenged by how I should act or behave in order not to offend someone from another culture
	Understanding the difference between their values and my own
	Communication (language barrier)
	Language barrier
	The difference in language. It is hard for me to interpret accents and voice inflections
	I don't usually have problems with people from other cultures more than merely misunderstanding an accent
	Most notably, I find I have trouble understanding through thick accents, but other than that working with people from other cultures is no different that working with anybody else
	I have to choose ,y words carefully to avoid misinterpretation
	Translating lingo and jargon
	People automatically think they know everything about your culture based on what they see or hear. This can create setbacks and conflict
	Language barriers
	Communication
	Sometimes it can be hard to understand some of them, if they have accents. Usually though it is not a problem. Some of them have different values.
	I have no challenge working with any other culture as long as the person is rational

<p>3. What are key goals, responsibilities, or tasks you have, if any, in which cultural differences need to be successfully navigated?</p>	
	<p>Find common ground. Realize that although we are all different, we are also very similar.</p> <p>Maintaining a degree of fairness, understanding and appreciation between members of different backgrounds. Also, to promote tolerance between members of different cultures.</p> <p>As a future elementary education teacher, it is important to discuss various cultures and their importance. Each culture is of equal importance and should not be ranked.</p> <p>I can't think of any. Sorry.</p> <p>Cultures are different all over, and in those cultures, there are behaviors that are considered normal, and not normal. I feel that it is our responsibility to learn about the norms of other societies, so that one is not found offended by these normal habits.</p> <p>I ask about a person's culture, so that I have some knowledge of how to interact with them.</p> <p>I have no goals that require cultural differences to be navigated. There is no goal in which that would ever be an issue.</p> <p>Setting a common ground where conflicting beliefs are difficult to be mentioned in would result in a smoother process if we were looking to be productive.</p> <p>Coming together to accomplish a common task</p> <p>To work cooperatively with groups of all cultures</p> <p>I try not to act differently around people from other cultures, I feel that it is important to just be myself no matter who I am with. If a problem arises I try to take a calm and relaxed approach to solving the problems and try to limit the role that culture plays in the problem. In the end, we are all human.</p>

	Well, the only time I've come across cultural differences that conflicted with responsibility was when I was working at a children's gym. We did birthday parties and often there would be families of other cultures and ethnicities that wanted us to change our party set-up to accommodate their traditions and practices.
	Respect and tolerance for one another regardless of our cultural differences.
	A key goal is to treat everyone with respect and to try and understand someone who may be from a different culture.
	Simultaneously representing my own culture in a positive light and adjusting to and accepting the other culture.
	There needs to be a greater acceptance of people from other cultures, despite their being different from one's own culture in order to coexist.
	I'm not sure. I guess I would peace is a pretty big (but cliché) one. Or maybe just universal acceptance of everyone (to add to the cliché, I suppose).
	Addressing commonalities to bridge
	Culture differences should be understood and accepted. Instead of seeing differences, similarities should be seen.
	I don't have to navigate many cultural differences.
	None, cultural differences enhance our performance.
4. Please give examples of situations you were personally involved with or observed where cultural differences needed to be addressed within your organization and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the situation ended negatively, that is, was not successfully resolved - the situation ended positively, that is, was successfully resolved 	
	I am currently in a relationship with someone whose parents grew up in the Dominican Republic. Their parents refuse

	<p>to accept the fact that I am not of some Spanish origin. They still have a general distaste towards me, despite the fact that I try to be friendly every time I interact with them.</p>
	<p>I don't have any good examples for this one. Whenever anything somewhat like this arose, it was just a simple matter of understanding our differences and realizing what we had in common.</p>
	<p>I have not come across any type of cross cultural situations. Though I did live in Switzerland for about 2 weeks, their culture seemed very similar to mine.</p>
	<p>When I was younger (maybe in 1996) I lived a few houses down from an Indian family who had been sent to America for the father's work. The family's home was egged on Halloween night- the only house in the development to be egged- and although the family was upset they didn't bother trying to seek justice. They just gave up and figured it was because they were an Indian family living in an Americanized suburban neighborhood.</p>
	<p>My roommates and I had a party at our house at school for one of our roommate's 21st birthday. One white male looked at a black male in a way that the black male did not like. The two exchanged words and then an altercation occurred. They broke an end table and knocked a photo off the wall. The friends of each respective male began to get involved. Finally, we pushed the fight outside by breaking up the two parties. Both parties were still mad at each other, but then a few white males talked to some of the black males to calm them down. The black males left and went back to their homes, and the white males stayed at the party.</p>
<p>Two African American people were arguing over sexual advances, and a Caucasian girl acted as a bridge between the two to reach an apology with each other.</p>	

