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Study Abroad and the Global Public Good: A Developmental Evaluation of the International Business Major

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Abstract

Study abroad, for any length of time and in any location, is widely recognized in higher education as a positive educational activity. While individual benefits of study abroad have been explored for decades, recent research has pushed the field to consider benefits for the local and global community. This program evaluation contributes to this line of inquiry by asking international business majors about the influences on their study abroad program choice process and the involvement of the university's mission to positively impact the public good. Using developmental program evaluation and UNESCO's global citizenship education theory, this study found that students are involved in a dynamic choice process that is influenced by three systems: the university, the personal network, and the societal system. While interacting with these systems, students develop meaningful study abroad goals, including participation in experiential learning and positively impacting the public good. These findings lead to a number of recommendations: faculty and staff should emphasize advising for first year students, sharing data with the study abroad office, and building a peer advising program and a faculty career advising structure. Study abroad administrators and leaders should evaluate their programs for their impact on the public good, which can be found in coursework, events, and marketing/advising. This program evaluation calls for further research on how Gen Z students make their study abroad program selections while considering their impact on the global public good.

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by

Sara Barbier Bularzik

August 2023

Advisor: Dr. Christine Nelson

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Chapter One: Introduction

Study abroad, for any length of time and in any location, is widely recognized in higher education as a positive educational activity for college students in the United States, enhancing their personal and professional development and increasing their global awareness (Engberg, 2013; Stoner et al., 2014). While individual benefits have been explored and praised for decades, researchers have just recently begun asking about the impact on the communities that host these short-term visitors (Doerr, 2016; Elliot, 2015; Ficarra, 2019; Schroeder et al., 2009). Critics of education abroad programs that primarily focus on the needs of U.S. students above the local populations say that these models promote a neocolonial relationship with host communities, sustaining historical inequities and injustices that cross-cultural engagement should be working against (Andreotti, 2011; Pipitone, 2018).

At the same time, U.S. universities promise to deliver an education for global citizenship (Goren & Yemini, 2017; Shultz, 2007) and the public or common good (East et al., 2014; Marginson & Yang, 2020). Students are surrounded by this language at schools like the one where this study is based, where the institutional vision is to be a great private university dedicated to the public good. The meaning that students derive from the public good is not clearly understood, as public good has consistently been defined solely by higher education institutions (Hazelkorn & Gibson, 2019; Nelson et al.,

2022). Furthermore, the connection between public good and study abroad is not well documented, and particularly absent from this discussion are voices of students who are going through the study abroad decision-making and application process (Bularzik, 2022).

Purpose of Evaluation

The purpose of this program evaluation is to enhance the program's understanding of how its students describe and interpret the study abroad choice process. In the study abroad choice process, this evaluation also explores how concepts of the public good and global citizenship may shape student perceptions. The population I will be learning from is undergraduate students majoring in international business (IB) at a private university in the U.S. who are in the process of selecting and applying to study abroad programs or who have recently returned from studying abroad. Students in this major study abroad at high rates (over half of the major in 2022-2023), but the IB program leadership does not know how students decide what programs to attend and currently play a minor role in the decision process. This study will focus on the stories and perceptions students have about study abroad program selection influences.

Evaluation Approach and Theoretical Framework Overview

Since study abroad is a long-standing and ongoing program, I will use developmental evaluation, which is useful to evaluate dynamic systems and innovative interventions. Developmental evaluation is a type of utilization-focused evaluation, meaning the findings and recommendations should be useful for the evaluand. The goal of this program evaluation is to learn how perceptions of the public good are involved in

study abroad program selection, so that the IB major leadership can integrate the public good in study abroad advising and promotion. The missions of the university and the college of business are to positively impact the public good, and the IB faculty leadership personally see learning about the public good as a crucial element to study abroad experiences.

To frame the research and discussion of a global public good through study abroad, I will use global citizenship education theory as defined by UNESCO (2018), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. There are many debates and definitions of global citizenship in the literature, which I outline in Chapter 2, but for the purposes of this study, the UNESCO definition focuses on cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral learning with a focus on intercultural cooperation. By using this conceptual framework, I am deviating from the typical study abroad frameworks that center only the student and ignore the impacts students have on others while abroad. Global citizenship education theory also complements my developmental evaluation approach because it recognizes dynamic, complex systems that are constantly developing in a changing world.

Evaluation Questions

1. How do international business majors make meaning of the influences on their study abroad program selection?

    a. How do students' perceptions of their program selection relate to the university's mission of serving the public good?

Background of the Problem

U.S. college students have been studying abroad in increasingly high numbers over the past two decades. According to the Open Doors Report published by the Institute of International Education (2022), the number of students going abroad during some point in their degree program more than doubled from 2000 to 2019, from 154,168 in the 2000-2001 school year to 347,099 in the 2018-2019 school year. (Data from fall 2019 through spring 2022 show much lower numbers of study abroad participation due to the Covid-19 pandemic and consequential global travel restrictions.) Over that same time period, study abroad students have become more racially diverse; in 2000/2001, 84.3 percent of students identified as White. By 2018/2019 that number dropped to 68.7 percent, with significant growth in students reporting Hispanic or Latino/a identities (5.4 percent to 10.9 percent), Black or African American identities (3.5 percent to 6.4 percent), and multiracial identities (0.9 percent to 4.7 percent). However, gender representation has remained consistently skewed toward women: in 2000/2021, 65 percent of study abroad participants were women, compared to 67.3 percent in 2018/2019.

As an academic pursuit, the field of study for students matters. The largest proportion of U.S. study abroad students have a major within a STEM field, 26.8 percent in 2018/2019, which includes physical sciences, health professions, engineering, math, computer science, and agriculture. The next two highest represented majors are business (20.7 percent) and social sciences (17 percent). This goes against common stereotypes of study abroad being a pursuit only for those studying foreign languages, international

studies, and the humanities. While the majors and courses that students take while studying abroad are diverse, the countries where they are going are not.

Destinations for U.S. college students have always been centered around Europe, beginning in 1923 with wealthy men from the University of Delaware touring France during their junior year (University of Delaware, 2023). One century later, the destinations are similar; in the 2018/2019 school year, 193,422 students studied in Europe, with France, Spain, Italy, and the United Kingdom attracting the highest numbers. That same year, only 40,602 students went to Asia and 21,410 went to Africa and the Middle East. These numbers reflect a historical institutional connection with U.S. and European universities, as well as a student preference to study in countries that are familiar or culturally connected with the United States.

Wherever students go, research shows that studying abroad increases intercultural learning and positive career outcomes. For example, Franklin (2010) found, in interviewing college graduates ten years after their study abroad experiences, that knowledge, skills, and self-awareness that was gained through study abroad is still applicable in their careers today. This is particularly salient for students pursuing careers with a global or intercultural component.

Studying abroad is also simply something that U.S. college students are excited about; a study from January 2023 found that 80 percent of college freshmen reported the desire to study abroad during their undergraduate degree programs (Spitalniak, 2023). Despite the enthusiasm, access to study abroad is inequitable. Simon and Ainsworth

(2012) argue that similar to higher education as a whole, study abroad opportunities skew wealthy and White, leaving students from lower socioeconomic categories and other racial groups less likely to pursue or have the financial or cultural capital to be able to participate in study abroad.

In addition, the benefits of study abroad have historically been focused on the visiting student and not the host community abroad. By discussing impacts on the community, we can shift the narrative around study abroad from solely personal benefits to mutual benefits, or the global public good.

Rationale for Study

There is limited research on study abroad students' perceptions of global citizenship and public good, and the research that exists focuses on students who have returned from studying abroad. This gap leaves wide open the question of whether students consider messages about public good in their study abroad program selection. Post-travel studies are valuable and give clues as to what students may be looking for when choosing study abroad programs. A recent study found that college graduates who had studied abroad were more likely to participate in civic engagement, philanthropic activities, and volunteerism, and cared deeply about issues like climate change and inequality (Jon & Fry, 2021, p. 408). This supports a quantitative study that surveyed students who graduated from 1980-2010 which had the same results (Murphy et al., 2014) and a mixed methods study of over 6,000 study abroad alumni which concluded that studying abroad had a positive impact on students serving the public good (Paige et

al., 2009). While these results are promising, they do not address the influences and motivations for students prior to going abroad.

This program evaluation aims to highlight ways that the public good is not just a lucky consequence of study abroad, but an influence on why students are choosing to study abroad in the first place. By bringing this to the forefront, international educational professionals will be able to consider more elements of their study abroad programs that lead to positive impacts on the public good. Limited research exists on the types of study abroad programs that lead to these impacts (Goldstein, 2015; Jotia et al., 2020), but these studies do not focus on the stories and perceptions of students.

As scholars call for more study abroad programs that positively impact the global public good (Moreno, 2021; Stein, 2021), it will be important to understand if and how public good is an influence on students who are choosing their programs. For this university and the international business major leadership specifically, this study will both provide a baseline for understanding the influences on students choosing their programs as well as context for how to further integrate the public good mission into study abroad messaging and advising.

Setting and Evaluand

The setting of this evaluation is a private university in the western United States with an undergraduate acceptance rate of 64 percent, according to U.S. News and World Report. The undergraduate population is just under 6,000 and the graduate population is approximately 7,500. The largest fields of study include business, social sciences, and

psychology. The university has an extremely high rate of participation in study abroad programs, the second highest in the United States.

This high participation rate is largely due to a scholarship program, which covers the costs of selected study abroad programs to make the cost for the student equal to attending a term on campus. This generous funding opportunity and the culture built around it on campus to encourage study abroad makes this university a unique setting for studying student perceptions and influences on their study abroad choices. The scholarship program also highlights the impact the study abroad office has on student experiences abroad, as the office is in charge of choosing and maintaining the portfolio of programs that qualify for the scholarship.

The evaluand for this program evaluation is the international business (IB) major at the university, which currently has 132 undergraduate students. Out of those students, approximately half of them study abroad, typically in fall term of their third year. Students in the international business major take a combination of courses from the business school and the school of international studies. All students in the IB major must also have a minor, which can range widely, from other business fields to the arts and sciences.

The stakeholders in this program evaluation are numerous, including students, the IB program leadership, the study abroad office, academic advisors, the admissions office, faculty, and the people who run study abroad programming in the countries where students are traveling. This program evaluation prioritizes the voices of students through

interviews because the goal is to understand how students experience the study abroad choice process. Each stakeholder group is interested in what students have to say. In Chapter 5, I will outline conclusions and recommendations for each of these stakeholder groups.

Findings and Recommendations

This program evaluation suggested numerous findings that address the evaluation questions. To answer how students make meaning of influences on their study abroad program choices, this study found three systems of influence. The first system of influence is the societal system, which makes up social discourse and imagery around study abroad and building study abroad as a good thing to do while you are in college. The second system of influence is the personal network, which is made up of students' friends, family, and community that reinforce images and messages about study abroad being a good thing. The third system of influence is the university system, which is the system that ultimately determines which programs students can go on based on scholarships, course transfers, and program approvals. Students do not move in a linear fashion from one system to the next; they are experiencing all three systems concurrently. The three systems influence the next question in this program evaluation.

To answer how students relate their program selections to the university and college mission of serving the public good, this study found two areas of meaningful goal setting. The first goal that students expressed was participating in experiential learning, particularly through travel and learning outside of the classroom. The second goal that students indicated was positively impacting the public good, which they described

through concepts of personal growth and ethical actions in their local and global communities.

These findings lead to a number of recommendations for the evaluand, the university, the field of study abroad, and beyond. For the evaluand in particular, the faculty leadership of the IB major, this program evaluation helped them put together a student journey map that shows how students experience the study abroad choice process and where there are gaps that the IB major could help fill. A significant recommendation of this evaluation is how to fill in those gaps with advising, events, and mentorship. Beyond the major but still within the university, this program evaluation also recommends that the leadership of the study abroad office evaluate their approved study abroad programs for public good impact, establish a formal advising structure for first year students, and work more closely with undergraduate academic advising to provide a more seamless experience for IB majors looking to fit study abroad into their course plans. For the field of study abroad and practitioners abroad, this program evaluation recommends putting more focus on the global public good for Gen Z learners. The global public good can be integrated into marketing, coursework, and other programmatic events through discussions and analysis of power, privilege, diversity, and culture.

My Positionality

Riding on a bus through rural Laos, a mother holding her baby touched my knee gently and said, with a smile on her face, "so different, so beautiful, I want that!" It was the first time anyone had told me that they envied my light-colored skin, and it sent chills up my spine. It took me years to untangle what it all meant. Global travel, the thing that

makes me feel the most alive and the most myself, is interminably wrapped in White supremacy. I live with this tension as I navigate my unlearning of colonial mindsets and relearning of positive ways to interact with the world.

I grew up as part of the majority in a White, middle class, urban, Catholic, Midwestern neighborhood and school system that celebrated European heritage: in particular, Irish, Italian, German, French, and Polish. In school, we were taught that our relationship to the rest of the world was based on leisure travel or helping the poor. Countries like Mexico, Jamaica, and the Dominican Republic served as cheap beach getaways for families. Farther afield travel to countries like Ireland, the United Kingdom, and Italy were promoted as bucket list trips that families took to connect with cultural heritage and ancestral pride. Finally, there were the occasional White savior youth who signed onto the Peace Corps, missionary work, or other service projects in "third world" countries in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The young people who went on these "adventures" were praised for being brave and selfless.

I studied French in high school due to my ancestry, so my first overseas trip was three weeks in France with my French class. I loved every second of it and looked forward to studying abroad in college. I went to college in Washington D.C. with the goal of studying international journalism and conflict resolution, undoubtedly influenced by the community that raised me to think I could "be the change" to fix global war and poverty. As I met students from different backgrounds and learned from professors from around the world, I slowly began to unlearn my self-centered savior mentality. I have

since been to nearly 40 countries, and I am still unlearning. This dissertation process and product are part of my unlearning.

I was drawn to working in the field of study abroad because I wanted to help young people like me – privileged and believing the world is their oyster – unlearn the harmful stereotypes and savior mentalities that we were raised to believe. If I were to reimagine study abroad that truly serves the public good, it would involve centering the needs of the communities where students are traveling to and guiding students toward awareness and actions to repair historical inequities. My experience has taught me that the world is not for my taking, despite U.S. higher education telling me that it is.

My money, U.S. passport, and skin color have brought me to places and given me privileges in those places, whether or not I recognized it at the time. Working in rural Ningxia province in western China, I was the favorite English teacher among the students, even though my fellow teachers had more teaching experience and were just as fluent in English as I was. But those teachers were ethnically Asian. Experiences like these have taught me that travel and intercultural interactions should never be discussed on a binary. I loved living and working in China, and at the same time I saw many complications about the country and of my being there. It was not good or bad, nor right or wrong. Living in the nuance is the only constant. The answer is not for U.S. college students to disengage with the world, but to engage more humbly, respectfully, and thoughtfully. This only works if students are given space to work through the ambiguity, nuance, and discomfort that come with global learning. I bring this embrace of nuance

and rejection of the binary into this dissertation and all future research and practice in the field of study abroad (Bularzik, 2022).

Key Definitions

> **Study abroad**: A common term for the experience of U.S.-based undergraduate students spending time in another country while gaining college course credits, ranging in amounts of time from a few days to an entire academic year.

> **Study abroad program:** An established structure to host U.S. undergraduates abroad, either based at universities or independently operated organizations with partnerships with U.S. institutions of higher education, providing services to students that can include housing, courses, campus facilities, travel programs, and extracurricular events.

> **Program selection/choice process:** The decision-making experience that students go through over any length of time when deciding what study abroad program(s) to submit applications for.

> **Public good:** A term encompassing a variety of interpretations of how to make one's community a better place through work, civic engagement, or other endeavors.

> **Global citizenship:** A term encompassing a variety of interpretations of how to positively engage with people and systems outside of one's nationality and culture.

Experiential learning: Learning through doing, often defined in opposition to learning by reading or lecture, and frequently inclusive of activities outside of a classroom setting.

Overview of Chapters

This program evaluation is comprised of five chapters. After this introduction chapter, Chapter 2 will provide an overview of the literature that is relevant to the study, including interpretations of global citizenship and the public good, an overview of students' study abroad choice process and motivations, and gaps in the literature related to these two areas. In Chapter 3, I will outline the methods and methodology used in this program evaluation, including the paradigm, evaluand and context, methods, data collection, and data analysis. In Chapter 4, I will give a detailed presentation of the findings, explaining how both of my evaluation questions were answered with the data. In Chapter 5, I will outline conclusions, recommendations, and areas for further research for a number of stakeholders, including the evaluand and other offices at the university. Finally, the appendix will include memos to stakeholders with specific recommendations.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

The purpose of this program evaluation is to enhance the program's understanding of how its students describe and interpret the study abroad choice process. In the study abroad choice process, this evaluation also explores how concepts of the public good and global citizenship may shape student perceptions. This study and literature review address two gaps in study abroad research. First, there is already extensive research on the factors that students consider when deciding whether to study abroad or not (Stroud, 2010; Bryant & Soria, 2015; Boulden, 2019; Salisbury et al., 2011; Sweeny, 2013; Butler et al., 2018; Simon & Ainsworth, 2012) and factors that impact destination choice (Nyaupane et al., 2011; Reister, 2018; Smith, 2016), but there is extremely limited research on what and who influences the type of program that students choose in those destinations. The variety of programs is endless; for example, a search on GoAbroad.com for study abroad programs in Italy comes up with 333 results (https://www.goabroad.com/study-abroad/search/italy/study-abroad-1, July 1, 2022). How students process and experience the program selection decision is unknown.

Second, the factor of public good in study abroad programs has very little research to date, making the influence of public good impact on students' program selection unknown. To frame the exploration of student perceptions of public good in study abroad, I will use the UNESCO definition of global citizenship education, which

includes cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral growth from international engagement (UNESCO, 2018). This theory acknowledges that global citizenship is a dynamic and complex concept that includes skills and knowledge (cognitive), self-reflection and respectfulness (socio-emotional), and actions (behavioral). In Chapter 3, I will go into more detail about why the UNESCO definition is a comprehensive and useful theoretical framework for this program evaluation. However, many other definitions of global citizenship education exist, and it is important to first analyze what these are and how they impact higher education.

This literature review is a product of years of reading and writing about these topics and collecting notes and summaries of articles and books in Zotero, a research and citation tool (Bularzik, 2020). As so much of this topic is interdisciplinary, there were not specific journals that I could focus on reading. Study abroad research can be found in the fields of education, travel and tourism, international relations, political science, sociology, language and linguistics, and geography. This meant much of my exploration was done by reading and looking at citations. If I found one article that touched on topics I was interested in, I would use Google Scholar to see who else had cited that article. This was particularly useful for finding the most recent research that had been published; global travel, international relations, and higher education have changed rapidly over the past few decades, so I made an effort to highlight research published over the past 10 years (2012-2022). Framing this program evaluation with the most recent research means that my conclusions and recommendations will be relevant for today's practitioners and stakeholders.

