EMBRACING THE NEW GLOBALISM: A Challenge to Rethink Education Abroad

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Let me begin with a potentially provocative statement. China is positioning itself to lead the future of education abroad, not the United States. Perhaps it is no coincidence that this development is paralleled by an extraordinary increase in Chinese foreign investment of over 180 billion dollars during the last decade and a surge in Chinese students studying in the United States.

U.S. higher education is mired in past assumptions and internal professional disputes distant from public demand and future opportunity. And despite “cosmetic” tweaks to traditional programmatic paradigms, what is potentially the future of education abroad eludes us.

Leaders in U.S. higher education are not accommodating a contemporary student population that is both interconnected globally, that is, to each other via technology, and, most importantly, NOT connected to them. U.S. students increasingly are trying to navigate around officially offered education abroad programs to get what they want and, arguably, need for the world they face in the future. They mirror the entrepreneurial spirit of their millennial generation and maneuver for bespoke programs that they believe will fulfill their needs rather than accept the “off-the-shelf” programs proffered by U.S. higher education.

Much has happened in the past two years to shake the historical assumption held by the women and men who are in charge. In addition to global recession the century’s first decade heightened awareness of the issues surrounding global climate change and the interplay between natural events, our supply chains for materials, food, and even talent. In short, CEOs have experienced the realities of global integration. The world is necessarily interconnected—economically, socially, and politically—and operating as a system of systems. So what does this look like at the level of customer relationships? For too many enterprises, the answer is that the customers are increasingly connected, but not to them.

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The IBM survey indicates that CEOs are grasping the troubling situation facing them and, against this backdrop of interconnection, interdependency and complexity, are declaring that success in
global business now requires fast thinking and continuous innovation at all levels of an organization. Through creativity they will reinvent their customer relationships and achieve greater operational dexterity.

The question before us is what U.S. education abroad professionals will do in the face of this change. Will they insist on what has always been just because it always was, or will they embrace change and lead? I suggest that without embracing change, education abroad professionals will forgo a critical opportunity to reshape education abroad. But also, they will relinquish participation in broader efforts to change the future of U.S. higher education. Further, without significant re-tooling, they risk marginalization and being hopelessly subject to external pressures by faculty, administrators and those who would reduce the cost of higher education through the elimination of what are falsely considered superfluous programs. Education abroad is arguably an easy target because it remains a “luxury” in financially stressed higher education in the minds of much of the public, despite decades of compelling arguments to the contrary.

**THE NEW GLOBALISTS**

Several months ago I had a dinner conversation with a young Chinese student who came to the United States for study at a top-tier liberal arts college, proceeded to obtain a law degree at Harvard, and is now an associate for a “white shoe” New York City law firm. I wanted to find out what might be behind the recent rise in Chinese students seeking study in the United States. According to the Institute for International Education (IIE) Open Doors 2013 report, there is a 21% overall increase of Chinese students studying in the U.S. over last year, 26% at the undergraduate level.¹ There has been an annual expansion rate of approximately the same percentage for the last three years. Chinese students studying in the U.S., both undergraduate and graduate, now represent a third of all international students; almost 235,000 out of approximately 819,644, the largest single concentration of international students ever studying here in U.S. history. Is this U.S. study just an “interesting” novel experience, or is there a bigger concept in play? I knew that this young Chinese student would have particular insight since, as a high school student in China, he founded and managed the most significant website for Chinese students seeking undergraduate study in the United States, cuus.org [Chinese Undergraduates in the United States] or cuus.cn, as it is known in China. He remains involved with this website and monitors evolving thought about undergraduate study in the United States by thousands of Chinese students.

He began our conversation by stating that in China there are three factors in the last decade that greatly influence undergraduate education abroad and that these factors are linked to a projection of what the Chinese desire from international study in the future. Not all aspects of this ambition are yet realized, but work progresses. Like other aspects of their political, cultural, economic and educational development in recent decades, the Chinese intend to supersede education abroad as currently practiced in the United States because they do not judge it to be the best model for global competitive success through international education.

The three factors involve respectively, 1) schools, 2) students and 3) parents.

- **SCHOOLS**

About ten years ago top high schools in China had a special track to prepare their students for the two most outstanding universities within the country. In the last five years this has changed radically. There is still a special track, but it now prepares students principally for U.S. universities, and to a lesser, yet still significant extent, U.K., Australian and Canadian institutions. (In Canada international student enrollments since 2001 have soared 94% with China leading in volume.)² This special track, needless to say, demands rigorous academics, but that is not all. The Chinese are attuned to the admission requirements of U.S. universities and now offer opportunities for extracurricular activities and recognition for leadership in such engagement. I naturally asked my dinner companion about why the focus was now so exclusively on education abroad at U.S. colleges and universities and the answer was not what I expected. The explanation lies within the aspirations of contemporary Chinese students.

- **STUDENTS**

As of ten years ago Chinese students seeking a U.S. undergraduate education were motivated solely by high academic ambitions. They appreciated that knowledge, particularly in mathematics, the sciences and engineering, was best obtained in the United States and not, they judged, in China. It was imperative that they study in the United States if they were to achieve excellence in their chosen field. The U.S. institutions that best provided this up-to-date knowledge to the highest standards were the country’s leading research universities. The reputation of a particular university was critical to them and they took great pride in being associated with this institution. And they fulfilled a stereotype of the Chinese student studying in the U.S., their courses of study were restricted to mathematics, the sciences and engineering. Their objective after obtaining a prestigious U.S. degree was to continue at a top graduate school in the United States and then get a job here. They did not see going back to China as a highly desirable professional or life option.