	I have a friend from Egypt and people ask her if she speaks Egyptian. I tend to correct them politely and point out its called Arabic.
	When I visited Mexico, I witnessed several instances of Americans complaining because they did not get their way. In the end, the Americans would walk away angrily, and the Mexicans would get a bad impression of Americans.
	While rare, I have seen Americans respect others' cultures while in foreign countries. It ends positively because the natives always seem to develop a thankfulness for the respect.
	One day, I was walking the streets of center city Philadelphia with my friend who is from Lebanon. As we were strolling along the street, a black man approached us and told my friend he should go back to where he really belongs because Muslims are not welcome here. We ended up just walking away, but it was upsetting to see a black man say this to my friend, where in our history at one time, black people were told the same thing to go back to Africa, and were frowned upon. It is ironic how society is, especially with other ethnicities.
	Cultural differences were addressed when students at my high school began to call each other by racist names.
	Israel Palestine conflict
	A person in my class is from Europe and has a very thick accent and I couldn't really understand what she was trying to convey in a group assignment.
	A person on my sports team needed help from the team to understand his surroundings and we were successful as a team.
	I do not have any
	I do not have any
	I have witnessed especially race issues on numerous occasion where one individual may not have been accepted into a group or

	gathering due to the color of his skin or the way he spoke.
	A Jewish family was having a party for their young son, and they had us order kosher food for their guests. Unfortunately, the catering service misunderstood and brought no kosher food. The family was outraged, we lost the sale, and they have not come back. This occurred about a year ago.
	A Muslim family was coming for a party for their daughter, but they had asked if men or women would be working the party. On hearing it would be all women, they asked that we dress conservatively, in shirts that covered our arms and shoulders, loose pants, and had our hair tied up. Though an odd request, we complied and the party was a success.
	I have not had much experience, but when I traveled to France, no one made eye contact or smiled. I ended up making a Parisian woman nervous and uncomfortable because I thought I was being friendly. Cultural differences and being educated about them are important.
	At my work study job we started participating in group tutoring efforts with the EOF students. The majority of these students are black or Hispanic origin. Although my office attempts to help the EOF students with papers and essays, they are very resistant to our help. This is attributed by some members of my office to the fact that they are black or Hispanic and thus lazy. Clearly the fact that they are lazy is not related to their race. It is related to some other factor. Although I try to explain this to others some do not understand. Next semester the EOF students will most likely be asked to stop this group tutoring since they do not really benefit from it.
	My softball team in high school was mostly white girls, and when a group of Hispanic girls tried out, there was some uneasiness

	<p>about it among the team. Most of the girls did not make the team for lack of skill, but one did make it. She was semi-rejected in the beginning of the season. Soon she was befriended by a few girls and eventually by her reggaeton music and sing the songs on the way to away games. She became a valuable member of our team even though she was of a different culture.</p>
	<p>Habitat for Humanity</p>
	<p>September 11, 2001</p>
	<p>Nothing really needed to be resolved. In school, there were just sometimes differences of opinion due to upbringing.</p>
	<p>Back in high school during my senior year an observant Jewish man wore a yarmulke on his head and he came into the classroom. It made people aware of him and his religion. There was some derogatory comments slurred at him but I saw that the teacher punished those students accordingly.</p>
	<p>I have observed at my high school in New Jersey the differences between how African Americans and Caucasians treat each other at lunch time or at pep rallies. Everyone would sit with their own cultural ethnicity whenever our class had to get together. This issue was never addressed and was never resolved.</p>
	<p>I have observed at my college in New Jersey how assimilated people of many cultures are as everyone interacts on campus. A girl in one of my classes wears a headdress that covers her head and body, but my class which is mostly Caucasian responded positively to her and respected that her culture and beliefs dictate how she dresses herself.</p>
	<p>Upon arriving at an airport in Cancun, Mexico, my family and I were approached by a man who began giving us information about the area. It eventually turned out that he was trying to get us to purchase a tourist ticket package. The problem was that a) we were in a hurry to reach our bus, and b) we</p>

	<p>were not staying in Cancun; we were staying further away in a less touristy area. We wanted to see actual Mexican culture and not just the tourist attractions. My father attempted to explain to the man that we were not interested and the man continued to talk to us. We actually had to start walking away from the man instead because he made it seem like we would be doing him a favor if we continued to listen to him.</p>
	<p>I was at work last summer at an office and a woman came into the reception area. She spoke very little English and was having a difficult time understanding the secretary. The woman called someone on her cell phone and began speaking Spanish. I got up and offered to help since I speak Spanish. She was dropping off some items, and the secretary had been trying to communicate to her that she needed to go to the back side of the building. I explained this to the woman in Spanish and she comprehended. She was very appreciative of my help.</p>
	<p>I worked in a restaurant, we were closing and I couldn't communicate to the dishwasher that patrons were leaving late and he got angry that I kept bringing dirty dishes to the kitchen. After the dishwasher got fired, the new dishwasher and I worked out a Spanglish sign language combo to communicate.</p>
	<p>My cousin was begging for a Christmas tree to be put in their house because everyone in her pre-school was talking about having one. My uncle who is Muslim said no, but my aunt who is Catholic wanted to let her. My cousin wasn't asking for a Christmas tree because of the religion, she just wanted to be like everyone else. It created a fight in my family. She never got the Christmas tree. It resulted in a lot of unnecessary tears.</p>
	<p>I can't say I've ever been in a situation like this other than, again, misunderstanding an</p>