In the following sections, I will outline the literature related to global citizenship education including the many ways it is defined, the many ways it is taught, and the ways researchers and practitioners are imagining the future of global citizenship education. Next, I will provide an overview of college students' motivations to study abroad and a review of how students' identities impact their access and experience of study abroad. I will then explain where students are studying abroad and the limited information that we have about why they choose these destinations. Next, I will look deeper into who today's study abroad students are as members of Generation Z, and how this identity interacts with the positive and negative impacts study abroad programs have on host communities. Finally, I will present the literature on the public good in higher education research.

Global Citizenship Education

In the 21st century, it is extremely common to hear from an educational institution of any level and in any part of the world that they intend to teach their students to become global citizens. Schattle (2008) said this is because global citizenship is ambiguous enough of a term that both liberal and conservative wings can find something to like about it. But what exactly is a global citizen and what are students learning to become one? To find this answer, I had to read authors mostly outside of the United States and often focused on primary and secondary education. There is a significant gap in research dealing specifically with global citizenship education in U.S. higher education. This literature review and subsequent program evaluation is a foundation upon which I can build that research.

Defining Global Citizenship

As global citizenship education is occurring in classrooms all around the world, to students of many different ages and backgrounds, it is not surprising that there is no common definition. But there have been many attempts. Andreotti (2006) defined two kinds of global citizenship education: soft and critical. The first aims to reach students on a moral level to influence them to give their time and money to support global issues such as the environment and education. Schattle (2008) called this same concept liberal cosmopolitan global citizenship. Gaudelli (2009) separated this category into world justice education – teaching global cooperation through entities such as the United Nations and the International Criminal Court – and cosmopolitan global citizenship – preaching common humanity and actions through charities and NGOs. Tarrant et al. (2011) described this as personal responsibility education, where the individual student can decide for themselves how they want to make a difference in the world. Veugelers (2011) called this moral global citizenship. All of these terms refer to an educational agenda that is not very controversial, as it allows the learner to decide for themselves how and where to put their efforts and praises the student for acts of charity and cooperation. This arm of global citizenship definition lacks any critical or justice-oriented action.

Shultz (2007) took the definition a step further to include neoliberalism. A neoliberal global citizen is above all a consumer of the world, whose main goal is "transnational mobility of knowledge and skills" (p. 252) that leads to personal economic success. Students taught in this framework are led to believe that they earned their access and success, despite any privileges that helped them along the way. Schattle (2008) called

this competency-based global citizenship, with the same idea of individual success in a globalized economy through a list of applied skills. Gaudelli (2009) connected neoliberal global citizenship to nationalism, as students are taught to be competitive with the rest of the world: learning is about winning for your own country (p. 71). The United States government has been explicit about its perspective on global education; the 2005 Lincoln Commission called for more global experiences for students to learn about the rest of the world in order to serve U.S. national security interests (Stoner et al., 2014). Neoliberalism is not always that overt; Lyons et al. (2012) showed how educational volunteer programs taking students overseas, despite their moral language, still produce neoliberal outcomes for their students.

Finally, in critical global citizenship education, Andreotti (2006) said students are taught to analyze how they are part of the problem of inequity and how they can be the solution (p. 47). This requires going beyond the surface problems and moral platitudes with reflection upon the legacy and history of one's culture, such as colonialism and slavery, in order to be accountable and work for justice. Shultz (2007) separated this more critical global education into two camps: radical and transformational. Radical global citizenship is about analyzing inequalities and oppression to understand the deeper history, but does not tie in accountability or actionable change. Transformational global citizenship, however, is focused on establishing new ways of interacting outside of historical power dynamics, and then building a better world that respects the complexity of human cultures (p. 254). The wide range of definitions of global citizenship education, from the soft and cosmopolitan to the critical and transformational, shows that schools

and classrooms have a lot of choices to make when deciding how to present this topic to their students. Through this literature review, I found that location and home culture also played a role in the teaching and learning of global citizenship.

Teaching Global Citizenship

A major influence on what students learn is their teachers' level of comfort with the subject matter. When it comes to global citizenship and its myriad of learning goals, teachers and professors are often unsure. Goren and Yemini (2016) in their study of Israeli teachers found that soft global citizenship was much easier to teach. Anything critical or political felt uncomfortable, and they resisted the reliance on the English language to mark that their students were "global" (p. 846). These teachers also saw a wealth and class divide, where students whose families could afford to travel identified more with global citizenship, and students with less wealth had to focus on local issues just to get through basic schooling.

Veugelers (2011) found similar attitudes among secondary teachers in the Netherlands. They preferred teaching a moral global citizenship over a socio-political one, as they wanted to avoid controversial issues in the classroom or any specific calls to action. They were uncomfortable calling out specific inequalities and power dynamics, as they did not feel supported by the school administration to do so. By focusing on themes of morality such as justice systems and humanity, they hoped that their students will use this as a steppingstone to more transformational learning in the future. This puts any transformational learning and action outside of the school system.

Looking all around the globe, Goren and Yemini (2017) found that in the United States, Canada, South Korea, China, and Europe, global citizenship education was focused primarily on neoliberal values of working effectively and competitively in a global economy through language ability and cross-cultural communication skills. This contrasted drastically with African countries, where global citizenship education was likely to discuss issues of advocacy, inequality, and social change (p. 174). This is an important contrast to remember for educators who are working with African and Western groups of students in the same space, who may not realize how different their definitions of global citizenship may be.

Teachers also play a role in either promoting or extinguishing the image of the White savior (Andreotti, 2006). The heroic savior story is common within global nonprofit organizations and education directed at White students who have the money and mobility to volunteer and donate to causes related to global poverty. The main problem with this image is that it erases the history between groups – such as the European colonizers and the African colonized – and rewards the small contributions of white individuals instead of pushing for a radical change in global economic structures. It also reinforces the idea that White/European beliefs and ways of knowing are right for the rest of the world, without learning anything about other perspectives (p. 41). Classrooms that preach the White savior model of global citizenship are perpetuating centuries of inequality and encouraging their students feel good about their role in it.

Imagining Future Global Citizenship Education

Gaudelli (2009) identified one of the biggest problems with global citizenship education as the concept of placelessness, that a person can belong to the entire world instead of a particular city, region, or group (p. 81). The valuing of placelessness erases identity and accountability and serves to ignore the complexity between groups interacting, such as a student on a study abroad program living with a host family. Along with ending this idea of placelessness, Gaudelli urged educators to teach their students that there is no single definition of a global citizen. It is in understanding this complexity that students could attain a higher level of knowing their role in the world. Andreotti (2006) also pointed out that by identifying your citizenship not with a specific place but with the entire world, you are pushing away from local and national rules in order to have unrestrained power (p. 43). This type of language creates a hierarchy of those who are global and those who are local, where the global citizens have more power, access, and control.

Andreotti (2011) wrote about her hope for a more critical curriculum rooted in decolonization. She outlined that global citizenship work should engage with various epistemologies in order to stop centering Western ways of knowing and of producing knowledge. In this spirit, this education would also argue against universal truths, stop looking for common ground between two sides, embrace paradox and ambiguity, and connect the dots explicitly between our current global situation and the extensive history of colonialism (p. 395). Western education systems have for too long taught their students that Western ways are naturally dominant, instead of teaching the history of

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colonialism and the sources of White wealth (Andreotti, 2006). There cannot be a neutral way of teaching decolonial global citizenship, as neutrality has historically been a way of silencing non-Western perspectives.

Not everyone agrees that global citizenship can decolonize. In his 2013 book, Dill argued that global citizenship in any form is tied to Western liberal individualism and cannot reinvent itself as anything other than that. In Jorgenson's 2014 dissertation, they studied North American college students participating in an exchange program in Ghana. But it was not really an exchange; by structuring a program where only North American students traveled overseas to learn about their Ghanaian classmates, and not vice-versa, the entire experience is framed in neo-colonial and unequal terms. Jorgenson argued that one-way study programs such as these uphold Western students as superior over African students, labeling only the travelers as global citizens. Gardner-McTaggart (2016) extended this idea to point out that the Western global citizenship education model has been used on non-Western students to raise their social capital and create a higher class within their local communities. When Western education creates an elite class in non-Western locations, we are socially replicating the situation of colonialism.

This complex history and attempt to define global citizenship education is important to understand because the main topic of this program evaluation, U.S. study abroad, is greatly embedded in the social discourse of global citizenship. In Chapter 4, I will outline the findings of this study that explore students' perceptions of global citizenship through study abroad. In this next section of the literature review, I will

outline what the literature has said about U.S. study abroad in general as related to my evaluation question of influences on study abroad program selection.

Why College Students Want to Study Abroad

When searching for these motivations for studying abroad, I found study after study about why educators and administrators want students to study abroad, but very little containing the student perspective. Those that do exist are quantitative studies using large-scale surveys, which make it harder to hear student voices. For example, Haisley et al. (2021) found that U.S. students were most highly motivated to study abroad for cultural exploration and travel. This includes a desire to travel, to get away from the U.S. for a short period of time, to engage in new experiences, and interest in the host country. They also found that U.S. students are not as motivated by academics or language learning compared to international students who study in the United States (p. 197). Nyaupane et al. (2010) found in their quantitative study that U.S. college students wanted to study abroad due to social ties and motivations, for example, having close friends or family who are in or from the country where they are going to study. Nyaupane et al. pointed out that studies on why U.S. college students want to study abroad are still extremely limited, and most of the research was done in the 20th century. The most recent relevant study directly asking students this question was Kitsantas (2004), another quantitative study, which found that the number one reason students said they wanted to study abroad was to experience different cultures. It is important to note here that career skills and future work opportunities are frequently listed as benefits and motivations to study abroad by educators and researchers (Franklin, 2010), but I was unable to find any

studies that indicated students themselves were motivated by careers. This suggests that career outcomes are just that – outcomes, not motivations.

Who Can Study Abroad

In Chapter 1, I described the demographic data and trends of who is studying abroad from U.S. colleges and universities. As overall numbers of U.S. students going abroad has increased over the past decade, researchers have investigated the questions of why students do not go and who these students are. While many studies focus on financial and academic barriers, such as majors and curriculum not allowing transfer credit from overseas courses and scholarships not applying to study abroad, those issues are not common for the evaluand and students in this study because the university has an endowed scholarship fund to support study abroad as well as a culture of academic support for study abroad among faculty and staff. Instead, this summary will look at student identity, particularly race, sexual and gender identity, and immigration status.

In a qualitative study of Black students attending predominantly White institutions, Boulden (2019) found that some study abroad marketing materials discouraged these students from pursuing study abroad due to insulting imagery of the host cultures or a lack of diversity in photos of student participants. This shows the importance of recruitment materials and advising early on in a student's college career. Simon and Ainsworth (2012) found that White and wealthy students were more likely to have family and friends who had studied abroad compared to students of color, making them more likely to seek out the opportunity. If colleges and universities do not interrupt

this cycle that allows White and wealthy students to use their social capital for access, then study abroad replicates inequality.

Salisbury et al. (2011) argue that African American students with high GPAs are less likely to go abroad compared to White students with high GPAs because of stereotype threat, or the fear that pressure not to fail will disrupt their experiences (p. 26). They also found that Hispanic students were more likely to go abroad if they received a scholarship, while scholarships did not impact the rate of White students going abroad. However, an offer of student loans for study abroad made White students more likely to go and Hispanic students less likely to go (p. 27). These findings show that finance and academics alone cannot predict participation – and ultimately, that race matters when considering who participates in study abroad.

Furthermore, Thomas (2013) argues that using race as a sole signifier of difference is not effective in identifying why students from minoritized racial identities do not go abroad. Instead, Thomas pushes us to focus on how the study abroad program fits the student's area of study, career goals, and personal goals (p. 377). Framing the choice to go abroad in these terms gives the students agency instead of a deficit positionality. In addition, Thomas outlines a possible alternative worldview held by African Americans that impacts their relationship with travel, where going abroad is associated with military service, and travel in general is complicated by questions about safety and acceptance (p. 379). Therefore, study abroad programs must address these worldviews and experiences in order to gain the trust of African American students.

Outside of race, recent studies have looked at immigration status and sexual and gender identity as indicators of study abroad participation. Butler et al. (2018) explored the decision-making of DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals) students in California public universities. These students have particularly complex legal situations to consider when leaving the United States, making their opportunities to go abroad unlikely. Bryant and Soria (2015) studied college students who identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual and found that they actually go abroad at higher rates than heterosexual students. They surmise this is because spending time in another country allows these students "to explore their sexual identity in a setting different from the one at home" (p. 101). In summary, the gap in participation is more complex than it seems; for colleges and universities to make the opportunity to go abroad equitable, they must understand all of the factors that impact their students' decision-making.

Where They are Going

The majority of U.S. students choose to study in Europe, Australia, or New Zealand, with much smaller numbers studying in Latin America, Africa, and Asia. According to the Open Doors Report from the 2018-2019 school year (using those years to avoid the pandemic travel restrictions of 2020-2021), of the 347,099 students who studied abroad for academic credit, 60 percent of them went to Europe, Australia, and New Zealand. For the 40 percent who went elsewhere, popular destinations included China, Japan, South Africa, Costa Rica, and Mexico (https://opendoorsdata.org/data/us-study-abroad/all-destinations).

Influences on Location Selection

Nyaupane et al. (2011) found that an important influence on choosing a study abroad destination was social motivation, meaning that students have a connection to friends or family who are from or engaged with the location. This helps explain why we continue to see the same countries at the top of popularity lists, as students go to the places where they know other students who have gone: United Kingdom, France, Spain, and Italy (OpenDoors, 2020). Smith's 2016 mixed methods study of important factors in destination choice included "language ability and study, recommendations, university policies and study abroad structure, the academic environment in the host country, the cultural environment in the host country, previous or desired travel, and financial considerations."

Reister (2018) found that students who study outside of the typical European locations are motivated by academics, career outcomes, and in learning a new language. However, many of these locations are home to the exported campus model, which is a manufactured U.S.-style experience abroad where the study abroad students have their own facilities and therefore do not have to interact much with the local population. Goldstein (2015) found that students who preferred the exported campus model scored higher on an ethnocentrism model and lower on a cultural intelligence model than students who were not interested in exported campus study abroad programs. The alternatives to the exported campus model are programs that include living and/or learning spaces that are shared with the host community.

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The final area of research on where U.S. students are going abroad that has been well documented is language learning and heritage scholars. In Howard's 2021 book on study abroad and language learning, many motivations for studying a language abroad are described, including to continue learning and improving a language that students study at their home campus and to make social connections while they are abroad (p. 4-6). Heritage scholars is a term used for any U.S.-based student who is interested in studying in a place where they have ethnic and/or family connections. Heritage learners can include students who are motivated to learn the language of their ancestors (Comstock & Kagan, 2020) or learn about their family history, such as in the African diaspora (Morgan et al., 2002). Many of the U.S. students going to Italy, Ireland, and the UK are also attracted to learning about their family roots (Naddaf et al., 2020). It is clear from all of these studies that there are many complex motivations and influences on which country students choose; however, there is a missing piece of how students choose specific schools or programs abroad. To help explore this topic, I turned to non-U.S. students.

International Student Program Choice

Another aspect of study abroad research that is relevant to destination and program choice is non-U.S. students deciding where to study for a full degree program abroad. In the U.S., we typically refer to these learners as international students, as they are coming to U.S. colleges and universities for full undergraduate or graduate degrees. How do they choose what countries to study in and what schools to attend? Eder et al. (2010) found in their study on international students choosing to study in the U.S. that the

influences pulling them to particular schools were the academic offerings at the college, the physical geography where the school is located, and the local culture.

But many international students do not come to the U.S. Wilkins & Huisman (2011) studied international students in the United Kingdom, asking how likely they were to recommend studying in the U.K. to their peers back home. The authors cite a variety of studies showing that personal recommendations are a strong influence on students' choice of study abroad destination (p. 2). In Lee's 2014 study on why international students choose to study in Taiwan, they identified the following factors: personal goals, knowledge and awareness of the host country, recommendations from others, physical environment, cost, social links and geographic proximity, and institution image (p. 369). Lee found that cost and language were the two highest priorities for students (p. 377-378). All of these elements are relevant to any student choosing to spend time outside of their home country.

What They are Doing There

For the next part of this literature review, it is important to identify the "they". The average age group of U.S. undergraduates who are studying abroad in the 2022-2023 school year are part of Generation Z (Gen Z), students born in the late 1990s through early 2000s (Bresler et al., 2020). This generation has been found to care about making a difference in the world, to be motivated to help others, and wanting to work toward things they believe in (Seemiller & Clayton, 2019, p. 268). They are also characterized by thoughtfulness, determination, compassion, open-mindedness, and responsibility. Finally, they want their learning to be tied to real world issues (p. 268). When thinking about Gen

Z students learning abroad, all of these characteristics and motivations could come into play when they are choosing which programs to attend, how to engage with their host communities abroad, and how the concepts of the public good play a role.

The characteristics of Gen Z could broadly be categorized as caring about social justice and public good. However, the study abroad programs they are choosing may not align with these intentions. For example, Schroeder et al. (2009) found that when education abroad programs are not done well, they cause damage to communities including overuse of land, water, and other natural resources, U.S. dollars spent in wealthy sectors of the community only, boom and bust cycles in visitors, and a disrespect for local cultures. Volunteering and service learning is popular among U.S. students abroad, but many service-project based programs sell students on the idea that they will do good in the world without confirmation from the host community that their activities are wanted or accomplishing anything positive (Elliot, 2015).

Harms and Stereotypes

Woolf (2006) argues that the 21st century push for U.S. students to study in Latin America, Africa, and Asia is really a pursuit of exploiting the exotic other. U.S. students are seen as wealthy, dominating, demanding guests in many parts of the world, making it extremely difficult for students to immerse themselves in the local culture, and, instead, giving them a superficial understanding of the place (p. 143). The reinforcement of stereotypes causes long-term harm to host communities by continuing historical dehumanization and oppression. The lack of reciprocity has built up resentment in host communities such as Florence, Italy, and San Jose, Costa Rica (Ficarra, 2019). In these

two locations, Ficarra (2019) spoke to community members who saw U.S. study abroad students as modern-day imperialists. With the study abroad industry almost exclusively focused on what the student wants, host communities are fed up.

