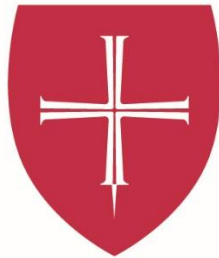


After Study Abroad...

A Resource Guide for Returned Students

COLLEGE OF
Saint Benedict



Saint John's
UNIVERSITY

Global Education

I experienced so much, but I can't say a thing...

Welcome home! You now join the ranks of over 15,000 CSB/SJU students who have participated on a study abroad program since CSB/SJU started sending people overseas in 1973. You took a chance by leaving everything you knew and ventured abroad! It's important to recognize your achievement and celebrate your recent return from abroad.

Every year, the Center for Global Education (CGE) sends over 450 students abroad for internships, semester programs, short term summer programs and research opportunities. As a returnee of a CSB/SJU Education Abroad program you join the proud ranks of our thousands of alumni as a member of the CSB/SJU family.

Coming home can be a very exciting time as you reunite with all of the people, places and things that you craved while abroad. It can also be a tough transition as you find yourself longing for the sights, sounds, smells and feelings that you had immersed yourself in during your time abroad. This phenomenon is called reverse culture shock. It can affect travelers at different times and to varying degrees. Some students may feel profoundly impacted by reverse culture shock; while others seem to be barely scathed, as they transition easily back to their lives in the US.

Almost all travelers expect to experience some degree of culture shock when they leave the US, but not as many anticipate the difficulties they may experience upon return. News flash: the world did not stop while you were abroad. Your family, friends, roommates, coworkers and classmates continued on with their lives while you were gone. They have had many experiences, just the same as you have. But they did have experiences, and it is important to honor the important events which took place in their lives.

The most important thing to realize about reverse culture shock is that it is a normal part of the process. Missing what you left behind means that you really embraced your experience abroad. It is important to recognize it and seek out ways to share your experiences with others and stay connected with your "abroad life". And don't worry, it shall pass.

This handbook aims to engage you as you return to campus and local community. Our goal is to provide you with resources to help smooth your transition, to help you integrate your experiences into your academic and professional lives and to help you take action and be an engaged global citizen. Your study abroad experiences can be put to use in a variety of ways. Take a look at the world of resources available to you.

CGE has dedicated staff available to assist you as you return home from studying abroad. Please do not hesitate to contact us to share ideas, ask questions, retrieve more information, or just talk to knowledgeable people about your return. Contact us at 320-363-5952 or email cge@csbsju.edu.

Sincerely,

CGE Staff

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LEAVING THE COUNTRY ACTIVITY

from Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use
OBJECTIVES:

- To help students prepare for the end of their time Abroad
- To help students identify the range of emotions that can be part of this experience.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Please allow for at least 45-90 minutes for this activity.
2. Plan to do this activity at least 2 weeks before departure, so students can really have time to accomplish things that come out of this activity
3. Read to students the following quote from Barbara Kappler Mikk. Ask them to think about her 2 very different stories of leaving England and Malaysia.

I had 2 very different study abroad experiences and 2 very different departures for home. The first was in England. My host family had decided to go on a family vacation right at the end of my stay. Since they were not going to be a home for my last days in the country, they took me out for dinner at an Indian restaurant. I can still picture my host mom pleading with husband not to eat so many hot peppers. After they left, I finished final papers and exams. The last hours were a whirlwind- I was leaving England with just barely enough time to make it home for Christmas. I ran from monument to monument, shop to shop, grabbing mementos to bring home. I stayed up so late the night before I left that with just 2 hours of sleep, I did not hear my alarm. The taxicab driver luckily pounded on the door, and I finally awoke. I left England in a blur, panicking about catching my flight.

When I left Malaysia I was a bit wiser. I spent an evening with my Malaysian friends having a relaxing dinner and talking about the past few months. I felt I was just getting to understand this tropical place of contradictions. Even though I was not ready, I felt in peace, having said my goodbyes, promising myself and others to return. I have traveled some since these adventures, but interestingly enough – despite my convictions- I have never returned to these places. This is OK, too, as I knew saying “I’ll be back” was not a replacement for “goodbye.”

4. Ask the students to take a few moments and write down the answer to this questions: “what is your ideal way of leaving this program?”
5. Then, ask students to take a minute to record the things they want to experience before departing
6. Finally, ask them what emotions they are experiencing.

DEBRIEFING:

- Ask students to report back their ideal way of leaving this program and what they want to do before departing. Make sure to have enough time for every student who wants to share something
- Be prepared to support students in their possible range of emotions: regret, bewilderment at where the time went, excitement to see family and friends, numbness, concern about what’s next, satisfaction about what they’ve seen and enjoyed, and even a sense of loss.
- Share some of your own stories of leaving a place to help students come up with realistic and meaningful experiences of their own

© “Leaving the Country” was originally published in *Maximizing Study Abroad: A Program Professional's Guide to Strategies for Language and Culture Learning and Use* by the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition at the University of Minnesota. Used by permission. More information about this CARLA publication can be found at: www.carla.umn.edu/maxsa/guides.html.

A THOUGHTFUL RETURN ACTIVITY

OBJECTIVES:

- To help student begin thinking about returning home so they consider what they have learned
- To support students' process of making the study abroad experience one of life-long learning
- To help students identify the range of emotions that can be part of this experience.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Review Julie's story below and/or share personal examples of your own study abroad experience and your departure from the host country.

"I came back from 4 months in London and was immediately thrown into a whirlwind of visits with every relative I had ever known as I missed Christmas at home to experience it in London. The following week I moved to a new residence hall as school started again. Life was back to Normal. What I wouldn't give to have time to myself to breath!"- JULIE CHI, LONDON

2. Ask students to share how they feel about leaving the program
3. Have students answer some or all of the questions below

DEBRIEFING:

- Have students report their responses. If time is limited, please focus on 5 and 7.
- Students may be experiencing a wide range of emotions at this stage of their study abroad experience.
- Share with the students "What Can I Do Before I Come Home to Help Myself?" and "TEN TOP IMMEDIATE REENTRY CHALLENGES" from the following pages.

A THOUGHTFUL RETURN QUESTIONS

Some of you may experience exactly what Julie did. It's the reality of the fast paced world in which we live. Since time upon re-entry may be scarce, we encourage you to record here your thoughts on these questions to prepare you for returning home:

1. In what ways have I changed?
2. What things (people, places, activities, etc.) will I miss most from abroad once I am home
3. In what ways might my friends and family have changed?
4. How would I like my family and friends to treat me when I return home?
5. What am I looking forward to the most? The Least?
6. What are the lessons I have learned that I will never forget?
7. What are the skills I have learned?
8. Many say that returning home is more challenging than the initial culture shock. What are some things I might do to make the transition easier?
9. What have been the important things about this study abroad experience that I want to share with family and friends?
10. What do I want to do with this experience I've had (e.g. continue studying the language)?

ANTICIPATION AND EXPECTATION EXERCISE

You also may have some mixed feelings about saying goodbye and returning to old routines. Part of what this resource tries to do is to examine how one's personal background and cultural values affect, in part, how you have perceived others who think and behave differently and how they may have perceived you. But in addition, we hope that by going through some self-reflective exercises at various stages of your journey, you can gain additional insights into the kinds of personal changes a study abroad program can bring about. This is particularly true in terms of one's perceptions about the self and others, both before and after a period of intense cross-cultural exposure.

What we ask you to do is to write your own personal responses to the questions below. Be as honest as you can. Your responses should reflect how you feel right now, before coming home.

a. The five things that I enjoyed **most** about studying abroad were:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

b. Five things that were difficult or bothered me the **most** while I have been abroad are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

c. The five things I missed **most** about home while I have been abroad are:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- d. The five things (people, places, activities, etc., in America) I have missed *least* since I have been abroad are:
- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
 - 4.
 - 5.