	accent of someone from another culture.
	Like I said before, the only real situation I have is misunderstanding of accents. So, I guess in this case I should say that the communication problem was overcome, and our conversation would go smoothly.
	I cannot think of any.
	I cannot think of any.
	I cannot think of any.
	I cannot think of any.
	Working at Kmart on the weekends, I've interacted with a multitude of other cultures. However, I haven't recognized any issues.
	Working at Kmart on the weekends, I've interacted with a multitude of other cultures. However, I haven't recognized any issues.
	I think drinking and smoking is very common among college students. In my culture it is very wrong for a girl to be doing this. My friends don't see anything wrong with it and there is constant arguing about it.
	In class, we talked about the difference of South American culture and everyone was interested in it. There was nothing bad said about the culture.
	I attend Greenwich University, I have yet to observe any direct conflict, however, I believe there should be a broader international student base here.
	Communication issues that arose where I work were handled by being patient and asking for the help of others who were capable of communicating more efficiently with the involved parties.
	Most of the kids in my classes are white, so there are not usually cultural differences. A few of my teachers have been hard to understand at times, but you can't really do anything about that.
	We had a speaker from our school come and talk to us about all the different cultural groups at our school which was interesting.

	Racial slurs may have been used and taken personally, resulting in a constant feeling of unease.
	Cultural discussions have taken place, noting differences without conflict.

Appendix J

Leadership Practices Inventory Results

**KOUZES
POSNER**



LPI INDIVIDUAL
Leadership Practices Inventory

Feedback Report for

Leslie Gassler






Administration: February 14, 2013

Leslie Gassler LPI

Leslie Gassler LPI

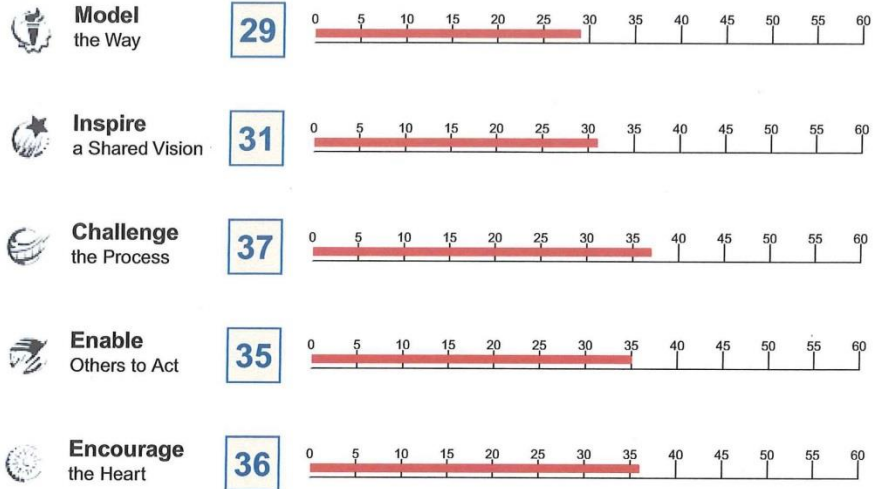
February 14, 2013

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The Five Practices Data Summary

This page summarizes your LPI scores for each Practice.



The rating scale runs from 1 to 10
1 - Almost Never 6 - Sometimes
2 - Rarely 7 - Fairly Often
3 - Seldom 8 - Usually
4 - Once in a While 9 - Very Frequently
5 - Occasionally 10 - Almost Always

Leadership Behaviors Ranking

This page shows the ranking, from most frequent ("high") to least frequent ("low") of all 30 leadership behaviors based on the self rating score. A horizontal line separates the 10 least frequent behaviors from the others.

HIGH	PRACTICE	RANK
11. Follows through on promises and commitments	Model	10
14. Treats people with dignity and respect	Enable	10
1. Sets a personal example of what is expected	Model	9
3. Seeks challenging opportunities to test skills	Challenge	9
5. Praises people for a job well done	Encourage	9
13. Searches outside organization for innovative ways to improve	Challenge	9
2. Talks about future trends influencing our work	Inspire	8
28. Experiments and takes risks	Challenge	7
30. Gives team members appreciation and support	Encourage	7
4. Develops cooperative relationships	Enable	6
7. Describes a compelling image of the future	Inspire	6
8. Challenges people to try new approaches	Challenge	6
9. Actively listens to diverse points of view	Enable	6
10. Expresses confidence in people's abilities	Encourage	6
12. Appeals to others to share dream of the future	Inspire	6
19. Supports decisions other people make	Enable	6
15. Creatively rewards people for their contributions	Encourage	5
22. Paints "big picture" of group aspirations	Inspire	5
25. Finds ways to celebrate accomplishments	Encourage	5
20. Recognizes people for commitment to shared values	Encourage	4
23. Makes certain that goals, plans, and milestones are set	Challenge	4
24. Gives people choice about how to do their work	Enable	4
6. Makes certain that people adhere to agreed-on standards	Model	3
17. Shows others how their interests can be realized	Inspire	3
21. Builds consensus around organization's values	Model	3
27. Speaks with conviction about meaning of work	Inspire	3
29. Ensures that people grow in their jobs	Enable	3
16. Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect people's performance	Model	2
18. Asks "What can we learn?"	Challenge	2
26. Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership	Model	2

LOW

The rating scale runs from 1 to 10
 1 - Almost Never 6 - Sometimes
 2 - Rarely 7 - Fairly Often
 3 - Seldom 8 - Usually
 4 - Once in a While 9 - Very Frequently
 5 - Occasionally 10 - Almost Always



Model the Way

- Clarify values by finding your voice and affirming shared ideals.
- Set the example by aligning actions with shared values.