Beginning about five years ago, however, there was a radical change in the type and ambition of Chinese students desiring undergraduate study in the United States. Approximately 90% of the Chinese students now studying in the U.S. reflect this change. They desire a good academic education, one that is reputable, but not necessarily the most elite academically. This attitude makes a far greater number of U.S. colleges and universities acceptable to Chinese students. They desire an academic program that stresses what they believe to be the strength of U.S. higher education, and thus the American mind at its best:
The allegiance of the new Chinese students is not to a particular college, university or academic program... but rather to a romanticized view of the U.S. college or university as the best platform upon which to achieve a transportable global lifestyle.

Chinese students consider of critical importance the integration of U.S. college life with U.S. cultural and social icons.

McDonalds, Starbucks, Whole Foods, athletic events, museums, classical and contemporary concerts, entrepreneurial clubs, cooking, dancing, outing clubs, civic festivals, parades, even bowling parties, are all important. They believe that this insight and practice into the way young people in the U.S. develop outside of the classroom are the keys to a life of adventure, entrepreneurialism, risk-taking, personal agency, technological design innovation, and wealth. These are all deemed attributes necessary for living a sophisticated global lifestyle in “the innovation society.” And they are achieved through interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary study on U.S. campuses and through community outreach off campus.

Unlike the Chinese students before them, this lifestyle will not unfold exclusively in the U.S., but rather, in Paris, London, Buenos Aires, Berlin, Singapore, Tokyo, Sydney, Johannesburg, Rome, Madrid, Beijing, Shanghai, Hong Kong, New York, or Los Angeles, with frequent movement among these destinations. Except for the global attraction of New York and Los Angeles, the new globalists tend to leave the U.S. upon graduating.

The language of the new globalism is English, although this might not be standard U.S. or British English, but a globally “exercised” English created by contingency, such as creative misunderstanding and misuse. Of course, each non-native English-speaking student possesses at least one second language from their place of origin, a global skill unfortunately not possessed by most U.S. students and, therefore, an obstacle to their full participation in the new globalism. While the new globalists lead with English as they live and work throughout the world, they have other options for communication when circumstances warrant. They are linguistically resourceful and depend on this attribute for global advantage and flexibility. In the case of Chinese students, they work diligently to improve their English competence while in the United States, as it is THE ticket to the global lifestyle they seek.

The modes of communication of the new globalism are the Internet and social media. The sphere of ideas and actions operates beyond a specific nation or culture, with most time spent far removed from what previous generations would deem a “distinctive local culture.” In fact, this new globalism generally dismisses any claim that there remain significant differences across cultures today and thus recognizes a prevailing “sameness” of life across the globe as defined by mass consumerism, common technologies and shared aspirational and financial values. Transculturalism is the watchword. Perhaps the notion approaches the words of the narrator in J.G. Farrell’s The Siege of Krishnapur: “civilization...must be more than fashions and custom..., it must be a superior view of mankind.”

While this new globalism might sound superficial, there is a compelling desire by these students to be exposed during their undergraduate education to critical global challenges that they believe are shared by all peoples regardless of nationality or cultural origin. Among these challenges are: sustainability, peace, politics, ecology, consumption, health, technology, relationships, imagination and creativity, community building, immigration, global interdisciplinarity and transdisciplinarity. These are the academic equivalent to the ability to perceive connection, similarity, and even the creative element, in what at first seem disparate elements. Unlike the previous generation, these Chinese students are open to taking courses, and even majoring, in the humanities, arts and social sciences. Of course, U.S. students are presently being advised to move away from these disciplines into more practical subjects thought to yield a job upon graduation.

Keller warns of John Steinbeck in Travels with Charlie in is New York Times op-ed piece of November 18, 2013 entitled “Toy Story.” Keller warns that these attributes are under threat due to decreased funding for research, a failing pre-collegiate education system, and immigration laws that deny the United States talent. For these new globalists the words of John Steinbeck in Travels with Charlie in Search of America still ring true: “I saw in their eyes something I was to see over and over in every part of the nation—a burning desire to go, to move, to get under way, anywhere, away from any Here....I saw this look and heard this yearning everywhere in every state I visited. Nearly every American hungers to move.”

Chinese students, however, see their future selves through education abroad in the United States and they like what they see. They want to absorb how the United States works. They are integrating the academic and non-academic sectors of U.S. undergraduate education into a seamless whole by virtue of an ambition that transcends the college experience; the desire for a place in an engaging, exciting global lifestyle that the U.S. undergraduate experience is expected to provide. They wish to be part of a larger narrative that drives them to accomplishment. Undergraduate study is a necessary means to a material end. Interestingly, they confide, somewhat disbelievingly, that U.S. students are not taking advantage of these opportunities, either through lack of preparation or lack of interest and motivation. Rather than pursue learning with intentionality as the Chinese students do, many U.S. students seem aimless and unmotivated.

Chinese students consider of critical importance the integration of U.S. college life with U.S. cultural and social icons. They want to experience the full range of life in the U.S.. Yes, visits to Wal-Mart,
Education abroad is about commonality, not difference and, unfortunately, traditional education abroad in the U.S. is based upon exposing students to cultural difference not commonality.

ethics, human rights, social change, wealth distribution and poverty, and entrepreneurialism. And whereas education abroad professionals worry about U.S. students overseas having contact with locals, students of the new globalism freely build shared alliances via the Internet and through issue-targeted face-to-face meetings all over the world. In fact, the very nature of powerfully shared global concerns simply reinforces students’ belief in the “sameness” of the world. Education abroad is about commonality, not difference and, unfortunately, traditional education abroad in the U.S. is based upon exposing students to cultural difference not commonality.