My greatest single challenge while I have been abroad has been:

WINDING DOWN: PREPARING TO COME HOME

Adapted from Bruce La Brack's "What's Up with Culture" <http://www2.pacific.edu/sis/culture/>

This section is about capturing memories and saying a "good"" Good-bye. As one's overseas journey begins to draw to a close there are a number of simple but important things you can, and should, do to make sure you bring proper closure to your adventure. These range from taking last minute photos and getting addresses of overseas friends and program classmates to being sure to say your goodbyes in a culturally appropriate manner.

Once abroad it is easy to get so involved in classes and daily activities, including planning trips to every other country on the continent, which we often forget to see deeply into the local culture and record that which is closest to us. Building memories is one of the joys of overseas study, but before long your daily routine becomes just that – routine!

So if you have not already done so you should record as much of your everyday life as you can, especially those ordinary places, people, and things you want to remember. This can include everything from collecting photographs, to buy or downloading popular music, local handicrafts, postcards of your favorite places, or even learning to cook a dish you like.

Capturing these photos and material touchstones will give you an opportunity to explore more deeply those things that have become a regular part of your life overseas. It is surprising how quickly one can get used to living in the new place and take things that once seemed so new or odd and overlook them completely. Suddenly, you are not noticing ordinary features of daily life any more. They are no longer strange. This generally indicates that you have become somewhat adapted to the culture.

Suggestions about what to record could include the street you live on and your room, your favorite clubs, pubs, and restaurants, the neighborhood, classmates, a local park or church, the neighbors you greet daily, street vendors and local markets...in short, anything you feel important to capture for future memories. Pictures of the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, the Vatican or other major monuments are nice, especially with you and your friends standing in front of them. However, everyone sees pictures of these places all the time. They are visually familiar but *no one has seen the places that are part of your everyday life*. Those photographs will not only be more interesting to the folks at home but more meaningful to you when you return.

Remember, however...

- Think about how you will share your photographs: how they will be organized, presented, and preserved.
- If you are an artist, even a budding one, try capturing everyday life in small paintings, sketches or drawings. This rarely goes unnoticed and people will often glance at what you are doing and, if it looks interesting, could be asking YOU questions.
- Journaling or Blogging is, of course, an excellent way of keeping track of your experience.
- The main point is to think about how you are going to take your memories home because they will fade over time.

Saying a culturally proper goodbye

One of the most neglected aspects of an overseas sojourn is the way one goes about taking leave. Nobody likes to say goodbye and many study abroad students put it off until it is either too late altogether or they rush through the process. This is a big mistake.

If you have made any friends or acquaintances while abroad, had a favorite teacher, lived with a home-stay family, got to know a local shop keeper, or established any regular relationship which was mutually important, then it is very important that you show respect and acknowledge the bond properly. It may be that there is a particular custom in your host-country for leave-taking that you may not be aware of and you may wish to ask a friend or mentor about (i.e. in Germany it is customary to give your *own* bon voyage party to which you invite your friends or fellow students!). In some cultures, distributing small gifts to those you are leaving is appropriate. In others, the opposite may be true -- the returnee is often given a small token; however, if they leave abruptly or without adequate notice, this may not be possible and may be considered very poor manners. A gift of a photograph that you have taken may be a wonderful way to leave a memory of yourself behind. *Understand, every culture has its own rules on the appropriate way to bring closure.* Doing the culturally sensitive thing is likely to be greatly appreciated and remembered by those left behind.

When the time comes to depart and return home, it is very important to say goodbye to all those places as well as the people who have become part of your life. A last visit, and taking the photos that you have forgotten until now, brings closure to your stay. Of course, besides mementos, pictures, and memories you are likely to be bringing back some intercultural skills, behaviors, and attitudes which you picked up by studying abroad.



WHAT CAN I DO BEFORE I COME HOME TO HELP MYSELF?

What can you do to prepare to return home? Being aware of the reentry process and following some advice from those who have already returned can facilitate your reentry. The following list is compiled from many sources, but all of the tips come from returnees who have offered these ideas in the hope of making your initial reentry easier for you and for those at home. They are offered to you as things to consider as you prepare to return from study abroad. First, say goodbye. Then:

1. Mentally prepare for the adjustment process

The more you consider your alternatives, think about what is to come, and know about why returning home is both similar to and different from going abroad, the easier the transition will be. Anticipating is useful. As one psychologist put it, "Worrying helps." However, obsessing does not, so be prepared -not paranoid!

2. Allow yourself time

Reentry is a process that will take time, just as adjusting to a new foreign culture required a period of acculturation. Give yourself time to relax and reflect upon what is going on around you, how you are reacting to it, and what you might like to change. Give yourself permission to ease into the transition.

3. Understand that the familiar will seem different

You will have changed, home has changed, and you will be seeing familiar people, places, and behaviors from new perspectives. Some things will seem strange, perhaps even unsettling. Expect to have some new emotional and psychological responses to being home. Everyone does.

4. There will be some "cultural catching up" to do

Some linguistic, social, political, economic, entertainment, and current event topics may be unfamiliar to you. New academic programs or regulations, slang expressions, popular culture references, recent events, and even major social changes may have emerged since you left. You may have some learning to do about your own culture. The longer you have been gone, the more you may have to discover, and the more noticeable it will be to others that you are not culturally fully up-to-speed. Approach this challenge in the same way you approached culture learning overseas, with a sense of humor and an open mind.

5. Reserve judgments

Just as you had to keep an open mind when first encountering the culture of a new foreign country, try to resist the natural impulse to make snap decisions and judgments about people and behaviors once back home. Mood swings are common at first, and your most valuable and valid analysis of events is likely to take place *after* allowing some time for thorough reflection. Most returnees report gaining major insights into themselves and their home countries during reentry, but only after allowing a sufficient period of time for reflection and self-analysis.

6. Respond thoughtfully and slowly

Quick answers and impulsive reactions often characterize returnees. Frustration, disorientation, and boredom in the returnee can lead to behavior that is incomprehensible to family and friends. Take some time to rehearse what you want to say and how you will respond to predictable questions and situations; prepare to greet those that are less predictable with a calm, thoughtful approach. If you find yourself being overly defensive or aggressive in responding to those around you, it is probably time to take a deep breath and relax. It is tempting when asked for the twentieth time, "How was London?" to sarcastically reply, "Very British!" but the momentary satisfaction will do little to open a real communication channel. As always, thinking before answering is a good strategy.

7. Cultivate sensitivity

Showing an interest in what others have been doing while you have been on your adventure overseas is a sure way to reestablish rapport. Much annoyance with returnees results from the perception that returnees are so anxious to tell their stories and share their experiences that they are not interested in what happened to those who stayed at home. This is ironic because one of the most common frustrations reported by returnees is that those at home only ask superficial questions (e.g., So how was it?) and want short answers. Returnees see this as a lack of opportunity to express their feelings fully. In such circumstances, being as good a listener as a talker is a key ingredient in mutual sharing and you may need to practice those skills upon return.

8. Beware of comparisons

Making comparisons between cultures and nations is natural, particularly after residence abroad. However, a person must be careful not to be seen as too critical of home or too lavish in praise of things foreign. A balance of good and bad features is probably more accurate and certainly less threatening to others. The tendency to become an "instant expert" is to be avoided at all costs.

9. Remain flexible

Keeping as many options open as possible is an essential aspect of a successful return home. Attempting to re-socialize totally into old patterns and networks can be difficult, but remaining aloof is isolating and counterproductive. What you want to achieve is a balance between resuming and maintaining earlier patterns and enhancing your social and intellectual life with new friends and interests.