1. Sets a personal example of what is expected	9
6. Makes certain that people adhere to agreed-on standards	3
11. Follows through on promises and commitments	10
16. Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect people's performance	2
21. Builds consensus around organization's values	3
26. Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership	2
Total: 29	Average: 4.83

How does this make sense to you?

What surprises you about these observations?

What opportunities do you see for engaging in any one of these behaviors more?

The rating scale runs from 1 to 10
1 - Almost Never 6 - Sometimes
2 - Rarely 7 - Fairly Often
3 - Seldom 8 - Usually
4 - Once in a While 9 - Very Frequently
5 - Occasionally 10 - Almost Always



Inspire a Shared Vision

- Envision the future by imagining exciting and ennobling possibilities.
- Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to shared aspirations.

2. Talks about future trends influencing our work	8
7. Describes a compelling image of the future	6
12. Appeals to others to share dream of the future	6
17. Shows others how their interests can be realized	3
22. Paints "big picture" of group aspirations	5
27. Speaks with conviction about meaning of work	3
Total: 31	Average: 5.17

How does this make sense to you?

What surprises you about these observations?

What opportunities do you see for engaging in any one of these behaviors more?

The rating scale runs from 1 to 10
1 - Almost Never 6 - Sometimes
2 - Rarely 7 - Fairly Often
3 - Seldom 8 - Usually
4 - Once in a While 9 - Very Frequently
5 - Occasionally 10 - Almost Always



Challenge the Process

- Search for opportunities by seizing the initiative and by looking outward for innovative ways to improve.
- Experiment and take risks by constantly generating small wins and learning from experience.

3. Seeks challenging opportunities to test skills	9
8. Challenges people to try new approaches	6
13. Searches outside organization for innovative ways to improve	9
18. Asks "What can we learn?"	2
23. Makes certain that goals, plans, and milestones are set	4
28. Experiments and takes risks	7
Total:	37
Average:	6.17

How does this make sense to you?

What surprises you about these observations?

What opportunities do you see for engaging in any one of these behaviors more?

The rating scale runs from 1 to 10
 1 - Almost Never 6 - Sometimes
 2 - Rarely 7 - Fairly Often
 3 - Seldom 8 - Usually
 4 - Once in a While 9 - Very Frequently
 5 - Occasionally 10 - Almost Always



Enable Others to Act

- Foster collaboration by building trust and facilitating relationships.
- Strengthen others by increasing self-determination and developing competence.

4. Develops cooperative relationships	6
9. Actively listens to diverse points of view	6
14. Treats people with dignity and respect	10
19. Supports decisions other people make	6
24. Gives people choice about how to do their work	4
29. Ensures that people grow in their jobs	3
Total: 35	Average: 5.83

How does this make sense to you?

What surprises you about these observations?

What opportunities do you see for engaging in any one of these behaviors more?

The rating scale runs from 1 to 10
1 - Almost Never 6 - Sometimes
2 - Rarely 7 - Fairly Often
3 - Seldom 8 - Usually
4 - Once in a While 9 - Very Frequently
5 - Occasionally 10 - Almost Always



Encourage the Heart

- Recognize contributions by showing appreciation for individual excellence.
- Celebrate the values and victories by creating a spirit of community.

5. Praises people for a job well done	9
10. Expresses confidence in people's abilities	6
15. Creatively rewards people for their contributions	5
20. Recognizes people for commitment to shared values	4
25. Finds ways to celebrate accomplishments	5
30. Gives team members appreciation and support	7
Total: 36 Average: 6.0	

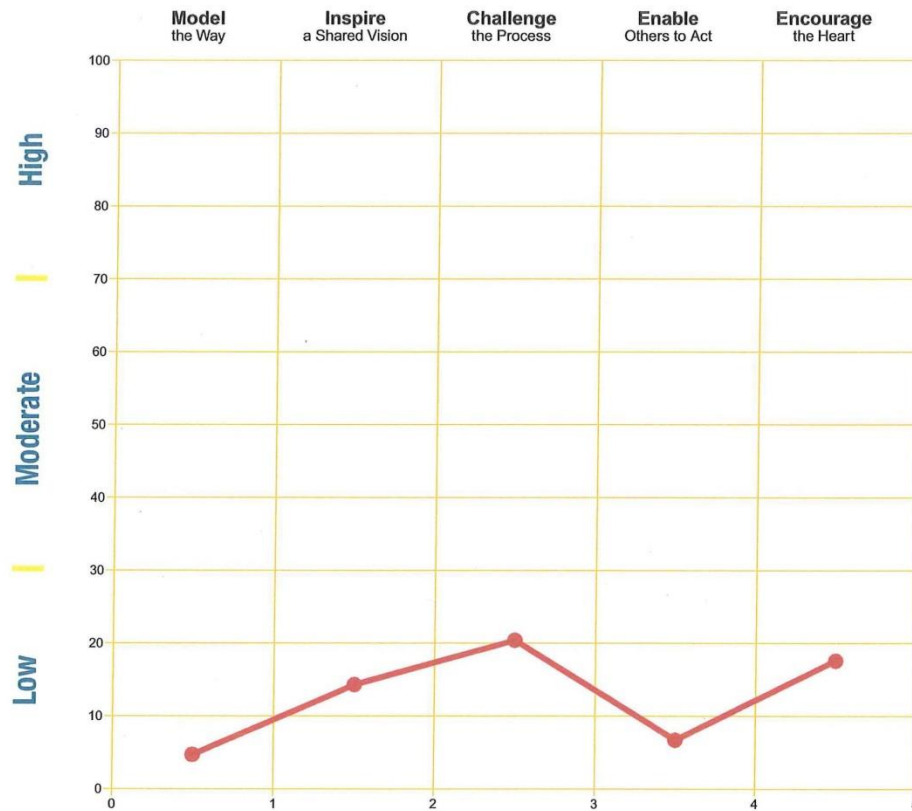
How does this make sense to you?