The new globalism is the product of the multicultural imperative that has been with us for several decades morphing into a new post-nationalist, hyper-globalizing chapter of our history. This is an observation that Professor Eric Sundquist of the Johns Hopkins University applied to recent developments in the humanities in his essay “The Humanities and the National Interest.”

In this context it is not surprising that the Chinese students are now interested in taking humanities courses. They view them as a vital path to powerful perspectives on the best of the human spirit, both historically and in the modern world, and they relate them to material accomplishment. Cultures approach globally-shared challenges the way they do because of their distinctive histories. Chinese students also take humanities and the arts to gain transcultural empathy, an important ingredient in confirming and maintaining cultural homogeneity. According to Professor Sundquist, “[the humanities] are our principal vehicle for engendering sympathy—the ability to imagine the experience of another, to see ourselves from that perspective, to make another’s life our own, if only for a moment.”

The new globalists want an education abroad experience to be highly pragmatic. They want to DO something during their international study that provides them additional knowledge and practice in what they believe to be the “American edge.” And they want to engage actively in areas of shared global interest that are already available on campus or in the surrounding community. Numerous Chinese students approached me at Dickinson College and wanted to start entrepreneurial and innovation clubs. They wanted to be exposed to the “big ideas” of intellectual history, especially as they pertain to the United States, and apply them to campus life. They want experience at being leaders in the U.S. undergraduate setting. They want practice in what they believe to be the fundamentals of a global lifestyle that permeates all areas of their college experience. This pervasive engagement advances, they believe, their understanding about how to approach shared global issues and prepares them pragmatically to enter an engaged global lifestyle after graduation. There is clearly a material intentionality possessed by the new globalists. They wish to acquire something that can be personally lived and be professionally beneficial as a result of their study and activity at a U.S. college or university.

The new globalists are also beginning to exercise their own interpretations of what they perceive the global lifestyle in the U.S. to offer. For example, they are increasingly embracing self-determination and personal agency, two related dispositions that they believe inform U.S. entrepreneurialism, by rejecting the assistance of recruiting agents. They distrust recruiting agents for a variety of reasons and go independently to the U.S. to take third-level summer courses to determine where they eventually wish to study. They use social media to share among other applicants, and those already at U.S. colleges and universities, “authentic” advice and counsel. They realize that most U.S. students do not use agents, so they in turn will not use them.

• PARENTS

The parents of the first large wave of Chinese students to study in the U.S. had parents who were government officials; the most recent influx comes from parents who are wealthy entrepreneurs and business leaders. They represent new wealth that connects financially and culturally to the world beyond China. Their wealth translates into an obligation to their children. They would bring shame upon themselves if they did not provide them with the best education that money can buy, an education that relates to their ambitions of a globally-engaged, transportable lifestyle for generations to come. For these parents an undergraduate education in the United States represents the indispensable platform for such ambitions.

THE CHALLENGE OF A NEW PARADIGM: THE NEW GLOBALISM

The new globalism that I outline exists and is increasingly practiced by a significant portion of the student population of the world. Most definitely we see the Chinese, but to varying degrees the Germans, Japanese, French, Spanish, Brazilians, Italians, Argentinians, Russians, even the English. (Note the spike in the number of English university-age students coming to the U.S. to study liberal arts because this comprehensive approach to education is not readily available in England. English students believe the interdisciplinarity within such study signals how the future will work. The ability to connect disparate areas of knowledge for new discoveries is judged an essential skill.) For new global students the whole is greater than the parts. Education abroad, the acquisition of a foreign language, participation in campus clubs, all this is directed to achieving what is most personally desired, a global lifestyle. This lifestyle is a concrete, comprehensive objective that organizes all activity. There is a personal intentionality that defines education abroad and bestows meaning and importance to it; that carries the students beyond the immediate experience and out into the world ahead. It has to do with the quality and variety of a life to be lived. None of the existing paradigms of education abroad in the United States fully accommodates the new globalism, despite some promising isolated initiatives that operate, unfortunately, without the benefit of broader intent that touches directly the aspirations of students.

Three historical paradigms for education abroad all prove incomplete and inadequate: 1) intercultural paradigms, 2) academic disciplines, and 3) language and culture learning. In fact, they are increasingly without application as the field of education abroad fractures into competing, winner-take-all schools of thought. We see true believers and their followers with a vocabulary for each school that approaches in density and invention that of the humanities when it embraced structuralism,
Let me comment on the three historic paradigms for education abroad and why they are inadequate to support the new globalism.

**INTERCULTURAL PARADIGMS**

A significant movement within education abroad theory is inter-culturally motivated. It is an “interventionist” position that posits difference in the world determined culturally and accessed by the “immersion” of students into another environment to enlarge their more provincial perspectives.