10. Seek support networks

There are lots of people back home who have gone through their own reentry process and both understand and empathize with a returnee's concerns. Returnees may find it useful to seek out people with international living experience such as academic faculty, exchange students, Peace Corps volunteers, international development staff, diplomatic or military personnel, church mission officials, and those doing business internationally. University study abroad and international student offices may also be places where returnees can find support and empathy as they go through the reentry process.

Adapted from materials originally developed by Dr. Bruce La Brack, School of International Studies, University of the Pacific for the Institute of International Education, San Francisco

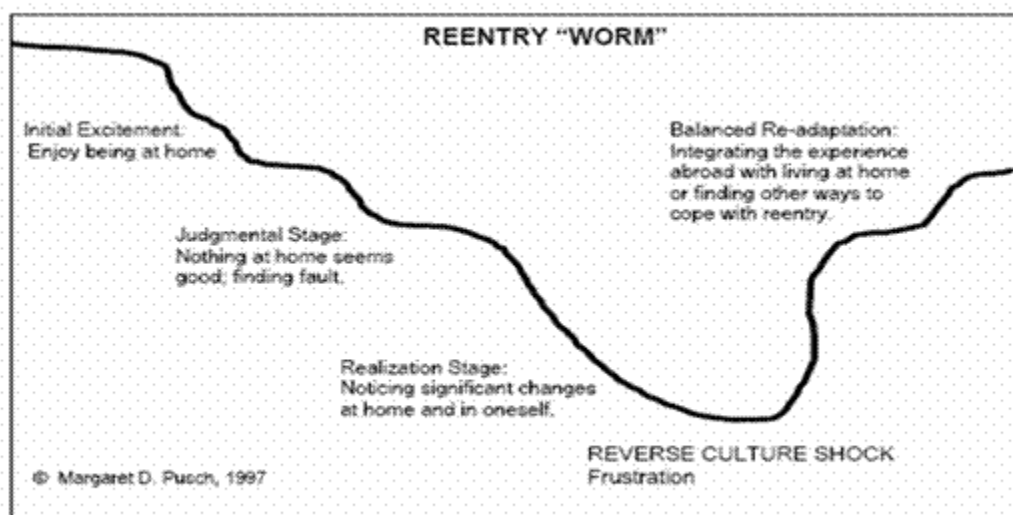
RETURNING HOME

Re-entry is the process of returning home after spending time abroad. It is a powerful experience that has the potential to allow for personal growth, to provide mobility for social action and civic engagement, to enhance skills for your professional life, and lastly the ability to further your knowledge about the world and your place within it.

The traditional view of re-entry has focused mainly on the emotional challenges that come with seeing your home community or country again after studying or living abroad. Like many other students returning from studying abroad, the emotions are just one aspect of your experience. You may also need to:

- meaningfully connect with others through social action or civic engagement;
- integrate your new experiences into your academic and professional life;
- find ways to continue to embody the global understanding that you experienced abroad.

To get you started, the re-entry worm can be a useful tool in helping you realize that you are not alone in feeling a range of emotions. We recognize that illustrations like the "reentry worm" may be useful for many students and that NOT all students' experiences fit into these categories. While the worm shows these emotions in an order, we know that emotions can happen at any point during your re-entry. In fact, you may not classify any of your experiences this way. The worm offers us a range of feelings that may be happening. Margaret D. Pusch is the designer of the worm and also has a resource that identifies personality types and draws connections to re-entry.



From: <https://studyabroad.sit.edu/documents/studyabroad/alumni-toolkit.pdf>

REVERSE CULTURE SHOCK

Reverse Culture Shock is a term associated with the phenomenon of returning to one's own country and culture. Very similar to culture shock, a person entering into their home environment will have to make adjustments to reacquire themselves with their surroundings. Unlike culture shock, most do not anticipate feeling like a foreigner in their own home. However, it should be expected. If you have made any cultural adjustments while abroad, you will have to readjust once back home.

EUPHORIA

Most travellers will experience some form of euphoria or high when returning home. For weeks the traveller has anticipated returning home and has now come face to face with family, friends, and double chocolate donuts. To friends and family you are nothing short of a celebrity. People want to hear about your trip, most enthusiastically look at your photos, and everyone is really glad to see you. This eagerness can last for a surprisingly short period of time. As can your tolerance to hearing over and over again, "how was your trip?"

SHOCK

All those social cues that you once took for granted now have to be relearned. You feel frustrated that loved ones have so quickly put your travels into the past. You may feel similar to the effects of culture shock: anxious, irritable, nervous, unable to sleep, or oversleeping. There really is no one pattern or set list of symptoms for reverse culture shock. And unlike culture shock, there is no timetable for moving past it.

ADJUSTMENT

Given time, the majority of travelers will come to some final state of adjustment. They will take their experience and put it into the context of their home. Homesickness for the home that you left behind gives way to a renewal of bonds with old and new friends and family. Your life begins to resemble a little of the life you left, except with a broader perspective from your journey.

TEN TOP IMMEDIATE RETURNEE CHALLENGES

Dr. Bruce La Brack, School of International Studies, University of the Pacific

There are lots of reasons to look forward to going home, but there are also a number of psychological, social and cultural aspects which can prove difficult - often because they are unanticipated. The following list was generated by interviewing students like you who have been through the experience and survived nicely. However, they say you should take the process seriously by being realistic and thinking about it and your possible reactions. They offer the following thoughts on reentry for your consideration in the hope they will make your return both more enjoyable and more productive.

1. Boredom

After all the newness and stimulation of your time abroad, a return to family, friends, and old routines (however nice and comforting) can seem very dull. It is natural to miss the excitement and challenges which characterize study in a foreign country, but it is up to you to find ways to overcome such negative reactions - remember a bored person is also boring.

2. "No One Wants to Hear"

One thing you can count on upon your return: no one will be as interested in hearing about your adventures and triumphs as you will be in sharing those experiences. This is not a rejection of you or your achievements, but simply the fact that once they have heard the highlights, any further interest on your audiences' part is probably unlikely. Be realistic in your expectations of how fascinating your journey is going to be for everyone else. Be brief.

3. You Can't Explain

Even when given a chance to explain all the sights you saw and feelings you had while studying abroad, it is likely to be at least a bit frustrating to relay them coherently. It is very difficult to convey this kind of experience to people who do not have similar frames of reference or travel backgrounds, no matter how sympathetic they are as listeners. You can tell people about your trip, but you may fail to make them understand exactly how or why you felt a particular way. It's okay.

4. Reverse "Homesickness"

Just as you probably missed home for a time after arriving overseas, it is just as natural to experience some reverse homesickness for the people, places, and things that you grew accustomed to as a student overseas. To an extent it can be reduced by writing letters, telephoning, and generally keeping in contact, but feelings of loss are an integral part of international sojourns and must be anticipated and accepted as a natural result of study abroad.

5. Relationships Have Changed

It is inevitable that when you return you will notice that some relationships with friends and family will have changed. Just as you have altered some of your ideas and attitudes while abroad, the people at home are likely to have experienced some changes. These changes may be positive or negative, but expecting that no change will have occurred is unrealistic. The best preparation is flexibility, openness, minimal preconceptions, and tempered optimism.

6. People See "Wrong" Changes

Sometimes people may concentrate on small alterations in your behavior or ideas and seem threatened or upset by them. Others may ascribe "bad" traits to the influence of your time abroad. These incidents may be motivated by jealousy, fear, or feelings of superiority or inferiority. To avoid or minimize them it is necessary to monitor yourself and be aware of the reactions of those around you, especially in the first few weeks following your return. This phase normally passes quickly if you do nothing to confirm their stereotypes.