What surprises you about these observations?

What opportunities do you see for engaging in any one of these behaviors more?

Percentile Ranking

This page compares your Self scores to the scores of several thousand people who have taken this version of the LPI. The horizontal lines at the 30th and 70th percentiles divide the graph into three segments, roughly approximating a normal distribution of scores.



Next Steps - A Note From the Publisher

Congratulations on completing the LPI Self! We hope that you found the experience helpful. Leadership is a lifelong journey and a life-changing one as well. If you are looking for those everyday opportunities to make a small difference in your world or if you are in need of the tools to get started or a community to keep inspired, we can help. Whether you would like to read the inspirational words of Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner, gather some feedback on how you are doing as a leader, listen to a podcast, watch a video, or join a blog there are a variety of resources that will help as you or continue your leadership journey. These include:

1. **360 Assessment** - All leaders need feedback on how they are doing if they want to improve. The *Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI)* and *LPI Online* (www.lpionline.com) are also available as a 360-degree assessment instruments. Designed by Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner, this best-selling leadership tool has helped develop the leadership skills of over one million leaders worldwide. The *Student LPI* (www.studentlpionline.com) is also available for high school and undergraduate classroom settings.
2. **Books** - Jim and Barry have written several books, including the best-selling *The Leadership Challenge* as well as *A Leader's Legacy*, *Credibility*, *Encouraging the Heart*, *Christian Reflections on The Leadership Challenge*, and *The Jossey-Bass Academic Administrator's Guide to Exemplary Leadership*.
3. **Workbooks** - Jim and Barry believe that an important part of the learning process is practice, practice, practice, so they have created *The Leadership Challenge Workbook* and *The Encouraging the Heart Workbook*. These interactive tools are designed to be used during that proverbial Monday morning when you are back at your desk, faced with a problem or situation, and would like to resolve the issue using Jim and Barry's framework.
4. **Videos** - These visual aids to The Leadership Challenge program bring inspiring, real-life examples to the leadership development process.

Next Steps - A Note From the Publisher

5. **Workshop** - *The Leadership Challenge Workshop* and *Leadership Is Everyone's Business Workshop* are unique, intensive programs that consistently receive rave reviews from attendees. They have served as catalysts for profound leadership transformations in organizations of all sizes and in all industries. The programs are highly interactive and stimulating. Participants experience and apply Jim and Barry's leadership model through video cases, workbook exercises, group problem-solving tasks, lectures, and outdoor action learning. Quite often we hear workshop attendees describe how *The Leadership Challenge* is more than a training event. In many cases they talk about how it changed their lives. It's a bold statement, we know, but we've watched it happen time after time, leader after leader.
6. **Podcasts, Blog, e-Newsletter, and Web-Based Tools** - At www.leadershipchallenge.com you will discover several innovative ways to stay connected and current. Some resources are free; all offer valuable interactive ways to learn, develop, and become more effective as a leader.

Combined, these offerings truly make Jim and Barry the most trusted sources on becoming a better leader. To find out more about these products, please visit www.leadershipchallenge.com. Or if you would like to speak to a leadership consultant about bringing *The Leadership Challenge* to your organization or team, call toll free (866) 888-5159.

Appendix K

Emotional Intelligence Skills Assessment Results

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SKILLS ASSESSMENT: SELF

Individual Feedback Report

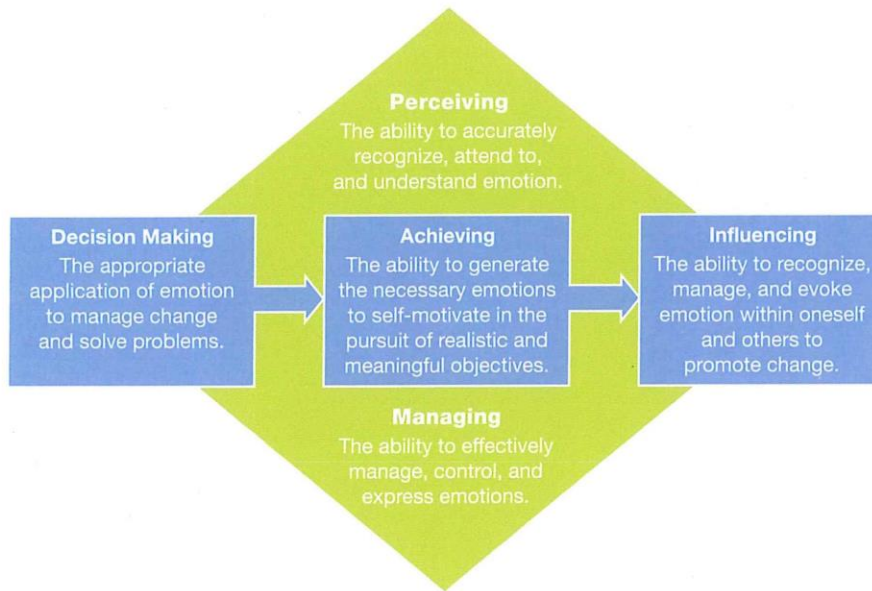
PREPARED FOR LESLIE GASSLER | FEBRUARY 14, 2013