Gen Z students not only want to make a difference and be a positive force in the world, but they also want to learn about real world problems and solutions. Study abroad programs have been criticized for sheltering U.S. students from reality. When study abroad students know little about their host country prior to arrival and have limited and/or unguided time to learn about it while they are there, the most common result is a reinforcement of common stereotypes and shallow learning. Ogden explores this deeply in his 2007 article "The view from the veranda: understanding today's colonial student." He describes the common experience of today's students gazing upon the locals from up above, similar to colonial families leaving from Europe to watch and take from exotic places around the world. Instead of truly learning something about a different way of life and pushing themselves to question stereotypes, students instead seek out experiences and places that confirm an unchanging, essential view of their hosts: French bakeries, Italian art, and Irish pubs.

Students cannot be solely blamed for pursuing these stereotypes; Canton and Santos (2009) found that marketing for study abroad programs contain:

> hegemonic depictions of non-Westerners, asserting a Western superiority ideology by polarizing the West and the Rest into binaries of modern-traditional, technologically advanced-backward, and master -servant and decomplexifying the globalization process by presenting the non-West as exotic, culturally pristine, and filled with happy natives (p. 191).

Study abroad programs that do not intentionally challenge and complicate the essentialist stereotypes of countries and cultures end up directly replicating systems of harm, oppression, and Western dominance (Stein et al., 2016, p. 12).

Study abroad needs to be more than learning a set of stereotypes about a place (Ramirez, 2015, p. 8), and there are innovative ideas about how to disrupt these harms. Doerr's 2016 article "Chronotopes of study abroad: the cultural Other, immersion, and compartmentalized space–time" argues that students are being taught how to look at their host community as a stagnant other that can be "experienced" (p. 81). She offers a better framework for study abroad as "not as an encounter of two cultures but as diverse students joining the ongoing production of life in the host society" (p. 81). Doerr connects this stagnant othering of cultures to the treatment of minoritized groups back at home: "this ideology resulted in assimilation policies toward minority populations, who nonetheless remained marginalized after being assimilated" (p. 91). Moreno (2021) offers critical frameworks to help study abroad educators and administrators reframe their programming, Pipitone (2018) designed strategic pedagogy focused on social change, Hartman et al. (2020) highlights programming with U.S. students of color engaging in local justice struggles abroad, and Makara & Canon (2020) found that intentional engagement with host communities in the Middle East broke down U.S. stereotypes of Arabs and Muslims (p. 314). All of these examples can point us in a direction of a new priority in study abroad program design and selection: the global public good. This program evaluation will help the field of education abroad know to what extent our

undergraduate students today are looking to impact the public good through study abroad and in what ways their faculty and advisors can engage in this discussion with them.

The Public Good in Higher Education and Study Abroad

The second gap in the research that I aim to address is the factor of public good in study abroad programs. Public good, also referred to in the literature and discourse as common good or social good, is not a well-defined concept. At the site of this program evaluation, public and common good are used in mission and vision statements, such as:

> Be a great private university *dedicated to the public good*.
>
> Our active *partnerships with local and global communities contribute to a sustainable common good*.
>
> *To benefit the public good* by developing business pioneers through impactful scholarship, challenge-driven education and lifelong learning.
>
> [emphasis added]

Contextually, we can glean from these statements that public and common good are altruistic endeavors that counter the individualism that is so often connected to personal and professional success through education. However, specific guidelines on how to put public good intentions into action are limited. Research on higher education and the public good shows that definitions and impacts have been and continue to be debated. In their 2014 study on advancing the public good at universities in the United Kingdom, East et al. argue that public good used to refer to educating people to work in public service careers but that it has evolved to mean pushing students toward social justice work (p. 4). Marginson and Yang (2020) describe and compare in detail how public and common good are understood in higher education in China and the United

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States, emphasizing that culture and history influence how societies approach these concepts. Nelson et al. (2022) bring their experiences as women of color in the academy to envision their own decolonizing interpretation of the public good that prioritizes community, relationality, and co-creation of knowledge. The existing literature makes it clear that the public good is still a concept to be debated, critiqued, and re-envisioned.

Looking specifically at study abroad and the public good reveals a handful of studies that investigate the impact that studying abroad has on students' civic engagement and public service after college (Jon & Fry, 2021; Jon et al., 2020; Murphy et al., 2014; Paige et al., 2009). All of these studies find that study abroad influences students to engage with global challenges such as climate change, global inequality, violent conflict, and nationalism (Jon & Fry, 2021, p. 408). These studies are important and noteworthy in education abroad research because they move the focus away from individual and personal student benefits from studying abroad and instead center collective global good.

However, all of these studies use students who have already completed their study abroad as their quantitative and qualitative data samples, which means we have only captured the post-program reflection perspective. They are also missing the question of what influence the students' home institution can have on the public good motivation. Guided by my research questions, I will interview some students before they study abroad. This shift from post-program to pre-program data will contribute to the literature on public good and study abroad by asking if students are influenced by messages about the public good when choosing their study abroad programs. If students are motivated to choose study abroad programs that contribute to the public good, this has significant

implications for any study abroad program providers and host institutions who, currently, are not considering public good in their work.

Conclusion

This review of interdisciplinary literature, from global citizenship and education abroad to public good and global impact, provides a thorough background for understanding the next stage of this program evaluation. Global citizenship is an evolving and thoroughly debated concept that helps us think through the complexity of international education. Study abroad in the U.S. context is wrapped into desires of being a global citizen, but can be limited by issues of access, narrow location and program options, and neoliberal and neocolonial tendencies. The public good is a concept similarly dynamic and debated, but has not yet been investigated through the student perspective or the study abroad context. In the next chapter, I will go into detail about the combination of global citizenship education theory and developmental evaluation, and how they work together to dig deep into student perspectives that have not yet been captured in the research.

Chapter Three: Methodology and Methods

This chapter explains how this program evaluation was carried out and how the theoretical framework and program evaluation theory support the evaluation purpose and questions. Program evaluation is a discipline focused on addressing real-life challenges and decision-making through rigorous data collection and analysis (Mertens & Wilson, 2019, p. 3). These challenges and decisions are set in complex systems and social structures that require skillful social navigation and collaboration with stakeholders (p. 11). In the following sections, I will outline the paradigm that framed my inquiry, the evaluand and context where this took place, along with the evaluation methods, purpose, questions, stakeholders, participants, data collection, and data analysis.

Evaluation Branch: Pragmatic Paradigm

The branch of evaluation I am using falls under the pragmatic paradigm, which emphasizes the usefulness and action-based recommendations for the evaluand (Mertens & Wilson, 2019, p. 86.) Pragmatists do not look to discover "the truth" in evaluation, but instead hold an ontology that values usefulness and relevance to the problem. Similarly, the pragmatic paradigm rejects the idea of a neutral evaluator, leaving space for the evaluand and evaluator to determine the relationship and level of involvement (p. 87). These values are referred to as the Use Branch of program evaluation, and one of the most common evaluation models that falls into this branch is utilization-focused

evaluation (UFE) developed by Michael Q. Patton. Patton says that UFE is inspired by relationships, in that stakeholders and users should be involved throughout the evaluation so that the recommendations are likely to be put into practice when complete (p. 90). Patton's evaluation theory is the most suitable for this program evaluation because the evaluand was motivated to be closely involved and was eager to use the findings and recommendations as soon as possible.

The Use Branch and UFE also inform the theoretical framework of this evaluation: global citizenship education. Global citizenship is a common phrase in international education and study abroad, making it a useful reference point for the evaluand and other stakeholders, such as students and staff. Different institutions and individuals have their own interpretations of global citizenship and its aims, which makes it more likely that everyone will find something useful in it, from individual cognitive goals to broad social actions. The intention behind using this framework was to speak the language of the topic and the evaluand so that the findings and recommendations would be useful and approachable.

Theoretical Framework: Global Citizenship Education

Components of this study are framed by the theory of global citizenship education, which is ubiquitous in study abroad discourse and analysis. Since the concept of public good is not yet widely discussed in study abroad research, and public good and global citizenship have many practical and theoretical intersections, using global citizenship theory is a relevant and approachable framework for this study.

There is no agreed-upon definition of a global citizen, but it loosely describes a person who is worldly and engaged with cultures outside of their national borders (Andreotti, 2006). Theorists have described various branches of global citizenship education, including one that emphasizes neoliberal intercultural competencies and skills that help students compete in a global economy (Gaudelli, 2009; Schattle, 2008; Shultz, 2007), another that focuses on ethics and personal responsibility to the world (Tarrant et al., 2011; Veugelers, 2011), and a third branch that offers a critical perspective that interrogates global power dynamics and advocates for justice, accountability, and transformation of systems (Andreotti, 2006; Schultz, 2007). For a more in-depth analysis of these branches, refer to Chapter 2.

It is within a blend of the second and third branches that I place the global citizenship framework that I use in this study, from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which defines global citizenship education as combining:

1. Cognitive: knowledge and thinking skills necessary to better understand the world and its complexities.

2. Socio-emotional: values, attitudes and social skills that enable learners to develop affectively, psychosocially, and physically and to enable them to live together with others respectfully and peacefully.

3. Behavioral: conduct, performance, practical application, and engagement. (UNESCO, 2018)

Using the UNESCO framework in this evaluation is both practical and aspirational. It is practical because it comes from a well-known global entity, the United Nations, and addresses the cognitive, emotional, and behavioral elements that may contribute to perceptions of the global public good and one's role in shaping it. This framework also works well with the developmental evaluation model, particularly in the areas of utilization focus (the findings should be applicable to stakeholders and their work and experiences) and complexity perspective (the findings should be complex to recognize the intricacy of human feelings, motivations, and decisions).

Using the UNESCO framework is aspirational because it is a departure from the common theoretical frameworks used in study abroad research and particularly on questions of why students choose to study where they do. Across topics and authors, I found a common set of theories that consistently centered the student without interrogation of their position within and impact on the rest of the world (e.g. theory of planned behavior; Fitzsimmons et al., 2013; student development theory; Lentz, 2018; the leisure motivation scale; Marques et al., 2018; knowledge function theory, theory of tourism motivation, and drive theory; Nyaupane et al., 2011). My goal in using the UNESCO framework of global citizenship education is to shift the conversation around study abroad from individual choices and benefits to one that considers host communities, power dynamics, and mutual respect.

Evaluation Purpose

The purpose of this program evaluation is to enhance the program's understanding of how its students describe and interpret the study abroad choice process.

In the study abroad choice process, this evaluation also explores how concepts of the public good and global citizenship may shape student perceptions. The majority of the students at this university study abroad, and due to the global nature of their courses, IB majors are highly likely to spend a term in a different country. Currently, faculty leaders of the IB major say that they do not feel like they have an understanding of the influences on students' choice of study abroad programs or locations. They would like to know more about the influences on these decisions and how the college's mission of business for the public good may be involved in these decisions. Since this evaluation is coming into the middle of a long-standing program of IB majors studying abroad and aims to map the complexity of meaning-making and influences, developmental evaluation is the best approach to use.

Evaluation Questions

1. How do international business majors make meaning of the influences on their study abroad program selection?

    a. How do students' perceptions of their program selection relate to the university's mission of serving the public good?

Evaluand and Context

The evaluand for this study is the faculty leadership of the international business (IB) major at the college of business at a private university in the western United States. There are currently two faculty leaders of the major, one from the department of management and the other from the department of finance. Both faculty members have extensive experience living and working abroad and teaching college courses related to

international business. In the 2022-2023 school year, the major has a total of 132

undergraduate students; to fulfill the major, these students take classes across business

and international relations fields. The table below shows the breakdown of IB majors by

year in school, with the largest number of IB majors in their junior year. The third

column in Table 3.1 shows how many of those students studied abroad during the 2022-

2023 academic year. The largest group is juniors, which is consistent across the

university and most U.S. colleges as the most common year to study abroad.

Table 3.1 International Business Majors and Study Abroad Participation, Academic Year 2022-2023

Year in School	Students in IB major	Study Abroad in AY 2022-2023
First year	36	0
Sophomore	33	1
Junior	37	15
Senior	26	5
Total	132	21

Among the 21 IB majors who studied abroad in the 2022-2023 school year, the

countries they went to include: Australia, Czech Republic, Greece, Italy, Japan, Spain,

Sweden, and the United Kingdom (Scotland). Seventeen students studied abroad in the

fall term, three in the winter/spring term, and one student is studying abroad for the entire

academic year. It is important to note that reduced participant numbers and limited

locations are likely due to the Covid-19 pandemic; study abroad participation is still

recovering from a nearly complete shutdown from 2020-2021, and some countries, most

notably China, are not accepting study abroad students at the time of this study.

Through my data collection, I found that discourse of study abroad at the university is positive among students and supportive among faculty and staff, making an environment where current students not only feel comfortable going abroad for a term or more, but high school students seek out this school as a place to go to college because of its reputation for study abroad. On the public-facing website, it states:

> Going abroad is often the single most memorable and rewarding experience of your college career. Our goal is to guide you through finding the best program for you and to prepare you to experience the transformative power of global learning (Study abroad website, 2023).

This positive framing of studying abroad as "rewarding" and "transformative" is important context to understand when thinking about the evaluation, the participants, and the data collection.

Another prominent element of the business college context is the discourse around the public good. As explained on the college website, the mission of the business college is to benefit the public good. Business majors, including the IB major, take courses such as Business and Global Values and Business for the Public Good. Through these courses and other campus events, students become familiar with the public good as a value of the institution.

Stakeholders

It is important to identify the stakeholders in this program evaluation so that the evaluation process and recommendations remain focused on being useful for people. The stakeholders for this program evaluation include:

- Students: International business majors in particular, and potentially other students, will be impacted by the actions that the IB faculty leadership, academic advisors, and study abroad advisors take as a result of the findings of this study.

- Faculty: The IB faculty leadership are invested in this program evaluation and its findings and may pass along ideas to faculty in other departments.

- Academic advisors: The decision to study abroad and what classes to take while abroad impacts a student's academic progress, and academic advisors play a role in this.

- Study abroad office: Not only do individual advisors meet with students to help them choose study abroad programs, but the office itself is responsible for approving and contracting with study abroad programs, impacting the options for students.

- Admissions office: High school students and their parents know about this university as a school that promotes study abroad, so admissions officers have a role to play in these early discussions with incoming students.

Evaluation Method

Evaluation Approach: Developmental Evaluation

Developmental evaluation (DE) is concerned with innovation and changing systems, positioned in between formative and summative evaluations (Patton et al., 2016). It is a useful evaluation approach when a program is not new (formative) and a program has no end point (summative). This middle space of DE recognizes that organizations and systems are dynamic and constantly responding to change (Mertens &

Wilson, 2019, p. 90). In the field of education abroad during a global pandemic, change is the only constant. Patton et al. explain eight essential principles to DE (p. 3), which are:

1. Developmental purpose: This principle anchors the study in supporting innovation and adaptation of a program, project, or policy (p. 291). Patton identifies five types of DE that help clarify the purpose, and the type that fits best with this study is "creating a new intervention aimed at a significant problem" (p. 292). I have worked with faculty and students to capture emergent dynamics in study abroad and the public good, and then identified new and original ways of intervening in the program. The developmental purpose of this evaluation is to inform and support a culture of study abroad for the public good, which would be a new programmatic approach not only for this university but for U.S. higher education as a whole.

2. Evaluation rigor: Patton stresses the importance of thorough data collection (p. 296) and examining your questions from multiple perspectives with critical thinking skills, to the point that your data is confidence-inspiring to the stakeholders (p. 297). This is what makes an evaluation rigorous. The way I have enacted rigor in this evaluation has been through multiple interviews with students and close collaboration with the faculty, both of whom are ultimately the creators of this innovation. An example of thorough data collection in my student interviews is through semi-structured interview style. I went into each student interview with a list of general question and topics, but I let the conversation go deeper into directions where the students wanted to go. This helped uncover

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additional motivations and influences that students were feeling, which I would

not have heard about if I stuck to a strict set of questions.

3. Utilization focus: The findings of this evaluation should be useful to the people

who will actually use it, which includes students, faculty, and staff at the college.

This is the principle of utilization focused evaluation (p. 300) which Patton also

developed. Beyond the immediate stakeholders in this evaluation, this project

could have a practical impact on the larger field of educational exchange and

international relations. In Chapter 5, I will go into detail about how the findings

can be applied to study abroad advising and practice.

4. Innovation niche: This principle focuses on innovation and adaptation to changing

environments, pushing against the status quo to drive new ideas forward (p. 302-

303). I used this principle in this program evaluation by focusing on the new idea

I and the evaluand are exploring: the influence of public good in study abroad.

5. Complexity perspective: Study abroad influences are extremely complicated,

involving students, their families, advisors, faculty, peers, institutional policies,

global immigration regulations, and a variety of personal preferences. The

concept of the public good, too, is complex and not easily defined. This DE

principle pushes evaluators to view all aspects of their studies through the lens of

complexity. Everything from design through implementation is improved with a

complexity perspective (p. 304).

6. Systems thinking: There are many systems in place within the university and

outside of it that influence students' feelings and decisions, such as marketing,

advising, public discourse, and social relationships. The principle of systems

thinking is a reminder that interactions and influences within the systems are

going to impact the process of innovation (p. 306). As part of my work with the

IB faculty leadership, we used system mapping (Patton, 2011, p. 244), which is a

useful technique to capture systems, relationships, and influences in a visual map.

You can see this map in Chapter 5.

7. Co-creation: By intervening with study abroad and the IB major, essentially

   becoming an influence myself, I as the researcher and DE as the evaluation

   method will be co-creating the outcomes with the students and faculty involved.

   This principle reminds me to form trusting relationships with these partners and to

   work on this development project collaboratively (p. 307). One way I

   accomplished this was through my recruitment methods. I recruited student

   participants through connections with their advisors and faculty so that I was

   introduced to them through an existing relationship.

8. Timely feedback: I consulted with faculty and staff stakeholders continuously

   throughout our time working together, not sticking firm to pre-determined times.

   The reason for timely feedback is so that findings can be quickly discussed and

   used to apply to decisions and interventions (p. 308). Tying back to the utilization

   focus, feedback can only be useful if it is shared efficiently. The purpose of DE is

   not to summarize findings and write a report at the end; the purpose is to give

   consistent feedback to develop ideas and solutions iteratively.

Since DE does not have standard tools, methods, or techniques (Patton et al., 2016, p. 290) it is important to integrate all eight of these principles into this evaluation. "Guiding principles provide direction, but must be interpreted and adapted to context and situation" (p. 290). By using DE in this program evaluation, I hope to provide an example for other colleges and universities to try DE in their own complex study abroad contexts.

Qualitative Methodology

The approach of qualitative methodology involves seeking to understand human experiences and perspectives related to a problem through open questions and inductive analysis (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 4). It is appropriate for this study because the purpose is to capture student voices as they describe how they are interpreting and experiencing the study abroad program choice process. In addition, qualitative approaches are useful for topics and phenomena that have not been extensively researched are not clearly understood (p. 19); as outlined in Chapter 2, this program evaluation addresses major gaps in the study abroad literature. Developmental evaluation allows for both quantitative and qualitative methodology, but it is especially aligned with qualitative methodology through its principles of evaluation rigor, complexity perspective, and systems thinking.