7. People Misunderstand

A few people will misinterpret your words or actions in such a way that communication is difficult. For example, what you may have come to think of as humor (particularly sarcasm, banter, etc.) and ways to show affection or establish conversation may not be seen as wit, but aggression or "showing off." Conversely, a silence that was seen as simply polite overseas might be interpreted at home, incorrectly, as signaling agreement or opposition. New clothing styles or mannerisms may be viewed as provocative, inappropriate, or as an affectation. Continually using references to foreign places or sprinkling foreign language expressions or words into an English conversation is often considered boasting. Be aware of how you may look to others and how your behavior is likely to be interpreted.

8. Feelings of Alienation

Sometimes the reality of being back "home" is not as natural or enjoyable as the place you had constructed as your mental image. When real daily life is less enjoyable or more demanding than you remembered, it is natural to feel some alienation. Many returnees develop "critical eyes", a tendency to see faults in the society you never noticed before. Some even become quite critical of everyone and everything for a time. This is no different than when you first left home. Mental comparisons are fine, but keep them to yourself until you regain both your cultural balance and a balanced perspective.

9. Inability to Apply New Knowledge and Skills

Many returnees are frustrated by the lack of opportunity to apply newly gained social, technical, linguistic, and practical coping skills that appear to be unnecessary or irrelevant at home. To avoid ongoing annoyance: adjust to reality as necessary, change what is possible, be creative, be patient, and above all use the cross-cultural adjustment skills you acquired abroad to assist your own reentry.

10. Loss/Compartmentalization of Experience (Shoeboxing)

Being home, coupled with the pressures of job, family, and friends, often combine to make returnees worried that somehow they will "lose" the experience. Many fear that it will somehow become compartmentalized like souvenirs or photo albums kept in a box and only occasionally taken out and looked at. You do not have to let that happen: maintain your contacts abroad; seek out and talk to people who have had experiences similar to yours; practice your cross-cultural skills; continue language learning. Remember and honor both your hard work and the fun you had while abroad.

FINAL JOURNAL ENTRY EXERCISE

By David Shallenberger Faculty, Department of Intercultural Service Leadership and Management, SIT Graduate Institute

1. How has re-entry been? What have been the most challenging aspects of coming back into your home-based life?
2. When you look back at the travel, what did you learn about yourself?
3. What new insights do you have about your own place in today's global community?
4. What is the most interesting thing you learned about your topic?
5. What applications do you foresee based on your new insights?
6. What activities were most valuable to you?
7. What activities could be eliminated?
8. If you were to do it all over again, what would you change?

25 QUESTIONS –SELF-DISCLOSURE EXERCISE

from Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use

- What was the strangest food you ate?
- How were the restrooms different?
- What was your most memorable experience?
- What was the funniest thing that happened to you?
- What was your most embarrassing cross-cultural communication moment?
- What do you miss most about your host country?
- Where would you go if you had the chance to study abroad again?
- What was your living situation like abroad (host family, dorm, etc)?
- Who did you spend most of your free time with abroad?
- Where did you travel before/during/after your program?
- What was your favorite place in your host city?
- Where did you want to go but didn't get the chance to?
- What was the best language experience you had?
- What was the best present you brought back for a friend/family member?
- What was your favorite thing to do on a Friday night?
- When did you start to feel more "at home" in your host country?
- Who did you wish would visit you abroad so that you could share the experience with them?
- Did you have the chance to see live theater, dance, or music performed?
- What was your first impression of your teachers?
- What was the best photograph you took during your stay?
- What was the biggest change in your daily routine?
- Why did you choose to go on a program to your host country in the first place?
- What was the place you missed most in the US while you were abroad?
- What was the thing (food, clothing, activity, etc.) you missed most while you were abroad?
- What is the most special item you brought back from your host country? Why is it such a treasure?

REACTING TO THE CHANGES

from Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use

Returning to one's home environment isn't easy for a number of reasons, including how much you have changed, how much you understand these changes, and how much your friends and family accept these change. It's important to take time to consider what particular frustrations are for you. Record your reactions to these questions and statements

1. I know that I have changed as a result of my experience because...
2. My friends do seems to understand _____ about me, but they don't understand...
3. My returnee experience would be better if...
4. Now that I am home, I worry most about...
5. The one thing I know I have learned about myself is...
6. I wish I could explain to my family and friends that...

While home may have remained fairly unchanged in your absence, it's possible that there have been some significant changes – a move, a divorce in the family, or a change to a new university. If you changed and home has changed, it's almost like you need to learn how to dance together again. Will you vary the music to adapt to the new rhythms of your lives or play the same tune?

UNPACKING YOUR EXPERIENCE

1. What are the parts of your experience abroad that you wish did not have to end?
2. What were the comfortable, familiar things from your trip abroad that you miss now?
3. In what ways has returning from abroad and arriving back into your old culture been similar or different from when you left home and arrived in your host culture?

Questions: the story of what happened

1. Tell a story about something that startled you about being abroad.
2. Tell a story about what amazed you while you were abroad.
3. Tell a story about something that made you stop and think while you were abroad

Questions: The stories that shape your life story

1. Who was one person that you admired while you were abroad? What qualities did you admire in that person?
2. What are some of the aspects of your host culture that you grew to love as you experienced the “story” of daily life while living there?
3. How has your experience abroad changed or confirmed the plan that you had laid out for the story of your life?

Questions: The Small Stuff

1. What little things were important to you before your experience abroad?
2. What was the small stuff that seemed to make all the difference while you were abroad?
3. What little things have you been noticing since you have been back?

Questions: Habits and Patterns

1. What are the little things that you could do regularly to keep your experience abroad alive?
2. Who in your life might support you in attending to the little things that are so important?
3. What small, daily changes can you incorporate into your life to support the growth and changed perspective that you have experienced?

RE-ENTRY ACTION PLAN

from Worldwide Learning: <https://studyabroad.sit.edu/documents/studyabroad/alumni-toolkit.pdf>

PERSONAL/EMOTIONAL PROCESS PLAN

I plan to do the following in order to prepare for and deal with the personal/emotional stress I may be facing now that I am home:

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

I plan to do the following in order to contribute to positive social change on my campus or home community through engagement in my home community and/or continued involvement with my host country or region:

ACADEMIC REINTEGRATION

I plan to do the following in order to actively integrate my new knowledge, interests and skills into my university experience:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

I plan to do the following in order to incorporate my new skills and interests into my professional path:

IDENTITY CHALLENGES

from Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use

You may feel in between 2 “poles” and for months following your return you might experience a feeling of “cultural identity crisis.” Indeed, you might feel like creating a new identity for yourself. Be patient and take time to reflect upon how you can incorporate all of your cultural identities into your own unique perspective on the world. For now, take a moment to reflect upon these questions:

- What value, beliefs, and behaviors have I learned from my host country that I want to try to maintain while back in the US?
- In what ways might these values, beliefs, and behaviors conflict with US culture?
- How can I find support for these new values?

SEEING THE U.S./CANADA AND THE WORLD IN A NEW LIGHT

from Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use

You have probably changed your views on a number of things since you came back. Many students have a new awareness of politics and the interpretations they get from the media of different countries and cultures. Some people feel either more highly critical of their own country or very grateful for the things that they enjoy in their own country—or both. To sort through your changing perspectives, jot down a few ways in which your views have changed. Here are a few questions to get you thinking.

Write your responses in the following chart:

1. What new experiences did you have while abroad that shocked or surprised you about the world?
2. How do you feel now about those experiences after returning to the U.S./Canada?
3. Are there certain stereotypes that you have let go of? Kept? Modified?