LESLIE GASSLER EI



EISA

Welcome to the *Emotional Intelligence Skills Assessment (EISA)*. The EISA is designed to provide you with feedback on your perceived frequency of emotionally and socially intelligent behavior, as well as to help you better understand how these skills impact the quality of your personal and professional performance. This report highlights your emotional and social skills across five dimensions or factors, shown in the model below.



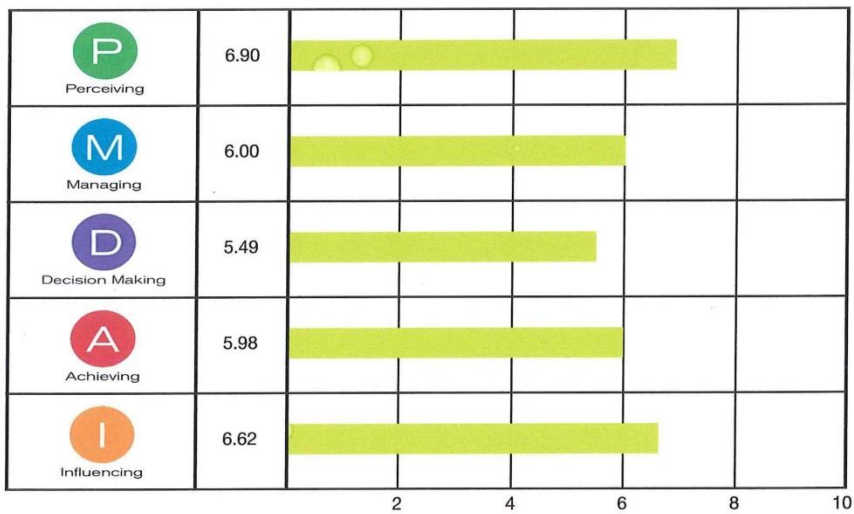
THE EISA ADVANTAGE

Emotional and social functioning plays a key role in your professional success. Each of the five dimensions of the EISA can be developed in order to maximize your performance. Although the EISA is a brief instrument, it represents a valid and reliable tool that quantitatively determines emotional skills that are likely to be relied on during periods of heightened stress and identifies those areas with the greatest opportunity for improvement.

YOUR EISA RESULTS

The EISA report is designed to provide you with insight into your current level of professional emotional and social functioning. When reading through your report, various emotions may surface. Please remember, the EISA report is only one piece of information and is best used in conjunction with other sources of relevant information. This may include, but is not limited to, the EISA: 360, objective behavioral ratings, and performance ratings. The process of growth begins with awareness, followed by determining what course of action is necessary to evoke long-lasting change. The EISA report is one instrumental component for initiating this change.

The scores shown on the bar graph below are *standard* scores. A standard score takes your raw score (which is simply the sum of your responses) and adjusts it onto a standardized scale to give you more information about what your score actually means and allows you to compare scores between factors.



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Let's look at an example of why standard scores are necessary. Let's say you received a raw score of 2.4 on Managing and a raw score of 3.1 on Achieving. Which factor do you use most frequently? Would you say Achieving? What if we then told you that the average score for Managing is a 2.1 and the average score for Achieving is 4.0? Now you can see that your Managing score is above average and your Achieving score is actually below average.

Standard scores eliminate this confusion. Standard scores incorporate the average and the spread of the data around the average (called the standard deviation) into their calculation, resulting in a more informative score. Standard scores for the EISA will always:

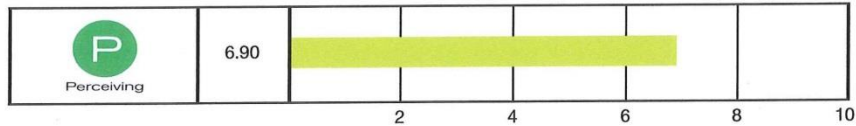
- range between 1-10
- have an average of 5
- have a standard deviation of 1

This means you automatically know if your score is above or below average (i.e., above or below 5) and how far away it is from the average (i.e., how many standard deviations of 1 is your score away from 5).

The following pages describe these factors in more detail.

PERCEIVING

“The ability to accurately recognize, attend to, and understand emotion.”



Perceiving emotions is the ability to be aware of, understand, and pay attention to emotions. Emotions contain valuable information about other people, our relationships, and our surroundings. The ability to perceive emotions begins with an awareness of emotional signals, accurately identifying the meaning of those signals, and then applying your emotional understanding to a given situation. The better someone is at reading and understanding emotions, the more appropriately that person will be able to respond.