Participants – Criteria and Sampling

To set up this developmental evaluation for rigorous data collection and specific findings and recommendations, I worked with the evaluand to identify participant criteria and sampling methods for both students and faculty. Both groups of participants were selected to give the most useful data and recommendations to the evaluand.

Students

  The student participants were eight in total, representing two groups. Group 1 included four students who were in the process of choosing a study abroad program. Group 2 included four students who had completed the study abroad choice and application process (three of these students studied abroad, and one was unable to go due to a passport problem). The eight participants are outlined in Table 3.2. This table includes their pseudonyms and any characteristics of their identities that they wanted to share, in their own words, in response to my question, "Can you send me a few words about how you identify in your race, gender, any identifiers that are important to you that may have an impact on your global experience?"

Table 3.2 Student Participants

Group	Name	Study Abroad Status	Gender	Race	Additional identities
1	Camila	Pre-departure	Woman	Latin	Queer
1	Gaby	Pre-departure	Female	African & European	Hispanic household
1	John	Pre-departure	Male	White	
1	Maria	Pre-departure	She/her/ella	Latina	First-gen, Mexican
2	Ally	Post-program	Female	White	Straight
2	Eric	Post-program	He/him	White	Jewish, straight
2	Leah	Post-program	Female	White	Bisexual
2	Emma	Applied, did not attend	Female	White	Jewish

  The inclusion criteria for these groups included being a declared international business major at the university and to have the intention to attend or to have completed a study abroad program before graduation. I used two methods to recruit students: criterion sampling and snowball sampling. Criterion sampling involves using specific criteria that

people need to have in order to participate (Mertens & Wilson, 2019, p. 410), which for this program evaluation meant the IB major combined with study abroad. This method of recruitment came up with six participants. Snowball sampling is when stakeholders recommend people to interview; in this case, that meant the IB faculty leadership advising students to participate in the study. The snowball method resulted in two participants.

To recruit students using the criterion sampling method, I relied on an academic advisor for IB majors and a staff member in the study abroad office, both of whom are stakeholders in this study. Both of these staff members emailed eligible students with my recruitment message (Appendix A), which included an incentive of a Starbucks gift card. The academic advisor sent the email twice, and the study abroad staff member sent the email once. The snowball sampling by the IB faculty leadership did not include a formal recruitment email, as the recruitment happened during conversations.

The total number of student participants was eight, evenly split between students who were planning to study abroad and students who already completed the process. This number and split felt good to me as the interviewer and researcher as well as to the faculty directors of the IB major, as we captured many different student stories that told of a rich and complex web of influences.

Faculty

There are two faculty directors of the international business major at the college. One is a professor of finance and the other is a professor of management. Both have had

extensive international business experiences. They were both included in this study because of their close ties to the IB major, as the evaluand and significant stakeholders. The two faculty members are also participants in the study because of the developmental program evaluation principles of co-creation and timely feedback, which value the perspectives and contributions of the evaluand. They were brought into the data collection process as soon as the study began by participating in an initial focus group with me.

Data Collection

To capture the experiences and perceptions of the students, along with the developmental process and innovation of the IB faculty leadership, qualitative methods were used, specifically, interviews for students and focus groups for faculty.

Student Interviews

Interviews are a popular way to collect data in program evaluation because both formal and informal conversations with stakeholders are essential interactions (Mertens & Wilson, 2019, p. 363). Multiple interviews with an individual are recommended over a complex research project such as this (Read, 2018) so I attempted to interview student participants two times each. I gave students the option to interview over Zoom video chat or in person so that they had flexibility with time and location. For the students who chose to meet in person, the interviews took place in my office, in the business building on campus where most of the students' classes take place. Interviews lasted between 20 and 40 minutes. Six of the students were interviewed once, and two of them were

interviewed twice. All interviews were recorded through Zoom or Google Recorder and automatically transcribed to help with accuracy.

Student interviews focused on the themes described in Chapter 2: motivations to study abroad, the study abroad decision process, influences on location and program, actions and impacts abroad, sense of public good, and sense of global citizenship. The interviews were semi-structured to allow students to go deeper into topics that were most interesting to them. General questions that I posed to each student included:

1. Why do/did you want to study abroad?

2. Tell me about your program selection process.

3. Who has influenced your study abroad decisions?

4. What does the college mission of business for the public good mean to you and how does it relate to studying abroad?

5. What does the concept of global citizenship mean to you? Are you a global citizen?

For the students who were newer to college (first year and second year students) I provided them with the college mission via email prior to our interviews to make sure that they were at least aware of the mission. For students who were in their third years and four years, I did not provide the college mission prior to our interviews because they had at that point taken classes in the business school that specifically focused on business for the public good. For the full interview protocol, refer to Appendix B.

Faculty Focus Groups

Focus groups are useful for identifying problems and generating solutions (Mertens & Wilson, 2019, p. 366-367), which is why they were ideal for working with the IB major faculty leadership. With the eight principles of developmental evaluation as a guide, the goals of the faculty focus groups were:

1. Develop new ways of approaching study abroad in the IB major (Developmental Purpose)

2. Make sure that the data was rigorous and rich (Evaluation Rigor)

3. Link findings to useful proposals and actions (Utilization Focus)

4. Brainstorm ways the major can innovate (Innovation Niche)

5. Map the complexity of student influences (Complexity Perspective)

6. Map the systems that students experience (Systems Thinking)

7. Work together with faculty, staff, and students to make the findings meaningful (Co-creation)

8. Meet as often as needed to keep the work moving forward (Timely Feedback)

We met formally four times over the course of this study for one hour each meeting, located in the office of the professor in the department of management. These meetings were not recorded, but I took detailed notes. Because we work in the same building on campus, we also ran into each other occasionally and casually chatted about the evaluation. These types of encounters are useful for gaining trust and camaraderie for both a researcher and an evaluand. In our formal meetings, I shared my most recent findings and cursory analysis. The faculty would react to what I was sharing and also

bring in new ideas of things they wanted to learn from students and ways that they could improve the program moving forward. These new ideas would then influence some of the questions I asked in my next student interviews. The main purpose of the faculty focus groups was to put DE principles into action, using timely feedback to co-create an innovative development. For the full focus group protocol, refer to Appendix C.

Data Analysis

Developmental evaluation and study abroad influences are complex and iterative, so I had to be organized and thorough in my data collection and analysis. To help with this, I relied on my audio recordings and written transcriptions of my student interviews; I went through each transcription to edit and make sure it matched what was said in the recording (Jones et al., 2014, p. 134). To organize the data, I used Nvivo coding and data analysis software to capture themes that appeared in the interviews (p. 165). Developmental evaluation suggests using abductive reasoning to create codes; abductive reasoning is a combination of deductive and indicative reasoning. "Deduction involves reasoning from the general to the specific. Induction involves reasoning from the specific to the general. Abduction works back and forth between general and specific to solve a particular problem" (Patton, 2011, p. 285). In practice, this means that throughout the analysis process, I thought about the big picture theories of global citizenship and the public good while also picking up on small, local knowledge that participants were sharing. The codes that emerged from Nvivo analysis are the findings categories presented in Chapter 4 and 5.

In the spirit of timely feedback and iterative co-creation with the evaluand, I wrote out initial findings from my student interviews and shared them in my focus groups with the IB faculty leadership. I took notes in our focus groups, and these notes helped me formulate my next set of interviews with students. This cyclical method of data collection and analysis is an important part of developmental evaluation. To capture all the changes and ideas that occurred over the months of data collection, I also kept an informal journal of my own thoughts and experiences throughout the program evaluation. This has been helpful for me to reflect on and review occurrences that may not be captured in formalized conversations (Jones et al., 2014, p. 130).

The goal of data analysis is to answer my evaluation questions: How do international business majors make meaning of the influences on their study abroad program selection? How do students' perceptions of their program selection relate to the university's mission of serving the public good? Through coding, discussing, and synthesizing the interview data, the voices of students come through to answer these questions and provide direction to the evaluand.

Study Timeline

Students submit applications to study abroad to the international education office by December 1 for early decision deadline, or by February 1 for a final deadline. This means students are deep in their decision-making and advising between the months of November and January. To follow this timeline, I interviewed four students in December and January who had not yet studied abroad. Once it was decided by the IB faculty leadership that including students who had just returned from studying abroad was a good

idea for more rigorous data, I interviewed three students from January through March who had studied abroad in the prior fall term. In February, I added the student who planned to go abroad but did not due to passport problems. Following the principles of developmental evaluation, I shared data quickly and regularly with the IB major faculty leadership throughout this process.

Ethical Considerations

The number one responsibility I hold as a researcher is to respect and honor student confidentiality and individual differences as I am learning about their experience with study abroad influences. Salisbury et. al. (2011) found that a student's identity and family background can make a big impact on study abroad decisions. Furthermore, deciding to study in locations in Europe versus Africa, Asia, and Latin America are also impacted by student identity, particularly race, as found by Wells (2006). NAFSA, the leading professional organization for study abroad administrators, also emphasizes that advising sessions should focus on students weighing the options of what is important to them in their program choice (Hernandez et al., 2014, p. 6-7). Therefore, education abroad professionals must work to strike a balance between respect for where the student sees themselves and where the major or college calls them to stretch their experiences.

I am also aware of the power dynamics as a graduate student and higher education professional talking with students and faculty who have different roles from me. To combat power dynamics, I will use developmental evaluation as my guide, as Patton (2011, p. 243) says that we must be partners and empower each other to innovate solutions. In practice, this involved me telling students and faculty that I am here to learn

about their experience and help them make it feel more supported. This study is the first step that the IB major is taking to address study abroad support, and I wanted to name this and involve participants in its creation.

One method I used with the faculty leadership to encourage co-creation is system and actor mapping (Patton, 2011, p. 244), which brings together stakeholders to map out the contributions and influences around the subject. Maps are a useful way to capture dynamic relationships and processes, compared to linear logic models that are frequently used in program evaluation. These complex maps of the study abroad decision influences and their connections to the public good mission are presented in Chapter 5.

Trustworthiness

This data is trustworthy and valid because it follows the DE principles of evaluation rigor, utilization focus, co-creation, and timely feedback. By holding multiple interviews and focus groups, I was able to hear the same themes again and again, making it clear to me that the data was thorough. In each focus group with the faculty leadership, we focused on how the data was useful and how we could adapt and respond to it. These in-depth discussions showed that I as the researcher was not the only one determining what were valid findings; instead, a group of us were checking and challenging each other to enrich the data and recommendations.

IRB Approval

According to the university Institutional Review Board in November 2022, this program evaluation did not qualify as Human Subjects Research because it was not

intended to develop generalizable knowledge, and therefore was not determined to be research. This is a common conclusion for program evaluations, which are targeted studies for particular programs and departments. Therefore, this project did not require formal IRB review.

Limitations and Delimitations

There are two major limitations of this evaluation: length of time and sampling. The length of time I have available to interact with the stakeholders and participants in this study is limited by study abroad application deadlines and the dates during which students are on campus. I also found that undergraduate students are incredibly busy, as evidenced by students not being able to find the time to do second interviews with me. It is certain that I have not captured the moment in time that all IB students are making their study abroad program and destination selection. Guided by developmental evaluation approaches, I still was able to engage with and learn from students at various stages of their study abroad decisions and experiences. One way I did this was asking students to tell me the story of how they made their study abroad program decision.

Regarding the sample of students in this evaluation, it was limited by who among IB majors have decided to study abroad and who was willing to be interviewed about that process. The eight students who participated, while a small number compared to the number of eligible students, were a diverse group, representing a variety of genders, races, nationalities, and ages.

The delimitation of this study, to focus on IB majors at one university, is intentional so that I can focus on the developmental goals for a particular department. The specificity of the time as the 2022-2023 school year is also relevant to the study, as there is new leadership of the two faculty who are overseeing this major. We are also still in a global pandemic, where international travel and personal health decisions will continue to be a complicating dynamic factor. Capturing the time, space, and population in this evaluation will produce relevant and specific recommendations for the evaluand, while also outlining a process for how other departments or institutions could conduct a similar evaluation.

Development Evaluation in Action

Plans are one thing, and reality is another. Using the intentions of DE, I had to pivot and react to new information many times throughout this study. These adjustments included student participants and data collection methods. My original intention was to hold student focus groups after interviewing all of the students. After trying to find a time to schedule the focus groups over many weeks, it was clear that the students' schedules were not going to line up in a way that could get us all in a classroom together. I pivoted to second interviews for any students who were able. It is important to remember when working with busy college students that flexibility can still bring you to the data you are hoping to collect.

The population of eligible students for this study started very small. My first attempt at recruitment only focused on first year and sophomore students who had not yet participated in a college study abroad program, because I wanted to highlight the

influences and feelings happening before students went abroad. In the spirit of developmental evaluation, I discussed my recruitment methods and responses with the faculty directors of the IB major and the initial findings. The faculty directors wanted to add the perspectives of students who intended to study abroad but did not end up going (a common occurrence during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic), as well as students who just returned from studying abroad. In qualitative program evaluation, "if new lines of thought are opened up on the basis of early data collection, the evaluators may need to expand the sample pool" (Mertens & Wilson, 2019, p. 422). While these students did not fall into the original category of pre-program, their post-program reflections were very useful to understand the connection between study abroad and the public good for IB majors.

Chapter Four: Findings

The purpose of this program evaluation was to enhance the international business (IB) program's understanding of how its students describe and interpret the study abroad choice process. In the study abroad choice process, this evaluation also explores how concepts of the public good and global citizenship may shape student perceptions. This chapter presents the findings from this qualitative program evaluation that sought to answer the questions:

1. How do international business majors make meaning of the influences on their study abroad program selection?

    a. How do students' perceptions of their program selection relate to the university's mission of serving the public good?

The theoretical framework informing this evaluation is global citizenship education, which, as defined by UNESCO (2018), aims to describe the learning that takes place for students participating in global experiences in the areas of cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral. To collect these findings, I used the methodological framework of Development Evaluation (DE) because of its focus on developing innovative interventions in an existing dynamic program (Patton, 2011).

Through my analysis of student interview data, two major themes emerged that answer my research questions: systems of influence and meaningful goals. Within these

overarching themes, there are subthemes, outlined in Table 4.1. In the following sections,

I outline each theme and subtheme and the qualitative data that supports it.

Table 4.1 Themes of the Findings

Systems of Influence	Meaningful Goals
Societal	Experiential Learning
Personal	Public Good Impact
University	

Students responded to the interview questions from different perspectives based on their identities, years in school, and study abroad status. As a reminder of these self-described identities, Table 4.2 of student participants is shared below along with Group 2's study abroad countries. Camila, Gaby, and John are in their first year at the university. Maria is a sophomore who is applying to study abroad programs. Ally, Eric, and Leah are juniors who returned from Europe one or two months prior to our interviews. Emma is a senior who intended to study abroad in her junior year, but did not end up going due to problems with her passport.

Table 4.2 Student Participants with Countries

Group	Name	Study Abroad Status	Gender	Race	Additional identities
1	Camila	Pre-departure	Woman	Latin	Queer
1	Gaby	Pre-departure	Female	African & European	Hispanic household
1	John	Pre-departure	Male	White	
1	Maria	Pre-departure	She/her/ella	Latina	First-gen, Mexican
2	Ally	Post-program (Italy)	Female	White	Straight
2	Eric	Post-program (Spain)	He/him	White	Jewish, straight
2	Leah	Post-program (Czech Republic)	Female	White	Bisexual

| 2 | Emma | Applied (France), did not attend | Female | White | Jewish |

Systems of Influence

To answer the question of how students make meaning of the influences on study abroad program choice, it is first important to understand what those influences are, how they are connected to students, and why they matter to students. In my final focus group with the IB major faculty leadership, we discussed the student interview data and brainstormed a list of influences. Then, we grouped the influences into what we call systems. We are defining systems as networks that students operate within and are both influenced by and have an influence upon. For example, the university system is one that students chose to be part of when they accepted the admission offer to the university. It is a system that influences their learning and social outcomes in a variety of ways, and the university is at the same time influenced by the students who attend. Systems can have both positive and negative elements. For example, the university may provide financial support for study abroad, but also restricts which study abroad programs students can use that funding to attend. Image 1 below depicts the three systems of influence we identified that students are navigating while making study abroad choices.

Systems of Influence
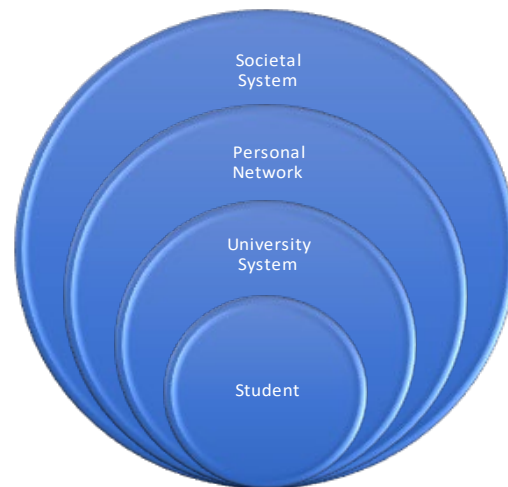
Figure 1: Systems of Influence

The narrowest system that students discussed was the university itself, which is why it is placed as the first circle where students operate. This system is narrow because it is bounded by particular practices and policies: graduation requirements, study abroad application processes, etc. Students may experience these practices and policies differently, but they all come in contact with them. The next level beyond the university system is the student's personal network. This network includes people at the university, but will also include family, friends, and other people well outside the university and sometimes even beyond the United States. Finally, the broadest system that students navigate in the study abroad program choice process is the societal system. This can include elements that many students can relate to, like the social discourse of college-going in the United States, or can be particular to media, culture, and politics that students involve themselves in.

Societal System: Creating a Positive Image of Study Abroad

My first question to all students was very broad: why did (or do) you want to study abroad? This open question let students respond with their first instinct of what it was that excited them about the opportunity and pointed to the influence of the societal system. Students did not immediately identify particular people or experiences that made them want to study abroad. Instead, they responded with general themes that U.S. college students hear about through social discourse.

The influence of broader society, including media, culture, politics, and other arenas where students interact, is identified in this study through social discourse. Social discourse in this context means messaging that students pick up from their surroundings, including their campus and classroom, the national media and culture, and other peer and social groups where students participate and are influenced. The concepts that students brought up that I identified as coming from social discourse around global travel and education include going outside your comfort zone, cultural curiosity, and positive reputations of certain countries or cities. These three areas represent messages that students have heard that study abroad is a good thing. They set up an image of a curious, engaged student seeking out world-renowned spaces to experience the goodness of study abroad.