How my views of the world have changed?	How my views of my own country and culture have changed?

STRATEGIES FOR RE-ENTRY

Several returnees collaborated to develop the following chart of common emotional challenges encountered upon re-entry and possible strategies to cope with these challenges.

Challenges	Strategies to help you deal with re-entry
<p>Friends and family at home don't seem interested in hearing about aspects of your experience that you feel are important.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Realize they may be adjusting to changes in you. Allow some time for this adjustment. • Plan a special time for you to share photos, souvenirs, or food from your experience. • Don't assume the opportunity for meaningful conversation will happen—make room for it to take place. Without a comparable experience, your family and friends may have difficulty understanding the depth of your stories. Be patient with them. • Write down your thoughts and feelings. It will help you to process them even if you can't talk about them. • Seek out others with similar experiences. • Give presentations to community organizations. Write an article for your local or school newspaper. Be active!
<p>Friends and family may treat you as the same person you were before leaving. You want your relationship to change as a result of your changes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your family and friends may be feeling uncertain about how you have changed. Discuss your feelings about yourself and others with them. • Encourage positive changes in old relationships. Don't expect your friends to suggest seeing a new international film—especially if they never did before. Take the initiative and invite them. • Seek out relationships with people who are compatible with the new you.
<p>You may be anxious about your academic situation because the subjects you enjoyed studying abroad, including language, appear to have little relevance at home. You might also be confused about your educational future and career plans in light of new or uncertain goals and priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take advantage of the wide range of educational opportunities available to you by finding informal and nonacademic ways to continue the study of your favorite subjects. • Take time to consider educational and career plans that include your new areas of interest. • Seek out the advice of your counselors and mentors.
<p>If you find that your attitudes and opinions have changed considerably during your stay abroad and are not widely shared in your home community, you may feel highly critical of your home country because you have new perspectives on it. Others might be critical of your "negative attitude."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try to keep your feelings in perspective; remember that your opinions and ideas may initially be greatly influenced by the host culture and may not represent your final balanced viewpoint. • Share your feelings with others but carefully choose situations in which to bring up controversial issues. • Continue to foster your ability to look at the world critically by reading and seeking out a diverse range of information, rather than falling into the trap of just thinking of things (politics in particular) negatively.
<p>You may become frustrated because people at home are uninterested in other peoples and cultures. Faced with this lack of concern, you might feel there aren't ways for you to take an active role in helping solve the problems of the world community.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempt to generate local interest in other peoples and their concerns. • Use your special status as an intercultural traveler to educate others through private conversations or by public speeches and presentations. • Look at problems in your own community now that you have a new perspective. Become a change agent.

Activity adapted from Kappler, B., & Nokken, K. (1999). *Making the most of your time abroad*. Minneapolis, MN: International Student and Scholar Services, University of Minnesota.

COPING, ADJUSTING, AND GETTING INVOLVED

Many of the feelings you may experience stem from the change you have undergone and the ambiguity about how the new, changed you fits into your old life. First of all, it is important to remember that change is a positive thing. You have new ideas and insights giving you a better sense of yourself. The trick is to figure out how to incorporate your new perspectives into your again in the U.S. while still retaining new knowledge and perspectives. First, don't consider study abroad a singular experience; instead, look at it as the start of a lifetime of international experiences. Second, find ways to continue pursuing newfound interests. Make the most of the resources that exist for you on your home campus and in your local community.

After you tackle the hurdle of reverse culture shock, you realize that the show must go on. But what in the world are you going to do with this vast knowledge and experience that you just acquired? The challenge before you now is to make the most of it. Visit our website section entitled "Return from Abroad" for complete details.

(<http://www.csbsju.edu/global/before-and-after-abroad/return-from-abroad>)

INTEGRATING YOUR EXPERIENCE INTO YOUR DAILY LIFE

- [Continue to document your journey](#). There are resources to help you continue to process how important your study abroad experience was. You may find it helpful to blog, journal, sing, write poems or just share your transition (either in private or in public).
- Take a [Service Learning course](#) and Volunteer in the community
- Join a student club at CSB/SJU or an organization in your community:
 - International, multicultural group
 - Student/social/political awareness group
 - Leadership group
 - International Student Association on your campus
- Continue learning/expanding your mind:
- Subscribe to alternative and/or international news media
- Find ways to incorporate some of the activities you did, foods you ate, music you listened to, etc. into your daily lifestyle now
- Take an international relations, world history, cultural/ethnic studies, language, or sociology class
- Stay connected to the experience:
 - Read your journal
 - Make a CD of songs that remind you of your time abroad or songs that represent the experiences you encountered
 - Watch movies or read books about your host country
- Continue studying a new Language:
 - Continue studying at your home university
 - Find Native Speakers in your community
 - Join a language club in your community or on campus
 - Volunteer with an international organization
 - Continue conversing with your new friends on Skype
- Take a language class to maintain your language proficiency or ask other faculty with foreign language skills if you can conduct your research and write your papers in a foreign language.
- Participate in a language table where people join to dine and converse in Spanish and French. Start a new language group!

- Find out about being a tutor for students who need help in elementary or intermediate language courses.
- Attend the international lecture series programs and other presentations on international affairs.
- Volunteer to lead conversation groups through your campus Intensive English program for members of the campus and community who speak English as a second language.
- Host an international dinner party.
- Submit original writing you did while abroad to be published in your campus or community newspapers or to national magazines.
- Join a student group with an international focus (i.e. International Club, Students for Holocaust Awareness, Council of International Student Affairs, etc.).
- Go to your campus or community library and read newspapers in the language of your host country. (Many papers are available on the web as well).
- Check community listings for international groups around your community (i.e. Rotary International)
- Check out foreign films from your campus or community library or see the ones showing on your campus.
- Engage in conversation and dialogue with others about your experience. Correspond with friends and family from your host country.

Share your Experiences and Get Published

As a study abroad returnee, there are many ways for you to share your experiences with others. Publishing them is not only beneficial for the reader, but great experience for you and your resume! Keep in mind that some organizations and publishers pay for submissions, while others do not. There are also a variety of photos and writing contests that offer prizes. The following information is taken from the websites of the organizations listed below.

Writing/Video Contests:

[Transitions Abroad Study Abroad Writing Contest](#): You could win a new IPAD!

Online classes for [travel writing, photography, and film making](#)

Enter the [GoAbroad Student Innovative Video Contest](#)- We had finalists

LIFE-LONG LEARNING AFTER STUDY ABROAD

from Maximizing study abroad: A students' guide to strategies for language and culture learning and use

Here are some suggestions from veteran returnees on how to transform your study abroad experience into life-long learning.

CONTINUE YOUR LANGUAGE AND INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

Whether through formal or informal instruction, there are many opportunities to continue studying the language and culture of interest after you've returned. Universities and community colleges offer many choices for foreign language instruction and many offer some of the less commonly taught languages as well. Private language schools also provide opportunities to practice and brush up on language skills through informal classes. Many universities and schools offer language exchange or "tandem" programs that match a native speaker, usually an international student or scholar, with someone interested in that student's home language and culture. In exchange, the partner can tutor them in English.

INVOLVE YOUR FRIENDS

Invite your friends to a dinner once in a while where you have potluck international parties. Use this as a chance to learn not only about the food, but to have your friends share their experiences with other cultures and what they are doing now to keep an international perspective alive.

WRITE ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCES

Magazines and newsletters, both on campus and off, will be interested in reviewing and possibly publishing accounts of your overseas experience and the unique perspective you now have. This is an excellent way for you to share with others what it's like living in another country. Most of your audience will not have experienced what you did, so by sharing your stories, intercultural encounters, and travels with them, you allow them to enter into your world; and perhaps you may even inspire them to take steps toward their own journey abroad!