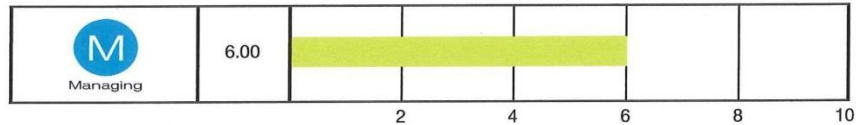
Your score suggests that you are very good at gauging your own emotions and the emotions of others. You are adept at understanding what emotions mean and the differentiation between them (for example, discriminating between fear and anger).

Emotional and Social Implications

- Your ability to discern between emotions and their degree of intensity allows you to better manage interpersonal relationships. This skill is especially important for you in environments that are constantly changing or that are emotionally charged.
- Being able to describe and identify your emotions provides you with more opportunities to be influential. People who are able to sufficiently appraise and describe their own emotions are more likely to exhibit more positive emotions and less non-verbal anger. This ability allows you to be perceived as more approachable.
- Your capacity to perceive the emotions of others is important to your overall performance. Being able to consciously interpret members of a group's tone, body language, and degree of eye contact gives you a higher sense of awareness. For example, if members of a group that you belong to are fearful of making a change, you are more likely to be able to recognize the need for an empathic or motivational conversation.
- Being authentic and predictable in your expression of emotions is a key to your success when interacting in groups. You often obtain full commitment from the groups that you associate with because you are aware of how positive and negative emotions can increase or decrease individual and group morale. Emotionally predictable people are often more successful because they are better at recognizing their own emotional triggers. Being aware of your emotional triggers helps you to stay calm, which often results in a higher level of trust and cooperation from others.

MANAGING

“The ability to effectively manage, control, and appropriately express emotions.”



The ability to effectively manage, control, and express emotions is perhaps the most important factor of emotional intelligence. That is, emotions are influential in directing our attention, our thoughts and feelings, and the decisions we make and the actions we take. However, we are not merely products of our emotions, but rather it is our appraisal/interpretation of our emotions that impacts the level/intensity of the emotion - both experienced and expressed.

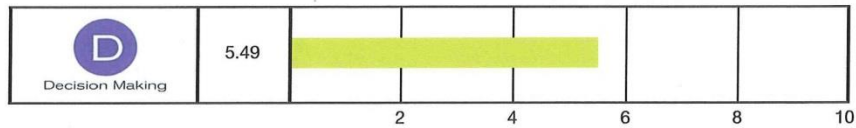
Your score indicates that you are highly proficient at managing, controlling, and expressing emotions in a socially acceptable and constructive manner. This ability has direct implications on the development and quality of your interpersonal relationships, personal stress, health, decision making, and professional success. For example, individuals who recognize when they feel frustrated, sad, irritable, or elated and who perceive how these feelings alter their behavior are often viewed as empathic, composed, and approachable, which can lead to greater personal and professional opportunities.

Emotional and Social Implications

- Your ability to manage emotions can translate into an accurate interpretation of your own emotions and the emotions of others. As a result, you are better equipped to express those emotions to others. It is this level of ability that is so vital to the quality of your interpersonal interactions.
- Managing your emotions will help you harness the energy needed to sustain motivation, cope with stress, and make decisions. For example, the experience of a positive emotion is a good indication that all is well, while a negative emotion can suggest the need for deliberation and attention to detail.
- You will likely be faced with personal, social, and professional situations in which family members, friends, clients, or colleagues become emotionally charged, allowing their emotions to exert undue influence. Using your emotional skills (attention to body language, tone of voice, etc.) helps you to manage the situation and put others at ease.
- Managing your emotions, including your ability to express these emotions, can lead to the development of more meaningful interpersonal relationships. For example, preventing emotional outbursts due to insignificant or trivial concerns or empathizing with someone who has had a bad day can lead to deeper emotional connections and greater interpersonal satisfaction.

DECISION MAKING

“The application of emotion to manage change and solve problems.”



The process of decision making requires the attention to and processing of relevant environmental, interpersonal, and intrapersonal cues. However, an individual's emotional state can directly influence what information he or she attends to. As a result, the emotionally intelligent individual knows which emotions will help with a task or situation and will in turn be able to generate the emotion that will provide the best chance of achieving a successful outcome. For example, positive and negative emotions (happy versus sad) directly influence both our cognitive and physical resources available for decision making, impacting both decision speed and accuracy. As a result, an astute awareness of the “problem” must be paired with an appropriate emotional state. Therefore, the ability to manage change and solve problems is a reflection of one's ability to match emotions with the demands of the situation.

Your score indicates a good decision-making ability, suggesting that you are generally adept at recognizing the importance of different emotions for effective decision making. However, you may be susceptible to adopting ineffective strategies when presented with emotionally evocative content. For example, there is a possibility that you are prone to impulsive decisions when elated or delayed and drawn-out decisions when subdued.