The new globalists challenge the interventionists position and call it passé or non-performative. For them, the world is the same and much that is considered “difference” is, in fact, trivial. Yes, it is idiosyncratic, but not globally profound. Let us take Germany, my area of specialization, as an initial example. What differentiates Germany today from life in the U.S. in ways that would be evident to U.S. college students? Not much! Of course, there are rather trivial differences such as eating more sausage, especially currywurst; dining on cheese and sausage for breakfast (although consuming cereal and milk is also popular); eating the main daily meal at lunch and not dinner; not refilling a coffee cup until it is completely empty (notice that there is a lot of talk about eating, as there is in the U.S.); wearing thick socks with sandals even in the summer; not opening a window, even in the hottest weather, because a “breeze” might cause sudden illness (Es zieht “it extracts ...” is the ubiquitous expression in such circumstances). Some of the traditional differences, such as wearing Lederhosen and dirndls, drinking lots of beer and swaying to and fro seated at long tables are, I suggest, aspects of a tourist campaign targeting gullible Americans and Japanese. They do not define the vast majority of the German population. And some distinctions no longer exist. For example, the popular U.S. imagination retains the notion that Germans can drive everywhere as fast as they want. But that is not the case. Even many of the Autobahns now have speed limits that are strictly enforced.

The new globalists are interested in the habits of mind and action of contemporary Germans that distinctively influence their responses to shared global challenges. This, they believe, is meaningful difference that deserves their attention. There is, for example, the Germans’ penchant for saving and fiscal restraint as it influences global finance; the Germans’ long-standing habits of conserving energy, engaging sustainability and creating new forms of energy through wind and solar power that influence global environmental policy and practice; evolving German programs to deal with immigration and healthcare; and the Germans’ relationship of management to labor as well as the tradition of solid craftsmanship and reliability in design and manufacturing. All of these are, arguably, somewhat distinctive approaches to shared global challenges. They issue from a specific nation and its people and have been formed over centuries of thought and activity peculiar to those people. The distinctive contribution to the globally-shared challenge is the concrete motivation for a new globalist to study the culture, language, history, literature, art, music, and science of the particular people in more depth. The new globalists, however, usually receive their initial information about these distinctions through the English language.

The proposition that U.S. students can truly absorb cultural nuance of another nation and its peoples through English, however, is disingenuous. Defined is absent. The delivery of critical data to explain comprehensively another people’s understanding of a demanding situation and their response to it are inaccessible to the linguistically bereft U.S. student.

Let’s be candid. Contact with truly transformative experiences, those that may be emotionally and psychologically upsetting to a U.S. student, are likely to be prohibited by legal safeguards appropriately imposed upon U.S. education abroad programs. We could never purposefully expose our students to political upheaval, violence, injustice cruelty among peoples, death, poverty, aging, or sickness, in the name of educational experiences.

Your good colleague, Dr. Bill Anthony of Northwestern University, reminds me that such, allegedly, was the case with the Buddha. The Buddha’s father, like the legal and risk-management divisions of U.S. colleges and universities, feared that as a young, impressionable man Siddhartha would become an ascetic if he came...
into contact with sufferings of life, as had been predicted, and confined him to his palace. However, on his first journey out of the palace, Siddhartha observed four sights: an old man, a sick man, a corpse and an ascetic. These observations affected him deeply and made him realize the sufferings of all beings. He was compelled to begin his spiritual journey that led eventually to his enlightenment. Such direct exposure to suffering created a sense of urgency for both his transformation and his desire to affect understanding in the world about him.

**ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES**

Education abroad in the post-WW II era was shaped and controlled by the academic sector of undergraduate education. Often a professor who had informal connections with an international colleague could create an education abroad initiative in their shared discipline. Many third-party education abroad organizations are defined by the academic sector. Of course, it makes sense to have education abroad programs academically centered. This, after all, is the main activity of higher education.

What is odd, however, is that when students describe how they benefited from education abroad, the benefits lie outside of academics. Students speak of emotional and social growth and a greater ability to deal with the unknown. Academic progress is seldom mentioned. And if the student studied in a non-English speaking country, there are few attempts at pre- and post-assessment to determine if the time abroad advanced foreign language learning. In many cases there is no attempt to learn the host country language. There is also little effort to pursue research that might clarify whether the self-proclaimed results of personal, emotional growth and the ability to deal with difference, could not have been accomplished by study at home in the United States.

If, however, the benefits of education abroad that students cite are accurate, then the traditionally-defined model of education abroad in the United States proves inadequate to reward accomplishment. Personal and emotional growth is not the subject of academic coursework and receives no formal recognition. Because of a long-standing antagonism in U.S. higher education between academics and those who support the out-of-class activity of students on campus, there is no way to give credit towards a degree for personal advancement. The students are adrift. They might obtain a valuable set of life skills through education abroad, but their college or university bestows no formal recognition for this accomplishment as it does for academic coursework. While awarding academic credit may be inappropriate for the acquisition of life skills and personal growth, there needs to be some other form of public recognition.

There are numerous programs that expose U.S. students to the shared challenges that define the new globalism. Often these initiatives include international study before or after an on-campus portion of a class and the foreign travel portion is directly related to the subject of instruction. Many of these courses are designated “service learning” and they connect an existing academic course to volunteerism, community service, field research or pre-professional internships internationally. While such efforts are laudable, in my opinion, they lack critical components to define the new globalism. For the student the objective of the initiative and the source of motivation is the academic credit awarded for the class. There is nothing motivating them beyond that academic objective and there is no recognition for non-academic knowledge and skill acquisition. Unlike the new globalism based on the intentionality of students to acquire a global lifestyle, U.S. education abroad exhibits an instrumentality that ends for the student at the conclusion of class. There is little to no reinforcement for what has been learned, no continuing connection to other coursework or out-of-class experiences, and no recognition of social and personal growth on the transcript.