KEEP THE INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS ALIVE

Many returnees report regretting that they did not keep in touch with their new friends after returning home. You will feel torn, like your heart and mind is split between two countries. The good news is that with the Internet, it is easier now more than ever to maintain contact with people halfway around the world. Writing letters and e-mail is also an excellent way to maintain your newly acquired language skills. As more and more nations have Internet connections, the amount as well as the variety of information available via the Web has mushroomed. Online newspapers give you immediate access to news on current events that often are not reported in U.S. newspapers.

MAKE NEW INTERNATIONAL CONNECTIONS

Most universities and colleges have active international student organizations that tend to be organized and attended by both international students and U.S. Americans. Many professional and community organizations exist that have cultural exchange and learning as one of their goals. Find out when the next meeting is and check it out.

PROMOTING YOUR INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

What have I gained from my experience?

Cultural Understanding and World View:

As a result of my international experience(s), I have developed:

- A greater knowledge about another culture
- Awareness of political, economic or social events around the world
- My interest in global or transnational issues
- My involvement with a global issue
- My involvement with a civic cause
- A definition of my political views
- My ability to speak a foreign language

Personal Growth and Values

My international experience(s) have helped me to grow and develop:

- My desire for more diverse friendships and social networks
- My desire to further my education (e.g., postgraduate degree)
- A better understanding of myself and my values
- My sense of confidence in new situations or when meeting new people
- My ability to accept differences in other people
- My ability to empathize with people, especially those who are different from me
- My ability to be more flexible and open-minded
- My tolerance of ambiguity in a variety of situations
- An understanding of my own strengths and weaknesses
- My ability to be independent
- My ability to take initiative

And, I have:

- Become more aware of the way I use and structure time
- An increased capacity to profit from my mistakes
- Strengthened relationships with my family members
- Strengthened relationships with my friends
- A clearer notion of what I will do with my life

Additionally:

- I am more capable of solving life's day-to-day problems
- I think more critically: I am more discriminating and skeptical
- I have improved observation skills
- I need more time to be alone
- I am more confident about the decisions I make
- Recognized the importance I put on developing my skills and talents
- An increased willingness to work hard and sacrifice in order to do well in school or in my job

Professional & Career Development

Studying Abroad contributed to:

- My ability to formulate my career goals and clarify my professional aspirations
- I am more aware of the opportunities in life that are open to me.
- Developing skills and intercultural competencies which will aid in obtaining my first job after graduation
- I have a greater willingness to take on roles and tasks to which I am unaccustomed

- The importance I place on working in a field that I find interesting
- The importance I place on having personal fulfillment in my work
- My ability to speak a foreign language in the workplace
- Developing my ability to understand an organization's culture
- My ability to adapt in diverse workplace environments
- Other things that you want to list:

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES OF AN INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

SKILLS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish rapport quickly • Function with a high level of ambiguity • Achieve goals despite obstacles • Take initiative and risks • Time management skills • Identify and solve problems • Accept responsibility • Communicate despite barriers • Learn quickly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handle stress/difficult situations • Manage/Organize • Lead formal and/or informal groups • Cope with rejection, criticism, constructive feedback • Adapt to new environments • Understand an organization's culture • Learn through listening and observing |
|---|--|

QUALITIES

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-reliance • High energy/enthusiasm • Appreciation of diversity • Perseverance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flexibility • Tolerance/open-minded • Assertiveness • Inquisitiveness • Self-confidence | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-knowledge • Independence |
|--|---|--|

WHAT SKILLS DID YOU USE ABROAD?
--

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Manual/Machine (build, construct, fix, operate, run, drive, or make) <input type="checkbox"/> Research (research, experiment, observe, classify, study, or investigate) <input type="checkbox"/> Problem Solve (analyze, evaluate, diagnose, problem solve, adapt, improve, or strategize) <input type="checkbox"/> Synthesize (conceptualize, integrate, theorize, or formulate) <input type="checkbox"/> Artistic (draw, shape, compose, arrange, or display) <input type="checkbox"/> Creative (envision, develop, design, create, innovate, or improvise) <input type="checkbox"/> Written Communication (write, edit, summarize, clarify, or explain) <input type="checkbox"/> Helping/Serving (help, assist, interview, nurse, nurture, or serve) <input type="checkbox"/> Consult/Counsel (coach, counsel, advise, or consult) <input type="checkbox"/> Instruct (instruct, teach, train, demonstrate, translate, explain or interpret) <input type="checkbox"/> Sell/Market (motivate, persuade, sell, influence, convince, promote, advocate, lobby, or publicize) <input type="checkbox"/> Lead/Manage (lead, manage, direct supervise, or facilitate) <input type="checkbox"/> Decision-Making (decide, resolve, select, negotiate, or arbitrate) <input type="checkbox"/> Perform (perform, present, entertain, represent, or model) <input type="checkbox"/> Implement (execute, implement, administer, control, schedule, or follow-through) <input type="checkbox"/> Organize (plan, organize, coordinate, or systemize) <input type="checkbox"/> Numerical/Financial (calculate, compute, budget, estimate or appraise) <input type="checkbox"/> Detail/Precision (attend to details, copy, inspect, precision work, proofreading, collecting) |
|--|

TIPS ON TELLING YOUR STORIES IN A JOB INTERVIEW/NETWORKING:

- Have 10-12 stories ready when you go into any job interview. They should be your real life experience stories from which you learned or accomplished something, or from which you acquired a new or reinforced an existing skill or positive quality.
- Include at least a few stories from your semester or travels abroad. The profound learning and the unique experiences abroad typically make for some great examples.
- Your time abroad has a certain 'shelf life' for greatest relevance, and you should use it to your advantage. If you study abroad as an undergraduate, your stories from that experience are highly relevant upon your return and for at least awhile after graduating.
- Don't have all of your stories be from your time abroad! You need to show balance of all the kinds of experiences you have had in your life so far – for example as a student, an athlete, an employee (even in a part-time job), as the leader of a student organization, etc.
- A good way to build your collection of stories is to think about times when you have been especially challenged or taken a risk. Your story might be about something that happened on a given day (for example, you took the wrong bus in Beijing and got lost), or a situation that happened over time (you were challenged by the differences in the education system abroad). Either way, give it a beginning and an end while making a relevant point and specifically identifying the skill or quality it demonstrates.
- Be sure to show respect for cultural differences. No matter how challenging the situation was, you don't want to use denigrating terms. Instead of telling how 'ridiculously small' your room was in your homestay, you need to explain that the room was 'much smaller than you were used too.'
- Stories need to be appropriate. When in doubt, err on the side of caution. Be aware that even though you now understand that having a drink with friends in a pub is a common no-big-deal occurrence in Ireland, you may want to eliminate any reference to pubs, bars or alcohol in your stories since that may not be the frame of reference for your interviewer.
- You need to be able to describe/discuss your international experience in more ways than just "it was great! I loved it!" Go beyond statements such as "I learned a lot about another culture!" or "It was a life changing experience!"
- Provide specific scenarios/stories to illustrate what you've learned, what've you experienced, how you've changed, etc. Be prepared to use a variety of specific experiences to describe skills such as: independent thinking, problem solving, flexibility, adaptable, open to other cultures and people, "thinking on your toes," interpersonal skills, communication skills, etc.
- If language skills are important/required for the position, be prepared to conduct part or the entire interview in that language – it might happen!
- Review the skills needed for the position and develop examples from your study abroad experience to document these skills.