Leaving Your Comfort Zone

Language around going outside of one's comfort zone is common in discussions about study abroad and travel, especially when telling students about potential benefits of

participation in advising sessions or direct marketing from study abroad programs. The students I interviewed all perceived discomfort as a positive thing, even if challenging and difficult at times. Eric, who recently returned from studying in Spain, said the message about one's comfort zone was the most important one he would pass on to other students:

> "I would say my biggest advice for any underclassmen would be for them to get out of their comfort zone, go study abroad. It's incredibly fun if you make it fun. You have to get out of your comfort zone and sort of try and be comfortable in the uncomfortable. Be ready to adapt and be flexible."

Eric's advice about being adaptable and flexible shows that going to live in another country is not always easy or fun, but he stressed that the benefits are worth it. Ally, who recently returned from Italy, agreed that study abroad is not comfortable, but it is still a good thing for all students to try to do:

> "I think 100% you should do it. I have never felt more out of a routine and more like…challenged. It was just a stressful time; it wasn't a comfortable time. So, if you're at a point where being uncomfortable is seriously going to just blow your life up, don't put yourself in that position until you're ready. But I do think it's worth pushing yourself if you think you can do it."

Ally and Eric's advice for students who have not yet studied abroad is part of the social discourse around comfort zones that Gaby and Maria have been hearing. Gaby, a

first-year student who wants to study abroad, has heard that students grow from the experience, even if it is difficult at times:

> "I believe that once someone studies abroad, not only in the academic aspect, more in the culture sense, it's quite the enlightenment and a personal growth that someone goes through. That's definitely something that I want. Everything is not sunshine and rainbows, but you will get x, y, and z out of it."

Gaby shows that she still wants the good outcomes of study abroad, even if the path to get there is not always smooth. Maria, a sophomore, was in the process of applying to study abroad programs when we spoke, and she reflected on the comforts of friends and campus. "I'm studying abroad for a reason, you know, to spread my wings and not have the comfort, like the backup of the friends that I have here." Maria is willing to leave the support network that she has built at college in order to seek out discomfort and growth. Again, we see that these messages of getting out of one's comfort zone are embedded in the social discourse around study abroad.

Cultural Curiosity

Responding to the question of why they wanted to study abroad, students also pointed to a desire to live in a different culture. Cultural curiosity is something that was built up for students throughout childhood, well before entering college. Social discourse and imagery about culture comes from media, pop culture, and discussions around diversity and globalization. "I wanted to experience the world," said Ally, who studied in Italy but also traveled extensively in Europe during her term there. John, who has not yet

studied abroad, said that he wanted to experience living among different cultures. He says, "I feel like the more you travel, the more worldly you are, and I think that's very important to be a better person…more respectful and considerate of other people." In this quote, he is reacting to an image he has seen of what a culturally aware and globally minded person would be like, and expressing a desire to be that person. This is an image that has been cultivated by social discourse of global travel, again positioning study abroad as a good thing for students to do.

Positive Reputations of Locations

As students described more specifics about where they would or did study abroad, they pulled from social discourse about certain cities, countries, or regions. Europe came up often as a place of interest because they knew it was a popular region for study abroad, and students knew they could travel to many different countries easily within Europe. "I really wanted to get to explore Europe," Leah said, who ended up studying in the Czech Republic. Ally pulled from Italy's reputation for art and history, saying, "I chose Florence because there's a lot of history there, and a lot of art history, and I'm interested in art." These choices suggest that while students are motivated to go outside of their comfort zones, some familiarity and reference points to the countries is also helpful.

Eric, who had traveled in France a lot with his family prior to college, wanted a different setting for his study abroad experience: "I ended up looking at lots of different locations in Spain. I wanted one that was pretty close to the coast that felt pretty, like, authentically Spanish, and not too urban." Eric said he was drawn to coastal, small-city

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Spain due to its reputation for a slower pace of life, which he does not get in the U.S. Maria, who has not yet studied abroad, was drawn to France due to its culturally rich reputation, saying, "I really felt like France was like, in a sense, where you appreciate like the little things like food, the monumental structures."

Camila, a first-year international student whose first language is Spanish, felt a draw to study abroad in Europe, a region she has never been to:

> "I want to go to Europe because I already live in South America, and I don't want to go to another American country. The other parts, like Asia or Africa or Australia, I don't find them very attractive, and some of them are too far away. I have never been to Europe, and I've always wanted to be there."

Camila is pulling from social discourse about what makes a place a good study abroad destination, and for her, Europe has the reputation that other continents do not. John, also a first-year student, said he was looking at some European cities for their industry reputations: "Berlin really intrigues me because they're doing a lot in technological innovation. Certain countries specialize in other things that the United States doesn't." In this quote, John is working through messages he has heard about strengths and weaknesses about places like the U.S. and Germany, which will lead him to eventually make a decision about which place is best for him.

The societal system influences students in a variety of ways, including sending images of what a good study abroad destination looks like, sending messages about the positive impacts of study abroad even when the process is difficult, and depicting the

value of cultural curiosity. In the next two sections, I will explain how the messages from the societal system are affirmed by personal networks and fulfilled by the university system.

Personal Network: Affirming Study Abroad Goodness from Trusted Sources

After hearing and collecting social discourse messages about international travel and study abroad throughout their lives, the students I interviewed then turned to their trusted personal network to confirm that study abroad is something they should pursue. I asked students to recall specifically who first told them about college study abroad, and they identified a series of trusted members of their personal networks of family, friends, and school communities. They became interested and curious about it based on recommendations and persuasion from these sources. John, who is still unsure where he will study abroad, said, "I guess I first heard about it in middle school, because I've had older friends or family friends at the time doing study abroad trips and telling me how great it was. So, I was like, that's something I want to do. That sounds like a great experience." Similar to the decision process for going to college, John is suggesting that early exposure to positive messages about study abroad influences his decision process.

Trusted Family

Family was mentioned several times as either a direct influence on study abroad choices or a general influence on their interest in different countries and cultures. Camila said her study abroad program choice will be influenced by her parents: "For sure, my parents. I'm an only child, so first of all, I want to be in a place that's not that far away

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from taking flights. And also, my mom loves Europe, and I think she has transmitted me that love to go there." Eric, who chose a program in Spain, also relied on these close relationships, saying, "I think the main resources I drew from for picking specifically, were probably just friends and family." Ally chose her program specifically because her sister had a positive experience in the same city: "I chose to study abroad because everyone in my family had studied abroad. My older sister studied abroad in Florence, which is where I ended up, and that's just how I was initially introduced to it." In all of these cases, students feel supported and affirmed in their choices if family has input.

Students also brought up travel experience with their family, or international experiences that their parents sent them on, as influences on their study abroad plans. John, who has not yet studied abroad, said he traveled a lot with his family, including internationally, since he was young. Most memorable was a home stay experience in Laos: "I stayed with a local family for like three days, and they were very happy with very little, you know, which is just so un-American. So, when I came back, I was really appreciative of the things that I have, the privilege that I have." John explained that this exposure to different ways of life is a major reason why he wants to study abroad. A home stay in Asia is also not a typical vacation for a family from the U.S., so this suggests his parents deliberately chose this experience for their children to learn about the world from a different perspective, something John brought up frequently in his interview. His family's ability to vacation in Asia is also a reminder of travel itself as a privilege, and that study abroad is an extension of this privilege for college students who can afford the time and expense of the experience.

Maria went to Mexico with her family, where her parents are from, after many years of her asking them to take her. "Finally, when we were able to fly out to Mexico, I absolutely loved it, just being able to, you know, they're like, oh yeah, you're a Latino! It's so nice to talk in Spanish, you know?" Maria, like many first-generation children in the United States, grew up knowing that her parents grew up in a different culture, society, and language. She said that this fueled her curiosity to not only visit her parents' home country, but other parts of the world as well. Maria recently decided to study abroad in Spain, where she will go next fall. She credits her parents teaching her Spanish for how she made this final decision. "Their Spanish is very different from what I learned, because my parents are from Mexico. I'm like, okay, it shouldn't be too difficult, but in the case that I do struggle, it's similar to what I already know."

Emma went to France with her mom as a kid, and also went back on her own: "I studied in a home stay in middle school in France, and I also got to stay in Paris, too, so I was able to see different parts of France." She then planned to study abroad in France while in college, but due to delays in passport processing times due to the pandemic, she had to cancel at the last minute. Part of the decision to cancel and not just postpone study abroad was made because she already had international experiences to draw from. "I'm fortunate enough to have been offered other abroad opportunities, like through my family and personal connections from the previous couple of years. So, I decided to pursue those as kind of my make-up study abroad," Emma said. Family had introduced her to other types of travel, which filled in her international interests when the pandemic became an obstacle.

Eric, who recently studied in Spain, also had a close connection with France, as his mom is from Paris. He traveled there often throughout his childhood: "I've always sort of had that multicultural perspective, and I've been really interested in diverse cultures, going to visit different cultures. I'm pretty lucky that I can say I've been to so many different countries, and it's always really fascinating to me." He points to his French family as teaching him the value of a multicultural perspective. Eric and Maria both grew up watching their parents navigate the United States as immigrants, which also introduced concepts of cultural differences and adaptation to them at a young age.

College Friends

Friends at college also played a major role in the decisions students made or were in the process of making. Either the overall experience of study abroad, or specific programs that they went on, turned into recommendations or positive experiences for these students. Friends and classmates acted as casual advisors for study abroad programs for Maria and Ally. Maria, who is going to Spain next fall, turned to sorority sisters and friends for their advice.

> "I don't know anyone who's applied this year, but I know a bunch of people that went in previous years. So, I asked them how their experience was and they said they loved it. I was able to talk to them and they were able to give me feedback, explaining a little bit more about what their study abroad experience was like."

This feedback process helped Maria decide on her program in Spain. Ally also turned to her close friends in her sorority last year when she was making her decision:

"I knew a couple of my [sorority] sisters were also applying. If you go to Florence, this is the program that you go on. I think there were almost 40 kids or 50 kids [from this university], which I thought there was only going to be like 15 of us, which was kind of nice when you would run into someone, and I got to meet people that I wouldn't necessarily meet when I'm here."

From Ally's informal conversations, she learned that this program in Florence, Italy, was popular among students, and that she would likely have that support group of peers while abroad. It ended up being a great setting for her, where she was able to have and make friends from her university, from other U.S. universities, and friends from all around Europe who she still keeps in touch with.

For Emma, friends on campus were actually part of the reason why she did not ultimately study abroad. She was planning on going to France, but it was just as international travel during the pandemic was starting back up, and passport processing times were extremely long. As mentioned earlier, her passport did not come back to her in time to leave for France, so she stayed at her home campus that term.

"I could have pushed my study abroad experience off by a quarter and gone later, and I essentially decided not to do that just because I lost so much time here at campus [during Covid] as well, and I kind of cut out my fall quarter of my junior year to be my study abroad experience. And then, after not having that, but finding my place on campus a little bit more after returning from Covid, I just grew really comfortable here."

Early Schooling

Long before they came to college, local schooling experiences shaped students' exposure to different cultures. Ally and Leah both grew up going to immersive language schools, which they credit for giving them interest in global travel, culture, and language. Ally said her school district "had like six different elementary schools, and closest to my house, that one was Chinese. So, my parents just kind of threw me in that, and I was in kindergarten." She loved it, and continues to study Chinese at DU, but was unable to study abroad in China due to pandemic travel restrictions. Leah went to a Japanese immersion school, and is also still studying Japanese in college:

> "I took Japanese from kindergarten through senior year, and got to do a few exchange programs there, which I thought helped my language a crazy amount, just being immersed in the culture and having to speak Japanese all the time. This Japanese immersion school was like a minute walk from my house, so [my parents] were like, oh, we'll just put her in this school and see how it goes. And it ended up being the best experience ever, so, I was just really lucky."

Since Leah studied abroad in Japan when she was in high school, she decided to study abroad in Europe while in college for a different perspective. But her Japanese experience, and her parents' encouragement of it, set her up for a life of pursuing cultural and travel opportunities. High schools do not have to be language immersion schools to influence students to pursue study abroad. Maria, who has not yet studied abroad, cited a

high school guest speaker as the first time she learned this was a specific pursuit she could do in college.

> "And you know, you're in high school, so you don't really understand a lot of the college terms, and so I was like, I don't know what that means, but they were able to travel while they were in school. And then I come to realize you actually take classes and you live there."

For Maria, this guest speaker taught her something about college and something about international opportunities. This suggests that these influences can be intertwined: high school students can be motivated to go to college specifically because of study abroad.

Students made it clear that trusted personal networks influenced their decision to study abroad and their interest in certain regions, countries, cities, and programs. Next, we will look into the final system that students navigate throughout the study abroad program choice process: the university.

University System: Providing a Good Study Abroad Program

Study abroad is common enough at U.S. colleges and universities now that determined students can usually find a way to do it no matter what school they attend. However, certain schools have more support systems in place to help their students study abroad, through things like scholarships, easy transfer credit policies, and faculty encouragement. The university in this study is one of these schools, often showing up on published lists of universities that are "good at" study abroad. Many students said they

choose to attend this school because of its reputation for supporting and encouraging study abroad.

"I picked [this university] partially because of their study abroad program, and I knew that was something I wanted to do," said John, a first-year student. He did his research on access to study abroad options during his college search, and this school checked that box. Eric and Leah, who recently returned from studying abroad, sought out this university because of study abroad quality:

> "Actually, when I was picking colleges and searching different colleges, one of my main factors was like the quality of the study abroad program. Like, one of my top five factors for picking [this school] was how good the study abroad program was." – Eric

> "When I was looking at colleges, I knew that I wanted to choose a school that had a good study abroad program. So that was a big reason I chose [it]." – Leah

It is important to note here that their use of the word "program" does not refer to the specific study abroad location and school that they attended abroad. Instead, they are using the word "program" to refer to the comprehensive services and access that the university provides. The purpose of this study was not to evaluate the quality of study abroad programs or services, but it is worth noting that the structure this university has set up for study abroad is attracting people to the school and is fulfilling that promise of goodness, as seen in post-program students Eric and Leah's quotes. As a system, the

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university is helping students turn their ideas about study abroad, as influenced by social discourse and personal networks, into a reality.

Policies and Procedures

Once students begin attending college, their study abroad program selection is influenced by policies and procedures of the university, including which programs are approved, which programs qualify for scholarships, which courses transfer back to their major/minor, and which programs are recommended by advisors, faculty, staff, and students. For example, the program that Ally attended in Florence, Italy, is the only program that her scholarships go toward in Florence. The university approves programs in other Italian cities, but for Ally, Florence was the priority. Therefore, her program selection was narrowed to just one option.

Students expressed the influence of these university policies and procedures through the importance of graduating on time. All of the students I interviewed wanted to go or went abroad for the fall term (September through December). It was important to all of the students that they went for a full term instead of a shorter program that went over a school break like summer or winter. "I'm basing that choice on a program that would allow me to be there for a semester," said Gaby. "Because I want the classes that will be provided during that time, if I'll get the same credits." A good program for Gaby, consequently, is one that provides her with a full semester's worth of credits as if she were still at her home campus.

Courses That Transfer

Taking courses that were relevant to the IB major was frequently brought up by students, with a focus on making sure the classes they took would help bring them closer to graduation. Maria, who plans to go abroad next year, said:

> "For me, I definitely wanted the program I decided to go with, definitely was due to credits transferring over, just because I have a minor and a major and I want to make sure I get all of that done. I want to take the right classes, but I also want to make sure I'm still on track to graduate on time."

The program that she decided to apply to in Spain, by the time of our second interview, checked those boxes. She will be taking classes in the fall that will transfer directly back to her major and minor requirements.

Eric studied abroad in Spain last fall, and when he made that program choice, he was a double major in finance and marketing. He took classes in those fields, but with an international perspective. That experience made him change his major to international business:

> "The school [in Spain] I went to was a really good school, and I ended up being able to take international business classes there. I took international finance, international marketing there, because at the time, those were still my majors. I really enjoyed the experience of those classes, and it made me realize I wanted to go into international business."

Eric's program in Spain was aligned closely enough with the business curriculum at his home university that even changing his major after returning to campus is not pushing his graduation date. This kind of seamless policy is what makes students trust their university for study abroad.

University Advisors

To help students understand which courses transferred back and what would be relevant for their majors, students relied on academic advisors and study abroad advisors. Maria spent her first year at college excited about study abroad but overwhelmed by the options and the application process, so in her sophomore year she sought out an advisor. "There's a certain advisor assigned to different study abroad programs. So, I went up to his office and we spoke about it, and he was super understanding and was like, it's all good. We'll just go through each [program] individually," Maria said. Her meeting with an advisor was a useful access point to making the program choice that she had a hard time making by herself.

Interactions with advisors can be interpreted differently, however. Gaby went to a study abroad advisor not long after starting college to ask which program would be best for an international business major. She did not get a clear answer, which felt frustrating.

"At the beginning of fall, I did ask for advice to one of my advisors, because I was really indecisive on which program. But none of them ever told me you should do this, if anything they kept asking me, well, what do you think you should do? And really, that was a shock to me, I guess, because I was used to

people around my life just giving me the answer, the advice on whatever they saw fit. But here, I notice they don't really give you the answers."

Gaby assumed that the university system would have one clear option for her, while the advisor saw their role as providing guidance on a choice that is ultimately up to the students. Camila, who is also in her first year, had not yet discussed study abroad with an advisor. In contrast to Gaby, who wanted a specific answer, Camila expressed concern that the advisor's recommendations would be too narrow:

> "I have minors to complete as well, and I would like to do a part of them in a study abroad program that I choose. Because if they only advise for a program that is only business, I won't be able to focus on the other things that I like. And I think that's what would happen, if I go to a business advisor, they would only suggest places that are business only, and I wouldn't like that."

As an international business major, Camila is anticipating that advisors are going to push her to study abroad programs that teach business classes, but not classes in her minor, which is fine art. This tension between different types of advisors (study abroad, major, minor) was described by Emma, who completed the study abroad advising and application process one year ago and said that there is a gap between academic advising and study abroad advising:

> "I really appreciate all of my advising, especially within [the business school]. I think it's spectacular, and I wouldn't have gotten this far without it. But I do wish I had a little bit more guidance from my personal advisors throughout study

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abroad, just because it was kind of a complicated process, and I didn't really

know who to go to. It wasn't made clear exactly who my study abroad advisor

was, or they didn't really know me like my academic advisors know me. So, it

was kind of a difficult process. I also, I don't know if this was like a specific

challenge to my year, because it was right after Covid, but yeah, I do recall

going to a couple of my advisors and asking for some help with study abroad, and

nobody really knowing what to do. So, that was a little stressful. So yeah, I do

wish that was like, more integrated into the academic advising."