Whether or not this new globalism can respond flexibly to the diversity of students pursuing education abroad is an interesting question. For example, there will always be students who pursue education abroad for academic purposes and, at first glance, have no practical objective beyond pursuing “learning for learning’s sake.” But, are such academically-focused students so without purpose and direction? I think not. They often want to study a specific subject thoroughly and at a location that has a distinctive approach to the subject. They will strive to master the language of instruction, if it is not English, so that they can enroll in an international university offering what they seek.

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I was this type of student years ago. I thought I was pursuing knowledge for knowledge’s sake. I was self-righteously, intellectually pure, or so I thought at the time. But later upon reflection, my pursuit was far more complex. I majored in German and philosophy and specifically selected a year-long program through the Institute of European Studies that permitted me to take courses in German at the Albert Ludwig University, Freiburg im Breisgau, Germany, in the philosophy of Martin Heidegger and related subjects. Indeed, I completed the first semester of a seminar at the university in Heidegger’s Sein und Zeit (Being and Time) that lasted an amazing 9 years! And I connected the other subjects I took, in literature, history, other areas of philosophy, sociology, to my main Heidegger studies in my search for new insights. Clearly, I was practicing interdisciplinarity. The focus of my study was broader than Heidegger. I was interested, through Heidegger, to explore human communication and misunderstanding.

When I returned to Dickinson I pursued an independent honors study on silence, an aspect of Heidegger that, in turn, provided the platform for a Fulbright research grant after college in Basel, Switzerland. There I examined the role of silence as a narrative device in Eastern and Western fairy tales. I approached education abroad with intentionality. I wanted knowledge
that came from a German philosopher in the setting in which he created it. I now had a way to incorporate my education abroad experience into an enduring global lifestyle. I self-consciously sought from my education abroad a lifestyle committed to shared global issues that, I thought, mattered. I found my role model among those European intellectuals, philosophers, novelists, playwrights and critics who had a distinctive voice on social issues that was heeded and debated. This was the heady time of the late 60s and early 70s, and I wanted to be part of it in my youthful way. In Europe intellectuals were taken seriously by the public. I wanted to find a way to talk about the key issues of the time that was different from the pragmatic, blunt manner of Americans. I thought I would find it in the “abstractness” of the Europeans.

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A college or university cannot dismiss the diversity of its students and must respond appropriately. For many academically-focused students that response most likely includes intensive foreign language study, the fulfillment of intentionality, and the possibility to pursue “big ideas” and concerns shared by peoples around the globe. It also includes a concrete way to bring back to the home campus what was learned overseas, to provoke positive change, to create a “product” based upon what was learned abroad, and continues to be absorbed upon return to campus. It involves the ability to fashion a globally-connected lifestyle that embraces an intentionality beyond any of the individual components of time abroad, such as language learning, travel, courses, etc.

Many of the key components traditionally sought by academically-oriented students from education abroad are shared in category, but not in content, with the Chinese students and others who pursue the new globalism.

• **LANGUAGE AND CULTURE LEARNING**
I have already mentioned language and culture as a paradigm for study abroad. The three key paradigms are, of course, interrelated. But I think that it is important to comment upon the historic difficulty of convincing Americans to master a language other than English. Many of us are still working on that! We all know the usual explanations. English is the world’s dominant language and you can get along almost anywhere that “counts” using that language. The United States is a vast country and you can travel far and wide relying upon English. There simply are not enough opportunities for Americans to practice another language outside of periodic classroom instruction and some foreign travel.

We have noted that the new globalist students seek to learn English in addition to having their own native languages, and that the use of both, or multiple, languages is critical to their global identity. I think the key for their motivation in acquiring a second language is that it is materially needed to participate in a burgeoning transcultural, transcultural lifestyle. They desire to have a specific quality of life. They have concrete motivation. The additional language is a practical “tool” in their approach to opportunity and challenge. U.S. students, to the contrary, while they have been warned repeatedly about the need to learn another language in order to participate in the future world beyond the U.S., seem not to have been introduced to this transcultural, transcultural lifestyle that could motivate them to learn one. Language learning remains a separate subject with motivation being restricted to mastering the language and its culture for its own sake. For all but the most dedicated and self-motivated students, the pursuit of a second language to fluency is a frustrating, fruitless activity. Motivation is a problem given the difficulties of practicing languages such as German, French, Russian, Arabic, Chinese, or Japanese regularly and naturally in country. U.S. students see little beyond the drudgery of learning a second language that they may not use in the future. It is all too abstract and distant for them and, given the circumstances, that is understandable.

But notice that I left out one particular language above, Spanish. Spanish is a language that is now accessible throughout much of the United States. There are numerous Spanish-speaking communities, there are bilingual persons living amidst monolingual persons, there are easily accessible radio and television stations, there are Spanish-speaking countries in relative proximity. Bilingual signage in airports, on planes, trains and buses is far more prevalent. The United States could solve its linguistic challenge and permit its citizens critical access to global competition and a global lifestyle by adopting Spanish as our second official language. All students from kindergarten on would learn Spanish as well as English. Now I know the arguments against this. The United States has but one official language and that is English. So it shall always be, as it explains our greatness and exceptionality. It is unpatriotic to dismiss English as our nation’s one official language. So it goes. This argument, of course, is like the claim that funny glasses, a love of coffee (but decaf, sadly), carrying a leather briefcase, sitting in a café thinking and writing when time permits, and wearing a beret as if these are still worn in Paris.