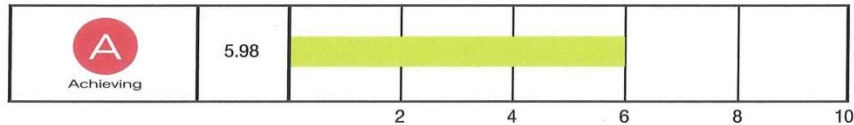
Emotional and Social Implications

- You are skilled at collecting all the factual pieces of information necessary for effective decision making, which can enhance confidence when making technical, tactical, and emotional decisions.
- Positive emotions such as happiness, elation, and exuberance tend to be associated with an overestimation of the likelihood for positive outcomes and an underestimation of the probability for a negative outcome. The experience of positive emotions is an excellent indication that all is well. However, be aware that not all situations will benefit from quick and overly optimistic judgments. Be sure to recognize when a more subdued emotional state can enhance your decision-making ability.
- Emotions such as anger, fear, empathy, happiness, and sadness have been shown to impact the decision-making process. Your score suggests that you possess the ability to recognize when it is necessary to activate an emotion compatible with task demands. For example, decision making in which considerable attention must be given to the details of the existing environment requires a more subdued emotional state.
- Your ability to manage change and solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature can be directly affected by your emotional state. For example, decision making with a reliance on pre-existing knowledge structures accompanies a positive mood state. In other words, the “gut reaction” approach to decision making often applies in this case.

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ACHIEVING

“The ability to generate the necessary emotions to self-motivate in the pursuit of realistic and meaningful objectives.”



Achieving requires the ability to self-motivate and to evoke the emotions necessary to pursue realistic and meaningful goals. Although success is often subjectively defined, our physiological reaction (that is, heart rate, blood pressure, breathing rate, etc.) and emotional experiences are based on the interpretation of the effectiveness of our efforts toward goal attainment.

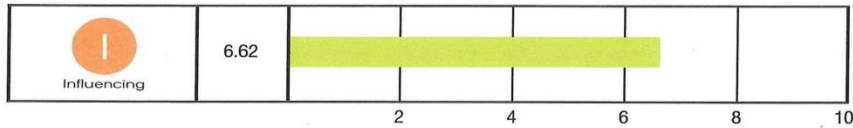
Your score indicates that you are goal directed but with a tendency to focus on the end result. Although you experience pleasure in success, you are likely to be motivated to avoid failure. You tend to take responsibility for the outcomes of your actions, enjoy activities with some risk, and welcome feedback. From a psychological perspective, your achievement orientation can result in the experience of positive emotions; however, this may take considerable effort. Intrinsic motivation has been linked with satisfaction, enjoyment, and interest, and it has a negative relationship with maladjustment and burnout; but given that you have a tendency to focus on outcomes while avoiding failure, your outcome orientation can lead to more negative moods and less effective social and emotional adjustment in high-stress situations.

Emotional and Social Implications

- Your disposition to achieve is a good indication of your motivation. Generally speaking, you are motivated to achieve success, while you spend little emotional energy and time thinking about failure. As a result, you find yourself drawn to challenges and tasks with moderate levels of risk. Consider your level of functioning on both the Managing and Decision Making components of the EISA. Maximizing your functioning in each of these areas will assist you in achieving your goals.
- You likely enjoy competitive events, especially those that are a true test of your abilities. Although this tendency is often engaging, be aware that this tendency can alienate those you work and socialize with. Not all people view a challenge or competition as an opportunity to experience positive emotions such as pride; some become more motivated to simply avoid the emotions that are associated with failure. As a result, the behavioral tendency is to avoid competitive and challenging situations. If you fail to recognize this difference, you may find that some people feel unsettled around you.
- Because of your desire to achieve success, you may also find that you perform better when faced with deadlines or in the presence of your colleagues. You can use this tendency to your advantage. For example, if you find boredom or monotony creeping into your day, impose deadlines or set challenging goals.
- You strive to find ways to make most tasks personally relevant and meaningful. This motivation results in the experience of positive emotions that often result in increased optimism and decision making. Given the nature of today's fast-paced environment, leveraging your ability to generate more positive moods will help keep your motivation high and productivity swift.

INFLUENCING

“The ability to recognize, manage, and evoke emotion within oneself and others to promote change.”



Emotions play an enormous role in the creation, maintenance, and progression of social relationships. Your feelings often shape the behaviors and thoughts of others because others perceive these emotions as social signals, which often provoke some form of action. The use of particular emotions and the regulation of those emotions influence the quality and intensity of interpersonal relationships. The way people read your emotional and social cues can have an effect on the amount of power, competence, and credibility that you have. Being confident and authentic in your interactions with people is also essential in becoming more influential in the various roles that you play. Being able to express yourself clearly and confidently often motivates others to achieve higher levels of performance.

Your score indicates a high level on the Influencing subscale, which suggests that you are often using your emotions and the emotions of others to your benefit. This skill may manifest itself when inspiring others to obtain greater goals, influencing others' creativity, improving collaboration, or bringing about change.

Emotional and Social Implications

- Your ability to be aware of your own strengths provides you with more opportunities to have influence with others. Consistently putting yourself in that position allows others to know what you bring to the table. People are attracted to and motivated to work with someone who believes that he or she can make things happen.
- Being able to assert yourself appropriately often allows you to manage others effectively. You are able to describe what needs to be done, which helps when setting proper direction and tone.
- Your ability to use positive emotions effectively enhances the influence you have. You often will use positive emotions (happiness, optimism, a smile) to engage others, which leads to increased approachability and a desire for future relationships. This increases your personal networks, as well as beneficial alliances.
- Your capacity to employ a positive and confident disposition increases your likelihood of influencing others, who generally perceive this disposition as energizing and motivating.