Emma's comments about this process being difficult and complicated is a critique

on the university system that she and other students are navigating through in order to

study abroad. While the system can work seamlessly for some students, there are

situations for others where it does not feel as smooth. These student stories bring in the

issue of trust as an element of goodness. By choosing their university as a good study

abroad school, students showed that they trusted the university with a very important

priority for them: studying abroad. Students also have to trust that the programs offered

to them are going to meet their needs and keep them on track to graduating on time,

getting a job, and carrying out the future they imagine for themselves.

The university system, out of the three systems identified in these findings, is the

closest in proximity to the student decision process. The university has policies and

procedures in place to lead students into particular programs including advisors, financial

incentives, and academic structures. In choosing to attend this school, students intending

to study abroad are putting their trust in the institution to be another trusted source of

information along with their personal networks. These three systems – university, personal, and societal – work simultaneously to provide students with structure and recommendations about how to choose a study abroad program. In the next section, I will explore how students translate these influences into meaningful goals for themselves.

Meaningful Goals

The evaluation questions (How do students make meaning of the influences on their study abroad program selection? How do student's perceptions of their program selection relate to the university's mission of serving the public good?) lead us from systems of influence to how students make meaning of and perceive their choice process. The systems of influence described in detail in the previous section set up students to create meaningful goals for their study abroad participation and outcomes. These goals are both internal-oriented (i.e. travel and language acquisition) and outward-oriented (i.e. respectfulness and service to the community), and oftentimes intersect both of these categories. I have broken the findings into two areas of meaningful goals: experiential learning and public good impact.

Experiential Learning: A Different Approach to Learning

Throughout my interviews, students talked extensively about the theme of learning, a desire to study abroad to learn, and choosing a program where they could best learn. They did not use this exact language, however. They focused on three key terms related to learning: travel, learning outside of the classroom, and experiencing different languages. These three terms are related to a specific kind of learning, experiential

learning, which can be loosely defined as learning by doing instead of by reading and listening to lectures. The common example students gave of how they wanted to learn by doing was through travel.

Travel as Learning

Travel came up very frequently as a motivation for studying abroad. Travel as an activity and subject is often a taboo word in the study abroad field. There is a historic sensitivity to being considered travel agents and having to prove that study abroad has academic value, so the field has tended to put academic learning and learning that takes place during unstructured travel on a strict binary. In talking with students, however, there was no binary; students saw opportunities for learning throughout the entire study abroad experience, including personal travel that was not structured by the study abroad program. Maria, who will study abroad next year, saw study abroad as her chance to explore. "I love traveling. I didn't really get to travel much, because my parents were always busy with work, and, you know, just trying to do the basic necessities."

Emma, who did not study abroad but who has traveled a lot internationally with family and friends, also expressed deeply personal learning and reflection through travel. She brought up this story as an example of how travel of any kind, even outside of study abroad, is an opportunity to learn about other people, but also about yourself:

> "It's not really describable how it makes you feel sometimes, and especially with, like, language barriers and everything. Sometimes that is seen as a challenge, and it is challenging. But I think it makes the experience a lot more meaningful. Like,

I was talking to this wood carver in Oaxaca, Mexico. He didn't speak any English, and I don't speak any Spanish, and it was just such a meaningful encounter that we had, even though, like, I have no clue what he was saying to me, and he has no clue what I was saying to him, but that was really cool, and he showed us pictures of all the generations before him of wood carvers. It's just like a different way of life, and it makes me think about how wired we are into fulfilling these roles in our country that are completely different from other countries."

Emma connected her experience in Mexico to the kind of learning she thinks students do on study abroad programs, and this made her feel better about not being able to go to France as planned. Ally put an emphasis on travel in choosing her study abroad program and location, based in Florence, Italy. She explained, "Italy was great…it was a good spot to be in order to travel around Europe. One of my purposes of studying abroad was traveling most weekends, which we were able to do." Those weekend trips that she took with friends were independently organized, outside of her study abroad program. This repeated planning and organization teaches students a lot of skills, including transportation, finances, and communication across multiple cultures and languages.

Leah, who studied abroad in Prague, Czech Republic, also reported traveling a lot while she studied abroad, but said it made her want to travel even more in the future: "There's so many places I want to go in Europe now, after being there. I just kept adding to the list of places where I was like, oh, I need to go here! So, I definitely will be going back and hitting some of those places, and working there would be amazing." Leah

gained and learned so much from traveling that she is considering moving to Europe to work after college.

Digging further into why travel was so important to students, the desire to be among difference and learn about cultural variation came to the surface. Leah loved learning about different ways of communicating:

"It was really, really, interesting to see, just like, cultural differences and social differences between different countries, and it gave me a ton of perspective on, you know, cultures with more open mindsets or cultures where you use, like, nonverbal cues. More often things like that, I think I learned a ton about just how to approach different people. I think I gained a lot of knowledge in that aspect."

Leah's reflection on her time traveling shows that she values it because of the learning that took place. Experiencing different places and interacting with different people comes with making mistakes and learning from them. Before studying abroad, all students at the university take a ten-week course that is meant to prepare them for these types of new interactions. But as Leah explained, the course is only hypothetical. It takes experiencing it to really learn it:

"I took the study abroad course that you have to take before going abroad. And we talked a lot about those cultural differences like eye contact or being direct versus non-direct. And I feel like I listened to that. I wouldn't have really understood it if I didn't get to experience it. So, I would say that yeah, cultural immersion is really the only way that you can really understand those ideas."

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Learning Outside the Classroom

Leah is describing another element of experiential learning: learning outside of the classroom. While she was told to be prepared for cultural differences, the books and discussions in the classroom were not enough to really learn what that meant. Eric, who also recently returned from studying abroad, agreed, saying:

"I think actually being there, being present and experiencing the culture first hand, and running into the obstacles that you run into abroad, like language barriers, like culture shock, I think those are some of the biggest learning experiences. I think that going abroad sort of opens up your eyes in another way, compared to like taking international courses. I think there's a lot of things in life that you can't really learn about unless you truly experience it."

Eric tied learning outside of the classroom directly to his major of international business. All of the students saw studying abroad as an essential part of the international business major. Emma, who did not get to study abroad but who has had other international opportunities, agreed, saying, "I think it would have been a great opportunity for me to put my education in practice. There's a lot of lessons that can't be taught in a classroom, especially for international business students." Maria, who will study abroad next year, also emphasized that she wants to experience cultural differences first-hand and not just in her IB classes:

"I feel like it's one thing to read it. It's something else to experience it, because, you know, you actually get to live it for yourself, rather than just getting it from

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someone else's perspective. You can read about it, but actually being able to experience it and understand it is a whole different thing."

Camila, a first-year international student, did international programming in high school that brought her to the United States to study English with students from around the world. Being among different cultures and languages made her happy and motivated to learn:

"I've been with other cultures before, cultural exchanges when I was in my senior year of high school, and I love them. I was with people from Europe, and that's where I want to go. I think because I was happier there than I was in my high school. In my high school is only people from [my country], and I enjoy being with people from other cultures and, like, hearing all the languages and everything."

Language Exposure

Being around languages other than English was important to many students, even if the language was not specifically one that they wanted to learn fluently. Gaby, a first-year student, said, "For now, I want to go to Europe simply because I'm studying French, but I'm not limiting myself to that; it's where I want to start, but definitely not where I want to end." Ally had studied Chinese previously, but when going to China became impossible due to pandemic travel restrictions, she chose Italy: "I feel like I'm just really burnt out on learning languages, but I just wanted to, like, be around a different one. I know zero Italian, but I just wanted to experience another language." Students expressed

that being able to navigate life in another language was an important learning experience for them, and that study abroad could provide this.

Throughout the interviews, students articulated experiential learning goals that they set for themselves to live and travel among different languages and cultures. When students were asked what they would do with all the knowledge and experience gained from studying abroad, they identified outward-oriented goals for the public good.

Public Good Impact

The students I interviewed were familiar with the public good mission of the college and the university either through previous coursework and campus discourse, or because I sent them the missions in writing prior to our interviews. I asked them directly about the public good and global citizenship: What does the college mission of business for the public good mean to you and how does it relate to studying abroad? What does the concept of global citizenship mean to you? Are you a global citizen? Does study abroad make you a global citizen?

Students had a variety of interpretations of what defined the public good and global citizenship, including open-mindedness and respect for differences, understanding power and privilege, becoming a better person and citizen of the world, understanding cross-border impacts of your actions, doing no harm to people and the environment, and volunteering in the community.

Respecting and Enjoying Differences

Across all students, the most common answer had to do with respect, openness, and consideration of difference. John, who has not yet studied abroad but who has traveled internationally with his family, described how he has become a global citizen:

"I've become more respectful and considerate of other people's culture and background. You're invested and intrigued by other places and cultures, and respect them, and also understand different laws and cultures and traditions in other countries. I wouldn't say you could be a global citizen if you go to China and, like, don't respect people's cultures or traditions. If you're ignorant of those things, I don't think you can call yourself a global citizen."

John is defining global citizenship as basic awareness of the culture you are operating in, as he gives in the example of China. But he is also giving value to being "invested and intrigued" by other cultures, which is deeper than basic respect. Camila, a first-year international student, also said global citizenship is more than respect: "It's being able to live with other people from all around the world and be respectful. But not only that, but also actually make connections with everyone. Because being respectful, like, only respectful, is not enough." John and Camila are both emphasizing that global citizenship is not a passive belief, but an action.

Impacts of Your Actions

Camila gave a specific example of this action, saying, "Also, if you're in a position of power, being able to create spaces for everyone to be comfortable." Gaby, also a first-year student, also considered her actions within her host community:

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"I think, based on how I choose to involve myself in the community, it'll be like a symbiotic relationship. In a way, maybe you see that the world is a big place, and everything isn't about you. In different places, customs, and differences, we should, depending on where we are, know how to acclimate to the environment. It's a way to not disturb the flow of the area and knowing how to respectfully assimilate yourself."

Acclimating and assimilating to the study abroad host community is a departure from the neoliberal language often used in study abroad that focuses on individual gains. At the university, students take a ten-week course prior to studying abroad that interrogates the concept of global citizenship. John, Camila, and Gaby have not taken this course yet, but are already analyzing global citizenship and how they will carry it out when they study abroad. Within the UNESCO framework of global citizenship education, they are touching on all three areas: cognitive (knowledge about the world), socio-emotional (social skills that help you live peacefully with others), and behavioral (conduct and engagement). Ally, who did take the pre-departure course and recently returned from study abroad, summarized global citizenship succinctly: "the world doesn't revolve around you."

Volunteering Abroad

Another action that students brought up when asked about global citizenship and the public good was volunteering abroad, either as something they would like to do, or something they wish they could have done. Eric, who studied abroad in Spain, said, "I

never volunteered when I was abroad, which was kind of surprising. I thought that they would maybe build that into their program. Definitely I think there's a need for volunteering and a need for giving back." Maria and Gaby said they do intend to volunteer when they study abroad in the future. "I've always been involved in community service, not because it looked good, but because I genuinely did like being involved," Gaby said. "When I look at the programs, I'm looking at how I can use my free time, whether they have volunteering services there. It may not have to be through the college, but looking around the area around me," Maria said.

Post-Graduation Work

Students also tied the public good to their major of international business and the kind of work they want to do after they graduate. Emma, who is just a few months away from graduation, summarized how her major and her experiences in different countries have shaped her goals for doing business:

> "Business for the public good is figuring out ways how to aid and support the future of our planet, our community, our society, our health, for as many people as possible, and hopefully for all. Although it's tempting, especially in business, to take the easy ways out, sometimes those are the hardest decisions to make, just to fight the conformity of business. People that are impacted by our selfish and stubborn business decisions, even if it's how many degrees away. That's always how it affects people, like environmental issues. Like if it's the cheaper option to use a not-so-sustainable business method, it's not going to be the people who have

money that see those environmental effects. It's going to be the people in lower income places. It's definitely put the pieces together for me to like, see the connection, see the actual people that it would be affecting, and connecting all of the different ideas and lessons that I've learned in the classroom to the outside world."

Emma describes harmful impacts of business on the environment, on public health, and on low-income communities. She credits seeing during her travels the "actual people that it would be affecting" as the key that helped her understand how to do business for the public good. Eric, who recently returned from studying abroad and changed his major to international business after returning, said he did so because it aligned with his ethics:

"If you're looking for more meaning in your life, I think [studying] international business is probably a more ethical route than other business majors, because you're kind of contributing to making the whole world better instead of just for profit. If you are doing global business, you could do, like, work for starting and expanding internet service for the rest of the world. That's a real ethical thing to do. I think international business is more oriented toward the idea of doing business for the public good."

Eric presented a contrast between doing business "just for profit" and doing business "for the public good" and explicitly said that the international aspect of his major makes students think more about public good issues. Again, we see students

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crediting international experiences with opening up their minds about how the world works and how their actions impact people far beyond their borders. Maria, who will study abroad next year, saw herself as a link between her local community and knowledge she will bring back from study abroad:

> "When I study abroad, I can learn more about business in another country, another community, and then come back and apply that to what I'm doing here. It's like you're able to apply those skills that you learned, and be able to express that to people around you who may not be able to study abroad. I can make a difference here through what I learned over there."

Maria is thinking about how her study abroad experience can benefit her community, including people who do not have the opportunity to travel. Her sense of the public good is not theoretical; it is connected to actions she can take to improve her community. Other students discussed how they would enact the public good in their future careers. First-year student Camila wants to start a global, socially responsible business:

> "I would like to have my own business, and that creates enormous opportunities for everyone to have jobs and everything. As a business person, you just have to manage how everything works, like for example, in contamination, the environment, the social responsibility and everything."

Social and environmental responsibility came up frequently when students talked about public good and their future jobs. Leah, a junior who recently returned from

studying abroad, saw a clear connection between these goals and her study abroad experience:

> "I don't know what I want to do at the moment, but I'm interested in sustainability, and I would be interested in working with international companies to make their brands more sustainable. When I go into a field where I'm doing business internationally, I think I could draw from study abroad experiences a lot."

Through each of these responses, students described a sense of responsibility for doing the ethical thing for the world and for your community, as well as a desire to do business better than has been done in the past. Students spoke directly to how their generation was different. Maria said, "I feel like the main thing is like, this generation is more willing to try new mindsets as they're abroad. And when they come back, have a new mindset of how they want to live their life, because the abroad experience changed the way they thought about things." Camila had a similar view:

> "I think we are, first of all, more open in a sense of, even from like a social context, we are more open to doing business with anyone, anywhere. I do think we like to be more international in my generation, more global, and not to stay with the same people in the same place."

It is clear that students did not see study abroad as an isolated activity. Instead, it was integrated into who they were now and who they wanted to be in the future: doing business globally for the public good.

Summary

This chapter outlined the data that answers the two evaluation questions: How do international business majors make meaning of the influences on their study abroad program selection? How do students' perceptions of their program selection relate to the university's mission of serving the public good? Students described complex influences within two major themes: systems of influence and meaningful goals. The students are part of three major systems that shape their study abroad program choice: university, personal, and societal. These systems shape their goals for study abroad, which include experiential learning and impacting the public good. In the next chapter, I will outline the implications and recommendations that come out of these findings.

Chapter Five: Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this program evaluation was to enhance the international business (IB) program's understanding of how its students describe and interpret the study abroad choice process. This evaluation also explores how concepts of the public good and global citizenship may shape student perceptions. This chapter presents the discussion of the findings, implications and recommendations for this university and for practice beyond this university, and finally, calls for future research related to this topic. This program evaluation answered two questions:

1.   How do international business majors make meaning of the influences on their study abroad program selection?

    a.   How do students' perceptions of their program selection relate to the university's mission of serving the public good?

To answer these questions, I used developmental evaluation methodology and collected data through interviews. Developmental evaluation (DE) is a methodology intended to be used in evaluations that are collaborative between the evaluator and the evaluand (Patton, 2011). In practice, this means I regularly shared and discussed findings with the faculty leadership of the IB major throughout data collection so that we could adjust and pivot the evaluation as needed in real time.

To interpret the findings in the previous chapter and to construct the following recommendations, I used the theoretical framework of global citizenship education (UNESCO, 2018), because it is a framework focused on global learning that is well-known in the field of global education, but not frequently used in formal research and evaluation. As a reminder of the findings structure from the previous chapter, Table 4.1 is included again below.

Table 4.1 Themes of the Findings

Systems of Influence	Meaningful Goals
Societal	Experiential Learning
Personal	Public Good Impact
University	

Discussion of findings: Making Meaning of Influences

Study abroad literature suggests that students are influenced to study abroad by friends and family (Nyaupane et al., 2010), a desire to experience different cultures (Kitsantas, 2004), and a desire to travel (Haisley et al., 2021). All three of these studies were quantitative, collecting data from large groups of students via survey to rank their influences and motivations. This program evaluation had similar findings of students being influenced by personal networks and motivations to learn through travel and cultural interaction, but it went deeper to capture how students move through systems of influence all at once. The goal was not to rank influences, but to hear from students about how they made meaning of these experiences. Figure 1 depicts the systems of influence at work when students are making their study abroad program choices, and Table 5.1 outlines the specific elements of each system.

Systems of Influence
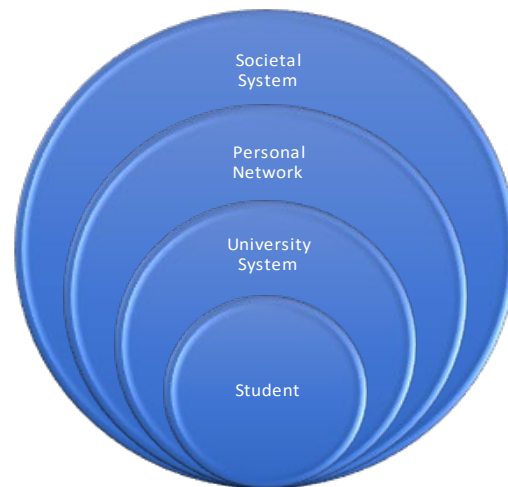
Figure 1: Systems of Influence

Table 5.1 Elements of the Systems of Influence

Societal System	Personal Network	University System
Social discourse	Family	Policy and program approvals
Global affairs	Friends and classmates	Design of major
	K-12 school and community	Faculty and advisors

This program evaluation found that the university system is closest in proximity to the student choice process because the university controls funding sources related to study abroad, the list of programs that are approved for students to go on, and the transfer credit process to make sure the classes they take abroad count toward graduation. Previous studies about the study abroad choice process did not identify the university system as a close influence. For example, Nyaupane et al. (2011), one of the few studies

that looked at program choice instead of just destination choice, found that social ties were the strongest element in the choice process. Smith's 2016 master's thesis did identify university policy as important in the student choice process, but focused mainly on foreign language requirements and organization of advising materials, two issues that did not come up in my program evaluation. The lack of findings and discussion in study abroad research related to university policy – such as how study abroad programs are approved by the university, how majors are designed to incorporate study abroad, and how advising is structured – means that universities may not know how they could do better for their students. The university system as a close influence on students is an important finding because it could push universities to assess their power and how they wield it. Identifying the university as a powerful influence could also impact how students choose where to attend college. University power will be discussed more in the implications section.