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The United States could solve its linguistic challenge and permit its citizens critical access to global competition and a global lifestyle by adopting Spanish as our second official language.

Christianity is our nation’s official religion. Our founding fathers rejected calls for a state religion centuries ago. I am of the opinion that the founding fathers established a nation that was to be dynamic and open to change in order to provide for its continuing growth and prosperity. If that growth is now diminished by our students not gaining fluency in a language other than English, what must be done to recapture momentum? They would not be gaining full access to a transculturalism and transnationalism that lies ahead of us and that will mean the continued strength and progress of our nation. What then occurs to other languages if the schools are concentrating on English and Spanish? These other languages will be studied with intent as when young people seek personal access to a particular culture’s perspective on a shared global challenge, and not in the forced, superficial nature that they are often approached by students now. This will provide the motivation for language learning that is now absent in U.S. education. It captures the imagination of the current generation and helps them make a difference in the global issues that matter to them. This motivation can be advanced by purposeful education abroad at both high school and college level. Of course, this will be the motivation for the vast majority of students, but not for all. There are some students who simply want to study a specific language because of family heritage or for pure love of language. Others will study a language because of a specific academic interest. They are the easy cases. But the vast majority of U.S. students will need to be encouraged to acquire a second language for their own sakes and for the sake of our nation. That, in turn, will lead them to participation and accomplishment in a transnational, transcultural lifestyle.

IMPLICATIONS FOR THE NEW GLOBALISM IN PRACTICE
To summarize, what is the new globalism that unfolds through education abroad?

• It affirms sameness in the world through transculturalism and transnationalism.
• Difference among peoples is a negative unless that difference reflects a particular culture or nation’s approach to shared global challenges.
• The new globalists want practice during undergraduate years through targeted, “customized” programs in and out of the classroom in order to identify solutions to shared global challenges.
• U.S. colleges and universities are the desired platform to gain the knowledge and skills that define the new globalism.
• Education abroad students validate the worthiness of both academic and non-academic programs of a U.S. colleges and universities as important to gaining the new globalism.
• In academics, the new globalists want interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary courses.
• In out-of-class activities, the new globalists want to experience the diversity of U.S. engagement and to practice leadership among fellow students.
• The new globalists speak at least two languages and English is their shared language.

Of course, not all students going abroad will be so intentional and pursue so vigorously shared global concerns, exploratory vocational opportunities and greater ambitions as those I describe here. For these students, education abroad remains essentially a chance to see the world, continue what they know best albeit in another environment and yes, party and spend most of their time with other U.S. students, despite the best efforts of their home institution. Yet, I predict, these students will increasingly be affected positively by the decades-old social messaging in pre-collegiate education and in society in general to engage in more purposeful activities such as community service and pragmatically-directed internships, incessant societal messaging that outlines every students’ need to prepare for a life in a demanding global economy and the necessity of colleges and universities in the age of accountability and financial constraint to offer programs that are far more practically-result oriented for student advancement during the undergraduate years and after.

With the advent of new globalism, leading education abroad professionals have the opportunity to refine their role in higher education and on their campuses. They should join with faculty and other administrators to define a 21st century education for all students. This can be done in several ways:

• Be strong advocates for better coordination between academic and non-academic life in education abroad. Introduce assessment procedures and recognition for knowledge and skills gained through non-academic activities. Such achievement should be formally recognized on the undergraduate transcript. This effort should transcend education abroad and be a major leadership opportunity for education abroad professionals to engage the larger issue in higher education of the wasted learning caused by the splintering of academic and non-academic pursuits.

• Implement pre- and post-testing of second language acquisition for education abroad programs that require it. Such testing will advance the impact of education abroad and clarify the connection to academic achievement.

• Work with faculty to advance interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary studies on campus and overseas. The new globalists are receptive to connections among the humanities, sciences, social sciences and the arts. Such connections are the source of solutions to shared global challenges.

• Work with faculty to design “customized” course-related education abroad that focuses on globally shared challenges. These courses may include pre- or post-education abroad coursework that introduces students to distinctive contributions of another culture to solve shared challenges.

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Such courses would provide faculty and students an active learning experience by connecting textbook learning to the out-of-classroom, wider world activities. Many faculty members, more than those in foreign language departments or those who are fluent in a second language, can participate as the language of instruction would be English. Such courses will link education abroad professionals to campus efforts to provide more undergraduate opportunities in experiential and service learning. Bolder measures such as providing transcript credit for non-academic knowledge and skill acquisition should be advanced. This could include an undergraduate “flex-program”: a three-year academic program and a one semester or one-year international or domestic program devoted to community service or pre-professional internships that focus on shared global challenges. This preserves a four-year undergraduate experience while accommodating the full variety of the U.S. undergraduate education. The international engagement could occur in any of the four years and a diploma would be issued after a four-year experience and reflect transcript credit for both academic and non-academic engagement. Third level mentorship would still be essential during the year of experiential learning. John Annette, president of Richmond University: The American International University of London, and a long-time advocate of experiential and service learning, in a private conversation with me (and I do not mean to imply his endorsement), suggested that the university mentor students throughout the 3-1 flex-program so that students are aware of the skills they are obtaining and how those skills might be applied. The students gain through their experiences a positive value framework for future life engagement, personally and professionally. The university might provide students a reading list relating to their focus area and mentor them through its own professors, either on site or electronically, or use professors from an international partner institution. There could be multiple shorter-term programs to accommodate students who are athletes, or involved in other campus-based activities, so that the equivalent of a 3-1 arrangement might be accommodated.