Great advice [found in this article](#) on articulating your study abroad experience in your cover letter, résumé, and interviews and making your international experience look professional.

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR ONE LINE RESPONSE TO "TELL ME ABOUT YOUR SEMESTER IN..."

When you find yourself an interview, networking or talking to grandma – it is typical for them to ask 'small questions' such as..."Oh, I see you spent a semester studying in Spain, how was that?" When they do...are you ready? You need to be prepared to respond with a concise and meaningful response – more than just "it was awesome." Instead, try responding with..."My experience in Spain was one of personal transformation." "My experience in Spain was one of personal transformation. While studying Spanish through the IE University in Segovia and volunteering as at the local school with 4 graders, Ciutat, I discovered my true passion for teaching others in a second language as my ability to engage and communicate with diverse cultures."

THE “ELEVATOR PITCH”

You never get a second chance to make a good first impression. That’s why you need to be able to introduce yourself and answer the question “tell me about yourself” clearly and concisely. You may use your elevator pitch when you are networking prior to your actual job search; or to answer “tell me about yourself” during the job interview.

KEY COMPONENTS

- Introduction
- Education; professional development
- Work experience; key accomplishments
- Transferable skills, if necessary
- Current status; what you have to offer
- Employment opportunities you are seeking
- *Length – 30 seconds to max of 2 minutes*

USES FOR YOUR INFOMERCIAL

- Response to “tell me about yourself” during job interview
- In any situation when you are making “networking” connections
- Portions can be used on your resume
- Increase confidence as you introduce yourself
- Script when making “cold” telephone calls
- When requesting informational interviews or advice

NETWORKING EXAMPLE: *(use only as a guide – create your own, specific to your situation)*

Thanks so much for being willing to speak with me. My name is Jane Jobseeker, and Nan Networker gave me your name as someone who might have information for me about the field of bioethics, in which I am very interested.

In May I will be graduating from the University of Minnesota’s School of Public Health with an MPH in Public Health Administration and Policy. While in school, I worked as a research assistant, and I am especially proud of the fact that I presented a poster presentation on tobacco use prevention at the ASPH conference last year.

As I mentioned, I am exploring information about the field of bioethics, with a goal of combining my skills and education working in a small non-profit. I have a few questions about your position and this agency and wonder if you could tell me a little about what you do and what it is like to work here.

INTERVIEWING EXAMPLE: *(use only as a guide – create your own, specific to your situation)*

First, thank you for this opportunity to interview with you today. As you know from my resume and cover letter, my undergraduate degree is in Biology, and I graduated with honors from the College of Saint Benedict. I became interested in public health while I was volunteering at a Missonvale Community Center in South Africa, and realized how prevalent the issue of health disparities is around the world.

I enrolled in the University of Minnesota’s School of Public Health, and in May, I will be graduating with an MPH in Community Health Promotion. While in school and through my community service activities, I developed skills and strengths both in research and public speaking – especially presenting educational sessions on a variety of health issues to diverse populations. I am especially proud of the fact that one of the sessions I designed and created was so popular, I have been asked to present it to several more groups.

One of the reasons I am excited about interviewing for your agency is that it has such a great reputation, and the position sounds both challenging and like a perfect fit for my skills.

Adapted from “Beyond Amazing and Awesome” handout from MN re-entry Conference 2013

RESUME ASSISTANCE

Resume Descriptions: *You may want to include information about international experiences on your resume. This information can be helpful when applying for graduate school, volunteering, or employment opportunities.*

In the “RELATED EXPERIENCE” section of your resume:

Volunteer, House of Resurrection, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, Spring 2019

- Provided child care and interacted with children diagnosed with HIV/AIDS.
- Organized, implemented and supervised structured recreational activities.
- Prepared and served balanced meals.
- Completed home improvement projects such as painting and yard work.

Vice President, International Affairs Club, College of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph, MN, Spring 2017 - Present

- Plan and coordinate the club’s monthly “speaker series.”
- Assist the President in leading/facilitating monthly club meetings.
- Plan, organize, and implement activities for annual campus “Festival of Cultures.”

As a separate category, describe your language skills...

LANGUAGE SKILLS: Proficient in reading, writing, and speaking Spanish.

To emphasize study/education abroad, include your international experience under the “EDUCATION” section...

Bachelor of Arts, St. John’s University, Collegeville, MN

Expected May 2021

Major: Biochemistry GPA: 3.37/4.0

Honors: Presidential Scholarship

Study Abroad: Spain Semester Program at IE University, Segovia, Spain Spring 2019

Include information as part of “INTERESTS” section of their resume:

Interests: International travel (Brazil, Spain, and Estonia), Amnesty International, Spanish Club

List foreign language(s): Specify language skill level (e.g. basic, intermediate, fluent)

II. Presenting Your Transferable Skills: The Cover Letter

Collectively, my coursework, study abroad experience, internships, and co-curricular involvement have prepared me well for the [position] at [name of company].

...

While enrolled at the [name of program] in summer 2006, I had the opportunity to complete an internship at [name of company]. This experience helped me to hone my [specify, e.g. analytical, research, etc.] skills and gave me insight into how to work effectively in a cross-cultural situation in the context of health care services. I believe this skill will prove beneficial in working with [name of company] global clients.

Provide an opening statement that introduces your diverse experience.

Mention the name of the program where you studied and state the name of the organization where you interned.

Clearly articulate what you learned from the experience and how this will help you in the position you are applying to.

Source: Word Learning SIT Study Abroad: After Study Abroad A toolkit for Returning students
<http://www.worldlearning.org/documents/worldlearning/studyabroad-reentry-toolkit.pdf>

GOING ABROAD AGAIN

GRADUATE SCHOOL – AT HOME OR ABROAD?

Is the continuation of your academic career your next step? If you're thinking about going to graduate school, your first two steps should be to talk to your academic advisor and pay a visit to the CSB/SJU career center. They will help you to learn how to identify programs that match your interests and goals and get you started in the application process.

If you're thinking about going to graduate school abroad, there are several things to consider in the application process. First of all, pinpoint what you want to study. Next, determine which schools offer the best programs. (This is where your faculty advisor may be of particular assistance.) How will you finance your studies? U.S. Federal Aid and loans may not be available for all programs overseas. Whatever you decide, you'll first have to deal with taking the entry exams, which are offered every few months. These tests may not be required by schools overseas, but it is still a good idea to take them now while your schooling is fresh, just in case your plans change to include a graduate program in the U.S. To find out when your particular test is being offered, stop by the career center. Also, the Princeton Review keeps an excellent website with information on graduate school exams at <http://www.princetonreview.com>.

Additional Graduate Programs and Search Engines:

Association of Professional Schools in International Affairs: <http://www.apsia.org>

Comparative and International Education Society: <http://www.cies.us/>

[Society for Intercultural Education, Training and Research](http://www.cies.us/)

Peterson's Higher Ed Guides: <http://www.petersons.com/graduate/gsector.html>

International Graduate Schools: www.internationalgraduate.net

National Association of Student Personnel Administrators: <http://www.naspa.org>

GradSchools.com: <http://www.gradschools.com>

SIT graduate programs: www.worldlearning.org/

Globalinks graduate programs: <http://www.degreesoverseas.com/>

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

<http://www.studyineurope.eu/>

<http://www.goabroad.com/degree-abroad>

INTERNATIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

Competitive Fellowships at CSB/SJU: <http://www.csbsju.edu/Fellowships.htm>

David L. Boren Fellowship <https://www.borenawards.org/>

National Security Education Program (NSEP) David L. Boren Graduate Fellowships
Opportunities for graduate students to add a study abroad and language component to their studies.