Framing the systems of influence as connected and simultaneously experienced is also intentional, as the study abroad choice process is not linear. In the limited research about U.S. college students choosing study abroad programs, the choice process is described as a set of steps. For example, Salisbury et al. (2009) conclude that students proceed through specific steps of the choice process and make a series of decisions to come to one final selection. However, my program evaluation suggests that students do not move from being influenced by society, to personal networks, to the university; students move back and forth among all three to engage in the choice process. For example, Eric grew up exposed to different cultures and perspectives, traveling

frequently with his family. He chose to go to this university because of its reputation for supporting study abroad. He studied the variety of programs that the university offered that included business courses, and ultimately, he chose a program in a small city in Spain where he thought the way of life would be most interesting to him. This journey involved Eric in considering the societal, personal, and university systems throughout his multi-year decision process.

The choice that students are aiming for sounds simple: a good study abroad program. But what makes a study abroad program feel "good" to each student? This question about goodness is a subjective question about assessing qualities of study abroad programs. It is a qualitative question that is answered through students' trust that the program they choose is going to meet their goals. It is important to note that previous studies on the study abroad choice process did not mention student trust as a finding. The closest study that mentions trust is Sweeney's (2013) research on what helps African American undergraduates successfully study abroad. Sweeney found that students relied on faculty, staff, family, and community to follow through with their intentions of studying abroad, all of whom are relationships where trust is implied. Sweeney's qualitative study uses critical race theory to frame their findings, which is how the emphasis on trusting relationships came to the forefront. Other studies on the study abroad choice process are quantitative, which result in findings that are pragmatic in nature, not leaving room for student voices to express feelings and experiences of trust.

Each of the three systems of influence identified in this program evaluation plays a role in helping students feel trust. The societal system builds an image of what study

abroad can provide for students: exposure to cultural differences and experiential

challenges that help them grow as individuals and as global citizens. Social discourse

flowing through this system provides students with examples of places that can give them

these experiences (i.e. Italy is the cradle of art history, Spain has a slower pace of life

compared to the United States, Germany specializes in cutting edge technology). The

student's personal network reaffirms that study abroad is a worthwhile activity to do

while in college, and provides them with concrete recommendations of regions, countries,

cities, and programs to consider. The university system provides the structure to not only

send them on a study abroad program they are excited about, but also to make sure the

time abroad is not a step away from their degree program, but integrated within.

Discussion of Findings: Global Citizenship Education

The goodness of a study abroad program according to students can also be

understood through the lens of global citizenship. Study abroad research uses a different

set of frameworks to interpret the learning that takes place abroad, particularly

surrounding career skills (Franklin, 2010) and intercultural competence (Root &

Ngampornchai, 2013). The findings from this program evaluation suggest that global

citizenship is an underutilized theory for interpreting study abroad influences and

motivations. In this section, I will explain the significance of global citizenship education

theory in the findings, including how global citizenship and public good appear in

literature, the intersections of global citizenship theory and systems of influence found in

this program evaluation, and an actor map focused on the student journey.

Global citizenship education theory was used in this program evaluation because of its close association with the concept of the public good. The university and the college of business have missions to impact the public good. Public good language is found throughout global higher education research (East et al., 2014; Marginson & Yang, 2020; Nelson et al., 2022) but not in study abroad literature. This program evaluation aimed to tie together the concepts of public good and global citizenship to demonstrate that students experience them as connected. When discussing their motivations for studying abroad, their goals while studying abroad, and their expected outcomes from studying abroad, students described cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral learning that would help them be a positive force in the world. This finding is particularly important for the first group of students I interviewed, those who have not yet studied abroad. There is no other study looking at public good as an influence on study abroad program choice, only studies that look at outcomes (Jon & Fry, 2021; Jon et al., 2020; Murphy et al., 2014; Paige et al., 2009). This program evaluation demonstrates that students are actively looking for study abroad programs that help them become global citizens who positively impact the public good; they are not passive recipients of global citizenship and public good as an outcome of study abroad.

Global Citizenship Intersections with Systems of Influence

UNESCO's (2018) global citizenship education theory breaks the concept down into three areas: cognitive (knowledge and analysis needed to understand a complex world), socio-emotional (values and attitudes that enable learners to live with others respectfully and peacefully), and behavioral (conduct and engagement that reflect these

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knowledge and values). If we overlap these three areas with the three systems of

influence identified in this study, we see many intersections. Table 5.2 outlines the ways

students are carrying out global citizenship while they make their study abroad choices

through the three systems of influence.

Table 5.2: Intersections of Global Citizenship Theory and Systems of Influence in the Choice Process

	Societal	Personal	University
Cognitive	Hearing social discourse messaging about skills and knowledge that would make them a global citizen.	Watching peers and close contacts gain knowledge from study abroad.	Guidance on programs that fulfill course requirements and major/minor requirements.
Socio-emotional	Collecting societal images about how study abroad makes you feel and grow.	Trusting your personal network to support you while taking on this challenge.	Leaning on the structure of the university to provide space for reflection and growth.
Behavioral	Learning about places where you hope to practice engaging as a global citizen.	Watching modeled performances of study abroad and cultural engagement.	Trusting in support for cultural engagement and application of learning.

On the left margin are the three UNESCO Global Citizenship Education concepts

and at the top are the systems of influence identified through this program evaluation.

The intersections are ways that students are engaging in global citizenship while making

their study abroad program decisions. In the cognitive area, students are being influenced

by the societal, personal, and university systems in perceiving what kinds of knowledge

and skills they will gain from study abroad. In the socio-emotional area, students are collecting examples and support for how their values and attitudes will develop through studying abroad. Finally, in the behavioral area, students are choosing study abroad programs where they believe they will be able to engage in learning and practicing global citizenship. Their societal, personal, and university systems influence how students perceive global citizenship in action. These intersections are significant because they show that global citizenship is not just a theory; for college students in the study abroad choice process, global citizenship is a set of goals for how they want to be in the world. Understanding the study abroad choice process through a global citizenship framework moves study abroad away from a self-serving extracurricular activity to one that is outward-facing and altruistic, a significant change for the field as a whole.

By interviewing students in four different years of college, first year through senior, I was able to discern that concepts of the public good and global citizenship are introduced to students well before they arrive at college and are then shaped and modified throughout college and beyond. The actor map of the student journey below (Image 2) depicts this experience. Actor maps are a useful tool in developmental evaluation, as they are made by both the evaluator and the evaluand (Gopal & Clarke, 2015). The international business faculty leadership and I decided to focus on the student as the actor in this map because the goal is to understand influences that students experience throughout their years at college. The goal of actor mapping is to see where gaps exist, so this mapping exercise helped the faculty identify spaces where they could fill in gaps. The tactics for filling in gaps will be discussed in implications.

Actor Map: Student Journey
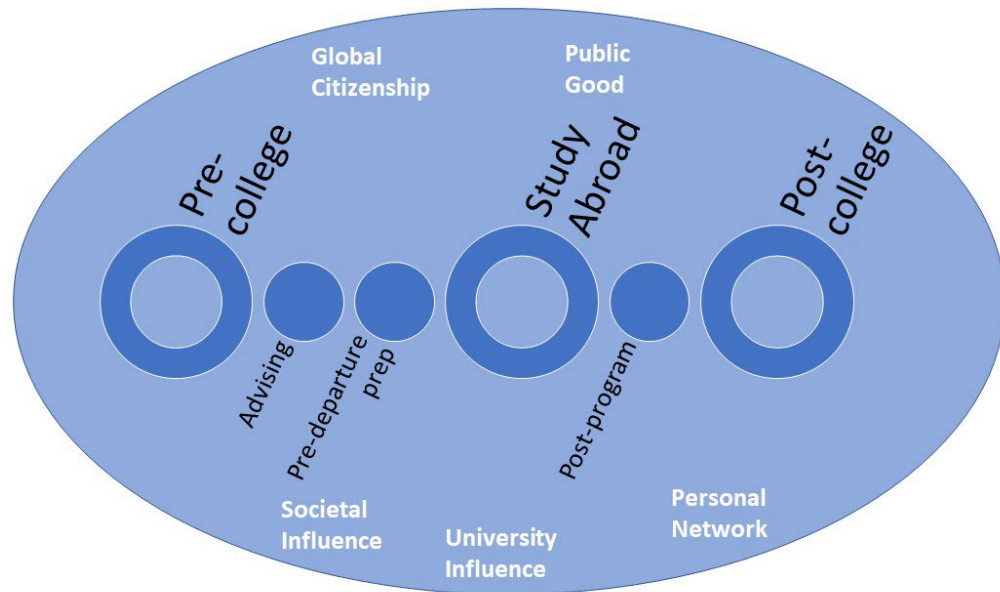
Figure 2: Actor Map of Student Journey

The student journey actor map depicts three formal realms that are outside of the university (pre-college, study abroad, post-college) marked by open circles, and three formal realms that are within the university (advising, pre-departure preparation, post-program) that are marked by closed circles. While this depiction is linear, showing the student journey from pre-college to post-college, the influences in white are not linear: global citizenship, public good, societal influence, university influence, and personal network.

Pre-college experiences includes everything in a student's life before attending the university, including family and community, the college decision and application process, and exposure to media and culture throughout childhood. Once students arrive at

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college, they go through new student orientation, academic advising, and study abroad advising. This experience is all captured in the advising circle. From there, students apply to study abroad programs and enter the pre-departure preparation circle. Preparation includes attending study abroad pre-departure orientation seminars and taking the study abroad preparation course. While studying abroad, students experience a separate academic and student services structure from their home campus, while maintaining their status as a U.S. student. Upon returning to campus, students enter a post-program phase where they apply their study abroad experience to their remaining time in college. Finally, after graduation, students apply their study abroad experience to post-college life including their career, their involvement in their local community, and their involvement in the global community.

This student journey resembles what is described in the literature around the international student choice process. As discussed in Chapter 2, there is extremely limited research on U.S.-based college students choosing study abroad programs, but there is plentiful research on non-U.S. students choosing where to earn bachelors or graduate degrees outside of their home country. International students choose what schools to attend based on personal recommendations (Wilkins & Huisman, 2011), local culture and academic offerings of the school (Eder et al., 2010), and finally tuition, language, and institution image (Lee, 2014). All of these factors appear in the actor map above, albeit in a different timeline and context. International students looking to study abroad for full degrees and U.S.-based students looking to study abroad for one semester are influenced

by recommendations by trusted sources, are drawn to particular cultures and reputations of programs, and are constrained by finances and academic offerings.

Recommendations for Practice: International Business Major

Talking through this journey with the IB faculty leadership and aligning it to the student interview data, we noticed a number of gaps where students could use more structure from the IB major. The interventions we discussed include first-year engagement, peer advising, data on IB major study abroad activity, and career advising.

Based on the experiences of first year students, I recommend that study abroad advising start during the first year. First-year students noted that the focus of the university's study abroad advising is on sophomores who are in the process of applying to programs. Maria, who is currently a sophomore, felt a lack of guidance when she first arrived at campus compared to her sophomore year:

> "I remember freshman year, I came in and I immediately went to the study abroad meetings. I was like, hey, I'm only a first year, like, what I have to do? They're like, you're actually starting super early, just go ahead and like, [figure] out what you want to do, where you want to go."

If study abroad advisors need to focus on sophomores, academic advisors and faculty in the IB major could turn their attention to first years. This gap in the student journey presents an opportunity for the IB major to advise new students on study abroad options and recommendations.

Beyond faculty and staff, the best advisors on this topic are fellow IB majors who have recently returned from abroad. I recommend that the IB major begin an ambassador program, where juniors and seniors who have studied abroad act as peer advisors. Ambassador programs with peer advisors are used across many areas of higher education and have benefits for both sides of the student population (Shook & Keup, 2012). This program is a great way not only to help first-year and sophomores learn about study abroad, but also to keep students engaged in the topic post-program. To incentivize study abroad returnees to be ambassadors, students should receive stipends or work-study grants. Currently, there are no formal requirements or spaces for IB students who have returned from study abroad to continue to engage in the topic, so they may be eager to be ambassadors to share what they have learned.

My next recommendation is to share data across offices (undergraduate advising, study abroad, and IB major leadership) on IB major study abroad activity. This will be useful for both students and faculty in the building of curriculum integration. Curriculum integration is a concept that was popularized by the University of Minnesota Office of International Programs in the late 1990s into the 2000s (Woodruff, 2009, p. 2). Its purpose is to closely align study abroad with majors and minors at the home campus so that students can fit study abroad into their course plans and see their takeaways from study abroad integrated into their college experience once they return to their home campus. To achieve this integration, study abroad offices and academic departments need to collaborate and share data.

Helpful data to collect and compile includes lists of study abroad programs that IB majors have recently chosen, courses that they took abroad, and courses that they recommend other IB students taking. All of this data can be obtained from the office of international programs (study abroad advisors) and business undergraduate programs (academic advising). These two offices can share this information with first years and sophomores who are looking for more guidance from the IB major on potential study abroad programs. Additionally, knowing which students recently returned from study abroad will be useful information for faculty who are teaching IB courses so that they can tie in topics that will help students connect their classroom learning to study abroad, another important component of curriculum integration. Finally, the IB faculty leadership can use this data to continue asking questions about how the major goals and learning outcomes align with certain study abroad programs. Academic departments and faculty should be closely involved in deciding which study abroad programs fit with their curriculum to ensure student learning goals are consistent (Gordon, 2014, p. 70).

The final recommendation for the IB major faculty leadership is to build out career advising for their students who have studied abroad. Students expressed deep learning and motivation to impact the business world in a positive way, and these feelings can be harnessed into job searches and applications. Career advising is another opportunity to help students in the post-program realm to continue to unpack their study abroad learning experiences. There is a lot of research connecting study abroad with career outcomes. Orahood et al. (2004) concluded from their study on business majors that the skills and experience gained during study abroad were valuable to future

employers. More recently, Farrugia & Sanger (2017) surveyed over 4,500 college alumni who studied abroad, focusing on long-term career impacts. They found that alumni credited their study abroad programs for expanding their career options and eligibility for promotions, as well as developing skills such as cross-cultural communication and working in teams. However, there are no studies noting the role of career advising post-study abroad. Instead, it is assumed in these studies that students will have positive career outcomes solely due to study abroad, not due to advising when they return from abroad that can help them process and translate their experience into career goals. For this reason, piloting a faculty mentorship/advising program would be beneficial for the IB major. Faculty who teach in the IB major, particularly those who have worked abroad or for international companies, could meet with students who have returned from study abroad to discuss how their experiences can be leveraged in their career goals, job searches, and long-term plans. Faculty would need to be compensated for their time through stipends or workload modification.

Recommendations for Practice: Other Offices on Campus

International business majors interact with many offices around campus, most importantly the office of international programs for study abroad advising and applications and business undergraduate programs for academic advising and course planning. Before they declare a major and start at college, they are also closely involved with the office of undergraduate admissions. All of the students I interviewed said they came to this university knowing that they wanted to study abroad. This means the admissions office gets questions from high school students and their parents about study

abroad, which is a great opportunity to both capture data about high school students' study abroad intentions to share with advisors and start to set the tone about study abroad as experiential learning for the global public good.

The office of international programs is the office that all students who want to study abroad must go through for program applications and approvals. As the first-year students I interviewed noted, they would like more opportunities to learn about study abroad as soon as they start at college. The office could use data from admissions to do targeted outreach to students who expressed interest in study abroad during the admissions process. Students would also appreciate advising materials specific to their major, showing which types of classes students like them have been able to take abroad.

This program evaluation also found that the public good mission of the university and its relevance to study abroad is salient for students. Therefore, the office of international programs should evaluate its portfolio of offerings to assess how well they address the global public good. Based on the issues students brought up in interviews, this assessment should ask: How is the study abroad program addressing the climate crisis? How does the study abroad program treat its workers? Are there volunteer opportunities? How do students learn about power and privilege in the community? How do students learn about diversity within the community? Finally, the office should evaluate its own pre-departure seminars and course to make sure that it reflects the public good mission and is meeting the needs of the students.

Academic advising is another crucial element of the student experience when planning for study abroad. Business school undergraduate academic advisors work with students across all majors, not just international business. This is another opportunity for advisors to look at data from previous students – where they have studied and what classes they took – to help guide students who are still making their study abroad program choice. The students I interviewed said there was a disconnect between study abroad advisors and academic advisors. Sharing of data and documents between these two offices would help fill that gap.

Memos for each of these offices (international business major, office of undergraduate admissions, office of international programs, business undergraduate programs) can be found in the appendix.

Limitations

This program evaluation was focused on IB majors who intended to or completed a study abroad experience. Additionally, all of the students I interviewed said they knew they wanted to study abroad before they came to college. This means we did not capture the experiences of students who came to the university not knowing about or not wanting to study abroad, so we do not know if any of these students end up studying abroad. The student journey may look different for someone who did not intend to study abroad but made a decision later to do so. Additionally, we only had one student in this study who did not study abroad. A limitation of this study is that it did not capture the experience of IB majors who did not want to study abroad at all. This should be studied in future research in the IB major. Future research that focuses on other majors that do not have an

obvious international component will also offer more perspectives on how students experience the study abroad program choice process.

Implications for Practice in the Field and Other Universities

The goal of this program evaluation was to help the evaluand better understand their particular students. Many of the findings, however, are applicable to the wider field of study abroad including colleges and universities, high schools, and study abroad programs. Three findings are especially important for these groups: the important role of university policy, the importance of the public good, and the early interest that students have in study abroad.

For colleges and universities around the United States, this study suggests looking closely at how policies and structures influence students' study abroad choices. The university system has a lot of power over how students ultimately access study abroad, including financial incentives, course transfers, and faculty and advisors that support study abroad. For high school educators and administrators, this study suggests looking deeper into your students' global interests and giving them outlets to explore ways to engage globally, either now or when they get to college. For each of those educational institutions, the first step in this work is identifying any school mission or vision statements that discuss the common good, social good, or public good. These mission and vision statements should guide the policy and practice of global engagement and study abroad. As found in this study, international education performed for the public good should serve the interests of students, their host communities, and the environment, making study abroad an ideal way to put mission statements into action.

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For study abroad programs, this study is a call for educators and administrators of these programs to consider the public good in a global context and to see that students are motivated to learn about how to be good global citizens. This means being deliberate about how you are teaching students about travel, culture, diversity, and the public good, both in and outside of the classroom. This recommendation is important for both the home campus and the study abroad program, as both play a role in shaping students' learning about the public good during study abroad. In practice, this looks like courses, events, and marketing/advising.