- Redefine what it means in U.S. higher education to be a global campus. De-emphasize labels used on campus that underscore difference such as “the melting pot” and “tossed salad.” Establish a campus culture that encourages a wide variety of students to focus on shared global challenges. Seek commonality in seeming difference, appreciate distinctive approaches to these challenges through differing cultural backgrounds. Engage in study and discussions of what respective cultures might contribute distinctively to solving shared global challenges and work in and out of the classroom towards shared solutions.

- Lead the national charge to adopt Spanish as the United States’ second official language. Ensure economic and cultural competitiveness for our nation in the decades ahead. Such advocacy will require intensive engagement with colleagues in pre-school to 12 education. Encourage the acquisition of additional languages in ways that our students discover personal motivation for acquiring those languages. Create compelling, discovery-oriented learning.

- Spearhead efforts to instill U.S. undergraduates with the ambition to achieve a global lifestyle through education abroad and the pursuit of solutions to shared global challenges. Assist students to appreciate the distinctiveness and complexity of the “society of innovation” of the United States through historical study and contemporary commentary. This is a lifestyle that, once secured, provides them with a personal and professional life of vast opportunity, sense of purpose and continuous questioning to maintain integrity. Correspondingly, use this effort along with education abroad as a way to reassert intentionality and a sense of purpose in all areas of undergraduate education.

- Join with other higher education leaders to identify the role of digital technologies in undergraduate education. Education abroad leaders have a particular role to play. Because of frequent and instantaneous digital exchange between education abroad students and members of their home culture, parents, friends, media, the historic “isolation” of education abroad students in another culture is now obsolete. Add to this the potential of an undergraduate education that involves students and faculty spending considerable time away from one physical campus. Anant Agarwal of MIT, co-founder of EdX, described this future scenario in a speech, reported in Inside Higher Ed, November 25, 2013, predicting what might be the future of an MIT education: “An education from MIT may soon involve a freshman year spent completing online courses, two years on campus and a fourth ‘year’ of continuous education.” In such a situation many options emerge for “spending time” in another culture, used singularly or in combination. For example, education abroad may be treated as just another learning location for students pursuing a principal course of study electronically, thus avoiding any institutional mediation to the culture in which they are physically located. Or culture-specific education abroad content may be delivered exclusively in an electronic format anywhere in the world, including the home campus. Such developments will require that education abroad professionals either join with colleagues in other fields to argue persuasively against such changes or join with others to embrace what some predict to be the future of undergraduate education and, in so doing, redefine their field.

Dr. Benjamin Rush anticipated the new globalism in several ways. He was, arguably, America’s first prominent advocate of education abroad. As the most prominent physician of his time, he was a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and the founder of three colleges: Dickinson, Franklin & Marshall and the College of Physicians in Philadelphia.

Rush mentioned the importance of education and travel abroad often. For example, he once said, “I think every native of Philadelphia should be sent abroad for a few years if it is only to teach him to prize his native country alone of all places in the world.” His remark, ironically perhaps, signals the beginnings of a U.S. provincialism that has influenced numerous students’ appreciation of the value of study abroad and affirmed an American exceptionalism. But with time Dr. Rush expanded his perspective on education abroad. He vociferously called for schools and colleges in the U.S. to de-emphasize instruction in writing and speaking Latin and Greek and institute the study of modern languages so that young people could go out in the wide world and be in contact with those who had ideas that might benefit a growing nation. In his plan for higher education he advocated that each college send three of its brightest students abroad to seek out the best ideas and practices and bring them back to incorporate into the U.S. so that it might become stronger as a democracy. He called his own study in Edinburgh “the best year of his life.” In 1780 Rush responded to a letter from John Foulke who was seeking advice about how to approach his education abroad. Foulke was eventually to become a prominent physician, member of the College of Physicians, and the American Philosophical Society.
RUSH DRAFTED A LETTER WITH EIGHTEEN PITHY POINTS OF GUIDANCE. It will suffice to mention a few of them to indicate his disposition towards how education abroad should unfold for a student.

Converse freely with quacks of every class and sex.... Establish correspondences with men of learning and virtue in every place you leave.10

- Keep a diary, and insert in it the NAMES of the persons you associate with every day, their professions, rank, and character, together with all the remarkable anecdotes, facts and even opinions that fall from them in conversation. (Of course, the language of both student and host country was English.)
- Make yourself acquainted with the names, &c., of the most distinguished characters belonging to the pulpit, bar, and stage in every place you visit.
- Attend shows of all kinds, and describe in your journal the most trifling of them.
- Endeavor to get lodgings in reputable families, and make yourself intimate with them.
- Attend particularly to NUMBERS in your description of persons or things. Don’t confine yourself to inhabitants of towns or countries under this head; extend your ideas to classes, professions, and occupations of men, including even barbers, shoeboys, &c. (Of course, were the American student in a country whose language was not English, a considerable mastery of the native language would be required to gain access to this full range of people, some of whom would have no command of English.)
- Visit every kind of manufactory, and describe them accurately in a book made for that purpose. Find out the price of each article at its delivery from the place of its manufactory.
- Keep a journal of your expenses regarding only gross sums. Preserve all your accounts, even tavern bills, as vouchers of your expenditures.
- Spend an hour every day for 3 months in receiving lessons from some principal dancing-master.
- Converse freely with quacks of every class and sex, such as oculists, aurists, dentists, corn cutters, cancer doctors, &c., &c....
- Establish correspondences with men of learning and virtue in every place you leave.10