Davies-Jackson Scholarship www.cic.edu/daviesjackson

Awarded to 2 students a year who will study at Cambridge, UK for a Graduate program.

Fulbright Scholarship <http://us.fulbrightonline.org/types-of-grants>

For study, research, or teaching abroad. Applications are to ONE specific country.

Gates Cambridge Scholarship www.gatesscholar.org

Awarded to students from outside the UK to study at Cambridge. The program aims to build a global network of future leaders committed to improving the lives of others.

Marshall Scholarship www.marshallscholarship.org

Marshall Scholarships “finance young Americans of high ability to study for a degree in the U.K.” For study at any UK university, including the “Big Three.” Need a 3.7 GPA minimum to apply

The George J. Mitchell Scholarship <https://www.us-irelandalliance.org/mitchellscholarship>

Scholarship for study in Ireland; NOT for “Irish Studies”. Competitive – modeled as the “Marshall Scholarship to Ireland”

Thomas R. Pickering Graduate Foreign Affairs Fellowship www.woodrow.org (search Fellows)

For graduate students (or students accepted to a grad school program) with an emphasis on language learning

Rhodes Scholarship www.rhodesscholar.org

For study at Oxford University, UK. The scholarship is extremely competitive. Students must have impressive grades and leadership experience.

Rotary World Peace Fellowship www.rotary.org (Search World Peace Fellowship)

Rotary World Peace Fellowships fund either master’s degree or professional development certificate study at one of the six Rotary Centers for International Studies in peace and conflict resolution at seven universities worldwide.

Thomas J. Watson Fellowship www.watsonfellowship.org

A one-year grant for travel and study outside the US. Must be a student at one of the 50 participating institutions. Free-formed, non-study proposals.

Loans, Financial Aid and Scholarship Directories

Loans: <https://www.salliemae.com/>

US Federal Government Financial Aid: www.fafsa.ed.gov

Directory of scholarships for all over the world: www.internationalscholarships.com

International Education Financial Aid: www.iefaf.org

The Grantsmanship Center: <https://www.tgci.com/>

Sources for Grants & Funds

[The Annie E. Casey Foundation](#)

[The Ford Foundation](#)

[The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation](#)

[W.K. Kellogg Foundation](#)

[MacArthur Foundation](#)

[The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation](#)

[Charles Stewart Mott Foundation](#)

[The David and Lucile Packard Foundation](#)

[The Pew Charitable Trusts](#)

[The Rockefeller Foundation](#)

[The Starr Foundation](#)

[The Robert W. Woodruff Foundation](#)

[German Academic Exchange \(DAAD\)](#)

INTERN ABROAD

Study abroad returnees that are seeking to gain more knowledge in their area of study benefit from hands-on experience through international internships. These internship experiences can either be unpaid or include a stipend for living expenses. Interning internationally will further increase your exposure to worldwide experiences and help you gain knowledge of your intended career or field of study. An unrivaled way to diversify your work experience, an internship will always look great on your resume.

Check out our own Global Internship Opportunities:

Summer Global Fellowships:

<https://www.csbsju.edu/global/find-an-education-abroad-program/short-term/globalfellowshipprogram>

INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Intern Abroad

<https://www.goabroad.com/intern-abroad>

<http://www.studyabroad.com/internships-worldwide>

Cultural Vistas

<https://culturalvistas.org/>

IAESTE-Int'l Association for the Exchange of Students for Technical Experience

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

Idealist.org-Action Without Borders

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

United Nations

<http://www.unv.org/en/about-us/employment/internship.html>

University of Minnesota- Learning Abroad Center

<https://umabroad.umn.edu/students/choosingprogram/programdefinitions/wiv/intern>

SHORT & LONG-TERM WORK ABROAD

Short-term work abroad (less than one year; typically a summer) usually involves working in an unskilled job, where you can earn enough to cover your food, lodging, and day-to-day living expenses. This type of job probably will not pay enough to cover air transportation, but it may help provide some extra money for travel after you leave your job. Short-term work experiences include positions such as —au pairs, farm workers, typists, waitpersons, and youth camp leaders. If you are a full-time student or a recent graduate, the work abroad programs through the British Universities North American Club (BUNAC) or the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) are some of the easiest ways for you to secure legal employment overseas.

Long-term work abroad opportunities can be very career-focused opportunities. Usually obtaining a longer term work visa requires sponsorship by an employer. For more information on obtaining work visas, visit the immigration website of the country in which you would like to work.

Internships & Jobs:

Visit this site for information on internships and job listings including CSB/SJU's [Handshake!](#)

<https://www.csbsju.edu/xpd/students/internships-and-jobs>

GOINGLOBAL

BUNAC (British Universities North American Club) - www.bunac.org

Work Abroad programs & Jobs- <https://www.gooverseas.com/work-abroad>

Escape Artist - www.escapeartist.com

Euro Jobs - www.eurojobs.com

Global Careers - <http://www.globalcareers.com/>

Idealist.org - <http://www.idealist.org/>

Interexchange - www.workingabroad.org

International Jobs - www.internationaljobs.org

Jobs Abroad - www.jobsabroad.com

Monster – <http://www.monster.com/geo/siteselection>

One Small Planet - www.onesmallplanet.com

CIEE - www.ciee.org

Overseas Job Web- www.overseasjobs.com

Transitions Abroad - www.transitionsabroad.com

United Nations- <https://careers.un.org/lbw/Home.aspx>

University of Michigan Work Abroad - www.internationalcenter.umich.edu/swt/

United States Department of State - www.state.gov

NAFSA: Association of Int'l Educators- www.nafsa.org

TEACH ENGLISH ABROAD

There are many opportunities to teach abroad through established programs. Most programs prefer a commitment of one academic year, though some offer summer or semester possibilities. In general, a Bachelor's degree is required while often some programs may also require U.S. or Canadian teaching successful completion of the 10-week program. Completing a Teacher Education Internship abroad offers the chance to interact on a daily basis with locals of all ages within the school environment, while gaining valuable teaching experience.

Below is a list of websites for anyone interested in teaching abroad. By no means is this a comprehensive list but should give you a good starting point to further explore the possibilities of teaching abroad.

CSB/SJU Sponsors many teaching opportunities:

<http://www.csbsju.edu/global/before-and-after-abroad/teach-abroad>

Other Resources:

www.teachabroad.com

www.ciee.org

www.daveseslcafe.com

www.eslworldwide.com

www.tefl.com

www.worldteach.org

<http://domainiac.tech/reviews/eflweb.com>

www.teachabroad.com

www.transitionsabroad.com

www.jetprogramme.org

VOLUNTEER ABROAD

Restoration projects, literacy campaigns and teaching are just a few examples of the many different volunteer programs abroad. Some programs charge a fee and provide services such as insurance coverage, meals and even housing. Some provide free room and board in exchange for your work, and others pay a small stipend. Volunteer work opportunities may range from a few weeks in length to two or three years in duration. If you're interested in development work, want to meet other foreigners and host nationals, and don't mind simple living conditions, you might want to consider this type of program. Here is a first step:

<https://www.csbsju.edu/xpd/students/volunteering/international-opportunities>

This site includes a variety of resources to help you find international volunteer opportunities.

VOLUNTEER ABROAD RESOURCES

Cross-Cultural Solutions - www.crossculturalsolutions.org

Idealist.org - Actions Without Borders - <http://www.idealist.org/>

International Volunteer Programs Association - www.volunteerinternational.org

Peace Corps - www.peacecorps.gov

Volunteer Abroad- <https://www.goabroad.com/volunteer-abroad>

Volunteer Services Overseas- www.vso.org.uk

World Endeavors- www.worldendeavors.org

YMCA International- <http://www.ymca.int/>

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