Courses

There are three specific types of courses where study abroad can be addressed directly with students: pre-departure study abroad courses at the home campus, courses that happen while studying abroad, and post-program study abroad courses at the home campus. Pre-departure and post-program courses are not common across U.S. colleges and universities because adding additional requirements to study abroad is a deterrent to participation and adds to a student's overall course requirements and tuition. However, for schools that do have pre-departure and post-program courses, like the university in this study, these are ideal places to integrate deep analysis and reflection on the topics of travel, diversity, culture, and global citizenship.

Travel was consistently brought up by students in this program evaluation as a priority in their study abroad choice process, and an opportunity for deep learning. Students said the course they took before studying abroad left some space for discussion of travel, but they would have liked more. In a study abroad pre-departure course, travel

can be incorporated into discussions about practical issues like money, communication, and transportation in different countries, as well as discussions on the more theoretical level around diversity, respect for difference, and cultural humility. Cultural humility is a term that researchers have suggested using instead of cultural competency, because it prioritizes self-awareness and social justice instead of competency-based behavior like communication skills (Fisher-Borne et al., 2014). In the words of a student I interviewed, cultural humility is realizing the world does not revolve around you, particularly as a U.S. citizen.

Travel should continue to be a topic for students to explore while they are in classes in their study abroad programs. For example, many students who study abroad in Europe aim to visit different cities most weekends, which means they are returning to class on Monday with new experiences that could be related to class and could be an opportunity for them to connect more deeply with course content. Finally, in a post-program course, students have more distance from those travel experiences, allowing them to reflect on travel as a larger concept that shapes their understanding of culture, diversity, and public good. Travel is a thread that connects to many of the things we in the field of study abroad want students to learn, but we tend to push it to the side as separate from formal learning. To resolve this, travel experiences need to be integrated into coursework and celebrated as part of the formal learning that takes place during study abroad.

Coursework should also directly emphasize topics of diversity, culture, and public good. From the interviews in this program evaluation, it is clear that students understand

that Italy is not a monoculture. Paris is not a monoculture. College students are ready for a deep exploration of all the different cultures that are interacting in these cities and countries, today and in history. Students are interested in pushing themselves outside of their comfort zones and exploring who they are in various cultural contexts. Faculty should provide them with spaces to talk about their outside-the-classroom experiences, their internal narratives and changes, and how these experiences tie back to their life in the United States. Students are enthusiastic about being among difference and getting outside of the U.S. cultural and political context. They have already been learning about diversity, equity, and social justice in their U.S. education, and they want to hear about it from the perspective of another country. For example, France approaches DEI very differently than the U.S., and a comparative exploration of the differences helps us more deeply understand our own issues in the U.S. The Gen Z students I interviewed are concerned about human rights, the environment, and runaway capitalism. They see study abroad as an opportunity to learn more deeply about these issues. Are you giving them the tools they need to do this? Do they learn about how the local community and national or regional context are approaching human rights and the environment? Help them compare and contrast this with the U.S. approaches.

Events

When the topics of travel, culture, diversity, and public good cannot be integrated into coursework, they should be formalized through events in pre-departure, during study abroad, and post-program. Most colleges and universities hold pre-departure events like seminars and workshops for students to learn about issues ranging from passports and

visas to language and customs. Pre-departure events are also a useful space to introduce ideas about the global public good, including approaches to environmentalism and social justice in the host culture.

While abroad, students are interested in events like volunteering and getting to know the host culture beyond the tourist trail. Study abroad programs need to be careful that these volunteer events are wanted by the community and truly do good, instead of just making the U.S. students feel good. The events that the home institution does post-program are also crucial, as this is often the only space study abroad returnees have to process and unpack what they experienced abroad. Events like these can be workshops, retreats, or seminars that are led by faculty, staff, or students who have skills in facilitating. The difference between events and courses in this case is that events are not required, but they can be strongly encouraged and targeted to particular groups of students (like international business majors) who may benefit the most from participating.

Marketing and Advising

Marketing is a part of the study abroad experience that was not explicitly studied in this program evaluation, but is involved in the social discourse that students hear about study abroad and particular destinations and programs. Marketing is interwoven with study abroad advising, as both universities and study abroad programs have the goal of increasing participation in study abroad. When promoting and advising on study abroad programs, certain language is used about the excitement and benefits of travel, such as learning about diversity and different cultures and striving to be a global citizen.

As discussed in Chapter 2, the way marketing and advising talks about travel, diversity, culture, and public good will impact students' goals and actions, and, in turn, impact the local communities where they are studying. If marketing and advising do not take into account historical and current systems of oppression and harm, the system of study abroad and its participants risk replicating it (Stein et al., 2016). This harm is most explicit when depicting countries in the Global South as "exotic, culturally pristine, and filled with happy natives" (Canton and Santos, 2009, p. 191) but can also be seen in stereotyping immigrants and marginalized groups in Europe. To combat this, study abroad administrators working on marketing and advising should use visions of the public good to assess their language and imagery around travel, culture, diversity, and public good to promote humility and learning, instead of White saviorism and dehumanizing depictions.

Call for Future Research in the Field of Study Abroad

This program evaluation sought to look at the experiential learning activity of study abroad through lenses that are not commonly used in this subject, by using developmental evaluation, global citizenship education theory, public good missions, and a focus on Gen Z. Therefore, further use of these frameworks and subjects would be extremely useful for the field as a whole.

Developmental evaluation (DE) is a hands-on research methodology that fits well with programs and systems that are dynamic and complex. The arena of study abroad is a perfect subject for this approach. By using DE, I was able to work closely with my evaluand, respond quickly to changes, and innovate new ways to improve the program.

DE would help other colleges and universities answer their own complex questions and more deeply understand the student experience. Furthermore, study abroad programs would greatly benefit from the use of DE, as they have a new batch of students every few months. Additional DE research on students in a variety of destinations, majors, and from different backgrounds would greatly improve the field of study abroad.

Future research should also consider using global citizenship education theory when seeking to understand student experiences. For too long, study abroad research has been interpreted through theories that are individualistic in nature, implying that students are motivated by neoliberalism and neocolonialism when seeking out international experiences. This program evaluation contradicts that, by listening to students through the lens of global citizenship and hearing them express motivations to learn and to positively impact the public good.

The public good as a concept and action already exists in study abroad programs, but to date has been little studied. Future research should dig into how study abroad programs are contributing to the social discourse around a global public good, how students are perceiving these messages, and how the actions on the ground match these messages. This research should be done with strong consideration of the local communities that host study abroad students, as they are ultimately the ones who get to decide if public good is actually being carried out in their communities.

Finally, this study focused on eight college students who are part of Gen Z, and found that they feel a deep responsibility to be good global citizens. Further research is

needed to understand how broad this feeling is across colleges, majors, and demographics. Gen Z believes that they are different than generations before them. If this is true, study abroad programs need to learn from them and be ready for them.

Call for Future Research for the Evaluand

For the specific evaluand, the faculty leadership of the IB major, this developmental evaluation is just the beginning of what they can evaluate. From here, I recommend the evaluand seek out more student perspectives, including IB majors who did not want to study abroad, IB majors who could not study abroad due to factors like family and athletics obligations, and IB majors who went to non-European study abroad programs. All of these perspectives will be valuable when putting together advising and guidance for students. Additionally, the evaluand should consider interviewing faculty who teach IB classes to understand their global experiences and their interest in being a study abroad career advising mentor. There are likely untapped resources that faculty would enjoy sharing with their students and students would find to be a valuable part of the major.

Conclusion

This program evaluation answered two questions about the study abroad program choice process and established a number of findings. First, students experience three simultaneous influential systems while making study abroad choices: societal, personal, and university. These systems help students shape goals for study abroad that include experiential learning and impacting the public good. The goals and motivations students expressed can be understood through the theory of global citizenship, which emphasizes

cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral learning that pushes students toward building a more equitable and peaceful world. This program evaluation helped the evaluand more deeply understand the experiences of their students and gave them a road map for intervening in the choice process in meaningful ways. In addition, the findings and implications are applicable across the university and beyond, setting up the field of study abroad to adjust its approach for a new generation that wants to study abroad for the global public good.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Student Participant Recruitment Message

Dear [*insert name*],

My name is Sara Bularzik, and I am a student from the Department of Higher Education at the University of Denver. I'm writing to ask you about participating in my research study. This is a study about influences on study abroad program choice on international business majors. You're eligible to be in this study because you have indicated that you are majoring in international business and you intend to study abroad. I obtained your contact information from the associate director for undergraduate programs at the college of business.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will participate in a 30-minute Zoom interview with me and then be invited to participate in a 60-minute focus group on campus with other international business majors who are planning to study abroad. You will be compensated for your time with a $20 Starbucks gift card. I would like to audio/video record our interviews to ensure accuracy, and then we'll use the information to summarize influences on study abroad program choice.

Remember, this is completely voluntary. You can choose to be in the study or not. If you'd like to participate, or if you have any questions about the study, please e-mail me at sara.bularzik@du.edu. Thank you very much.

Sincerely,
Sara Bularzik

Faculty Sponsor:

Dr. Chris Nelson, Christine.Nelson@du.edu

Appendix B: Interview Protocol

1. Before the interview, send students the document of questions and missions. Document says:

   Pre-study abroad interview questions *(if student has not yet studied abroad)*

   1. Why do you want to study abroad?
   2. When did you decide that studying abroad was something you wanted to do?
   3. Tell me about how you've thought through your program selection.
   4. Who in your life has influenced your study abroad decisions?
   5. As a business major, what does the college mission of business for the public good mean to you?
   6. How do you think the college's mission is or isn't involved in study abroad?
   7. What does the concept of global citizenship mean to you?
   8. How do you think the program you go on for study abroad will impact your global citizenship?

   Post-study abroad interview questions *(if student has completed study abroad)*

   1. Why did you want to study abroad?
   2. When did you decide that studying abroad was something you wanted to do?
   3. Tell me about how you thought through your program selection.
   4. Who in your life influenced your study abroad decisions?
   5. As a business major, what does the college mission of business for the public good mean to you?
   6. How do you think the college's mission is or isn't involved in study abroad?
   7. What does the concept of global citizenship mean to you?
   8. How did the program you went on for study abroad impact your global citizenship?

   College Vision: Pioneering business for the public good.

   University Vision: Be a great private university dedicated to the public good.

2. Start the interview by thanking them for participating and asking them if I can record (either via phone recorder app or Zoom).
3. Ask questions as written above and add in additional relevant questions as needed.

4. At the end of the interview, ask if there is anything else they want to add.
5. Thank them for their time and confirm details about Starbucks gift card distribution.

Appendix C: Focus Group Protocol

1. Before the focus group, email the faculty about the topics we will be covering so they will be prepared for the discussion.
2. Begin the focus group with presenting my most recent ideas and findings.
3. Take notes of faculty responses to my prompts.
4. Close meeting by setting future meeting date and topics.

Appendix D: Stakeholder Memos

Faculty Leadership of International Business Major

1. Characteristics of your students

    a. First year and sophomores: These students came to college very enthusiastic about majoring in international business and tying study abroad to their major. They chose the major because of previous global or cultural experiences that made them curious about the world. They like the variety of courses they can take in their major, instead of just focusing on one aspect of business. In their first year, they do not have many chances to meet other international business majors, but they would like to. They are unsure of how to seek out advice on study abroad programs.

    b. Juniors and seniors: These students chose to major in international business because of global experiences they had before college or during their previous years in college. They have ideas about how their major will lead them to international business careers. They hope that these careers impact the world in a positive way, changing the status quo of business. They like that the major lets them take a variety of classes, and they were able to take classes abroad that transferred back to the major. They know other international business majors and are aware of the IB Club.

    c. Student journey map:

        i. The student journey actor map depicts three formal realms that are outside of the university (pre-college, study abroad, post-college) marked by open circles, and three formal realms that are within the university (advising, pre-departure preparation, post-program) that are marked by closed circles. While this depiction is linear, showing the student journey from pre-college to post-college, the influences in white are not linear: global citizenship, public good, societal influence, university influence, and personal network. Pre-college experiences includes everything in a student's life before attending college, including family and community, the college decision and application process, and exposure to media and culture throughout childhood. Once students arrive at college, they go through new student orientation, academic advising, and study abroad advising. This experience is all captured in the advising circle. From there, students apply to study abroad programs and enter the pre-departure preparation circle. Preparation includes

attending study abroad pre-departure orientation seminars and taking the study abroad preparation course. While studying abroad, students experience a separate academic and student services structure from the home campus, while maintaining their status as a U.S. student. Upon returning to campus, students enter a post-program phase where they apply their study abroad experience to their remaining time in college. Finally, after graduation, students apply their study abroad experience to post-college life including their career, their involvement in their local community, and their involvement in the global community.

ii.

Actor Map: Student Journey
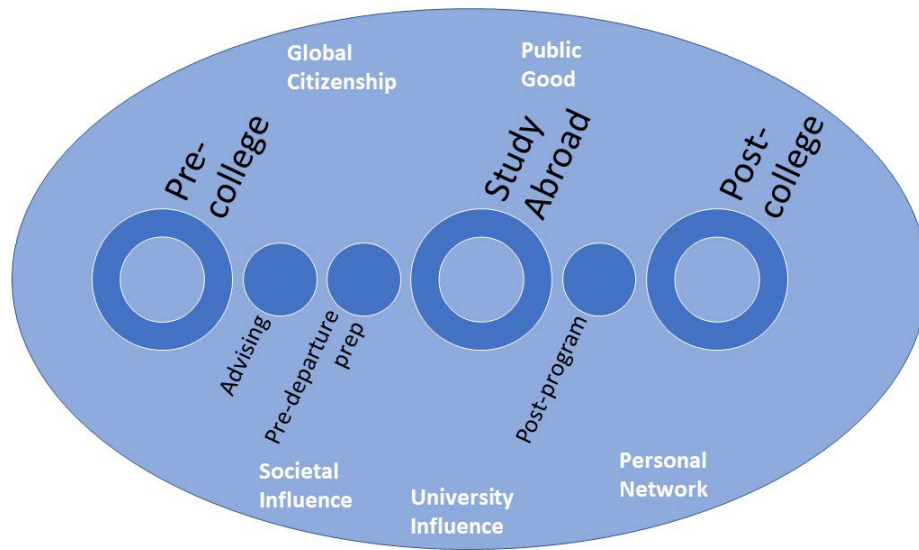
2. Connecting study abroad with the international business major

   a. First year student engagement

      i. Welcome new students in the fall with an event that brings together students at all levels. Seniors can share their study abroad experiences with the new students.

      ii. Hold a session in winter quarter for students who just returned from study abroad to share their advice for first year and sophomore students.

     iii. Peer ambassadors: Hire juniors and seniors to advise first year and sophomore students on study abroad.

b. Data collection

     i. Get list of IB study abroad students and their programs/courses from the office of international programs.

     ii. Share this list with professors teaching IB classes.

     iii. Learn more about programs to see if they are meeting IB and college learning goals.

     iv. Get syllabi for INTZ courses that students are taking before they go abroad and see how they integrate with IB major.

c. Career advising for study abroad returnees

     i. Hire faculty to work with students on processing their study abroad experiences through a career search lens.

     ii. Help students with mock interviews, cover letters, and other job search skills focused on international business.

Office of Undergraduate Admissions

1. Characteristics of international business majors
   a. These students come to this university motivated to study international business with the goal of doing business for the global public good.
   b. These students come to this university motivated to study abroad and tie the experience closely to their major and experiential learning goals.
   c. Students choose this university because of its positive reputation as a good study abroad school.
2. Engaging students in study abroad discussions
   a. Family: Students said family was an influence on their study abroad decision process. Engage family in these discussions during the admissions process so that they can see this university is a trusted supporter of study abroad. Tie study abroad to the university mission of serving the public good.
   b. University Staff: Share what you are hearing from students and their families about study abroad goals with the office of international programs so they stay up to date on what their students (currently Gen Z) are looking to do in study abroad.
   c. Early advising materials: Provide prospective students who are enthusiastic about study abroad with advising materials that are targeted at the high school level. For example, sharing language requirements for study abroad programs so that students can focus on those language classes in high school.

Office of International Programs

1. Characteristics of international business majors before they study abroad
    a. These students came to college very enthusiastic about majoring in international business and tying study abroad to their major. They chose the major because of previous global or cultural experiences that made them curious about the world. They like the variety of courses they can take in their major, instead of just focusing on one aspect of business. They are unsure of how to seek out advice on study abroad programs.
    b. They are influenced by family, friends, and their K-12 schooling experience when thinking about study abroad destinations.
    c. They want to know which study abroad programs and classes are best for international business majors.
2. Give eager first year students something to do.
    a. Connect them with other international business majors who have already studied abroad.
    b. Tell them about courses and programs that work well for this major.
3. Students see study abroad as a way to impact the public good. Explore the global public good mission in portfolio of study abroad program offerings. Questions to ask as you evaluate include:
    a. How is this study abroad program addressing the climate crisis?
    b. How does the study abroad program treat its workers?
    c. Are there good volunteer opportunities?
    d. How do students learn about power and privilege in the community?
    e. How do students learn about diversity within the community?
4. Students want to learn about how study abroad will impact the public good. Examine pre- and post-study abroad classes and seminars through the lens of public good. Questions to ask as you evaluate:
    a. Are we talking about study abroad as an individual benefit only, or does it tie in community impacts and the public good?
    b. How do we address travel and its ability to help students develop as global citizens?
    c. Are cultures presented as static and essentialist, or as dynamic systems that are difficult to define and constantly shifting?
    d. Is diversity presented as a U.S.-centric concept or one that has its own history and context based on where you are in the world?

College of Business Undergraduate Advising

1. International business majors and study abroad goals

    a. First year and sophomores: These students came to college very enthusiastic about majoring in international business and tying study abroad to their major. They chose the major because of previous global or cultural experiences that made them curious about the world. They like the variety of courses they can take in their major, instead of just focusing on one aspect of business. In their first year, they do not have many chances to meet other international business majors, but they would like to. They are unsure of how to seek out advice on study abroad programs.

    b. Juniors and seniors: These students chose to major in international business because of global experiences they had before college or during their previous years in college. They have ideas about how their major will lead them to international business careers. They hope that these careers impact the world in a positive way, changing the status quo of business. They like that the major lets them take a variety of classes, and they were able to take classes abroad that transferred back to the major. They know other international business majors and are aware of the IB Club.

2. Advising for students who want to study abroad
    a. Students want to see examples of programs and course maps that other IB majors have followed.
    b. Connect first year and sophomore students with recently returned from study abroad IB majors.
    c. Connect with office of international programs to collect data on where IB majors are studying abroad. Work closely with that office to make sure students feel like their academic advisors understand their study abroad decision process.