For Dr. Rush education abroad was, without doubt, a most disciplined endeavor. It was infused with intentionality, organizing productively a daily regimen to include fiscal responsibility, reflective note-taking upon all that was experienced, and engaging in activities where one lived, and with whom one interacted, that provided insight into the host culture beyond the areas of academic study. Clearly Rush found no incompatibility between what was to be gained from education abroad in academic study and from the full spectrum of life outside the classroom. It is noteworthy that in his prefatory remarks, Dr. Rush tells John Foule that he will stress two key outcome areas: “a few things that relate to your improvement as a man” and “what I think will contribute most to improve you in your profession.” The intentionality that Dr. Rush lent to education abroad unequivocally extended well beyond the particulars of the experience and focused on character, lifestyle and how one would live out into the future personally and professionally.

All of these components to Dr. Rush’s advice, of course, foreshadow aspects of the new globalism in education abroad.

A critical question to ask before concluding is whether or not the new globalism can exist without students assuming political and economic liberalization or democratization, that is, without being “schooled” in this perspective. The new globalists, after all, desire the U.S. undergraduate experience in its totality as the platform to acquire those attributes of flexibility, risk-taking, entrepreneurialism, optimism and free association that they believe constitute a globally-successful, innovative lifestyle. Their sourcing of U.S. higher education is, however, ultimately instrumental in that they are silent about political assimilation. Yes, the new globalists display empathy for solving shared global challenges, but the degree to which politics enables instrumental change is not articulated, in fact, it is strictly avoided. But can those attributes that the new globalists wish to acquire be fully exercised without the democratic political system upon which U.S. higher education is based? Will this dilemma ultimately confound Chinese students in particular, or will they represent the new leadership that establishes economic liberalization without political liberalization? Will their leadership redefine Chinese politics or will they abandon China completely for higher education is based? Will this dilemma ultimately confound Chinese students in particular, or will they represent the new leadership that establishes economic liberalization without political liberalization? Will their leadership redefine Chinese politics or will they abandon China completely for life and work under other political systems internationally. As stated succinctly in the September 2013 report, “Horizon Scanning: what will higher education look like in 2020?” issued by Global Opportunities for the international unit of UK higher education and the Leadership Foundation for Higher Education: “Liberalization as a political and economic force presents a dilemma in ethical terms.”12

Our task as higher education professionals is to recognize changes in education abroad at their inceptions and as they originate from outside the United States. We must debate their strengths and weaknesses and have that debate inform our programs as we adjust them to the changing conditions. We must unite with others in undergraduate education leadership to apply key lessons gleaned from the new globalism. We must reform higher education in general and create a compelling leadership narrative that re-connects a centuries’ old ambition for education abroad for U.S. students with the evolving ambitions of a global, transcultural society.

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The need for fundamental change in education abroad and U.S. higher education stands before us as a challenge to belief in the immutability and durability of current practice. While many educators glibly take for granted the accelerating pace of change brought about by evolving digital technologies, it does not follow, as stated in the British report “Horizon Scanning” that “...the rate of change in human relations will be as fast. Technology does not have a free hand in driving change. Change is driven, and held back, by people, institutions and countries with political and economic interests.”12 Actually, doing something about change in education abroad in an expedient fashion may be the biggest challenge especially, and ironically, as the impetus comes from without and is not of our own making.
REFERENCES


12. Ibid.

Dr. William G. Durden

William G. Durden has been president of Dickinson College since 1999 and as of June 30, 2013 is President Emeritus and a Professor of Liberal Arts. He is also an operating partner of Sterling Partners, a private equity company that focuses on education and healthcare and is located in Baltimore, Chicago and Miami.

Dr. Durden currently serves as chair of the advisory board of the Council for the International Exchange of Scholars (the Senior Fulbright program) and as a member of the board of trustees of the Institute of International Education (IIE). He is a board member of Walden University and the Santa Fe University of Art and Design, for-profit higher education institutions, and a director of MERITAS (Sterling Partners). He also serves on the Washington Center’s Council of Presidents. During 2007-08, Dr. Durden chaired the subcommittee of the Annapolis Group (120 of America’s leading liberal arts colleges) charged with offering an alternative to the U.S. NEWS rankings. He chaired the recent Middle States accreditation of West Point and just served on an external task force to revise the West Point curriculum to meet future demands on its graduates.

Prior to coming to Dickinson College, Dr. Durden was simultaneously president of a division of the Sylvan Learning Systems, Inc. (today Laureate Education, Inc.) and vice president of academic affairs for the Caliber Learning Network - originally a joint venture of MCI and Sylvan. Dr. Durden was a member of the German Department at the Johns Hopkins University and Executive Director of the Center for Talented Youth (CTY) for 16 years. During his Hopkins’ engagement, he was also a senior education consultant to the U.S. Department of State for 11 years and chaired the Advisory Committee on Exceptional Children and Youth.

Dr. Durden received his undergraduate degree from Dickinson College in German and philosophy and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in German Language and Literature from the Johns Hopkins University. Directly following his graduation from Dickinson, he was a Fulbright Scholar at the University of Basle, Switzerland. He has also studied at the University of Freiburg and the University of Muenster, Germany. Dr. Durden has published and spoken widely on topics such as literary criticism, gifted and talented education, foreign language study, technology and instruction, U.S. and international education policy and theory (at the school and university levels), leadership, and democracy in education. His most recent publication is a book entitled, Living on the Diagonal (2013).
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