Faculty as Global Learners: The Impact of Leading Study Away Programs

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Integrating Global Learning with the University Experience: Higher-Impact Study Abroad and Domestic Off-Campus Study
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Goals for Today’s Session

• Report faculty perceptions of how leading study abroad programs impacts their teaching, research, and service.

• Identify the forms of support that faculty at liberal arts colleges most value before, during, and after leading a SA/SA program (and what additional supports would be of most value to their teaching and learning).

• Share promising practices from your own campuses that support development, learning, and growth related to leading SA/SA programs.
The Impetus for Our Study

• At liberal arts colleges, faculty-led off-campus study away and study abroad (SA/SA) programs present high strategic value but entail institutional costs.

• We wanted to examine the impact of leading global programs on:
  – Faculty members’ teaching, research, service, and overall well-being; and
  – Faculty members’ perceptions of student learning in those programs.

• We wanted to make recommendations to campuses to (better) support faculty leaders.
Research Methods

Survey 1 (Fall 2015)
Understanding faculty & student transformation in study abroad/study away programs at liberal arts institutions (n=223)
59 questions: demographic factors, institutional support, preparation, and outcomes for teaching, research, service, and attitudinal changes

Survey 2 (Fall 2016)
Follow-up questions for faculty members who lead study away and study abroad at liberal arts institutions (n=72)
8 open-ended questions: global learning, critical incidents, institutional support, high-impact practices, pedagogy, assessment, and impact on faculty leader

Sample: 28 private liberal arts colleges participated (14 from the Associated Colleges of the Midwest; 13 Associated Colleges of the South; and Elon University).
Most Common Participant Demographics

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<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>53%</td>
<td>were female</td>
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<tr>
<td>77%</td>
<td>were tenured</td>
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<td>59%</td>
<td>were age 50 or older</td>
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<tr>
<td>83%</td>
<td>identified as White</td>
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<td>35%</td>
<td>had children under age 18</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A majority were born in the United States</td>
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<td>39% taught in the arts &amp; humanities</td>
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<td>42% led programs 15-30 days in lengths</td>
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Information on Programs Led

Survey Categories taken from the Open Doors Report - Demographics, Survey 1 (Fall 2015)

Domestic - 7%
Latin America / Caribbean - 19%
Sub-Saharan Africa - 7%
Middle East / North Africa – 5%
Europe - 28%
Asia – 13%
Oceania – 2%
More than one region – 8%
Missing – 11%
Five Main Findings for Faculty, Administrators, & Researchers
Faculty members at liberal arts colleges reported benefitting from consistent, strong institutional support across the entire study away / study abroad experience (from proposal to re-entry).
Institutional Support = Positive Feelings

Participants who reported **high levels** of institutional support were more likely to experience **positive feelings** post-SA/SA (p=.05):

- **Institutional Support:**
  - training, compensation, recognition, staff support

- **Positive feelings:**
  - eager to lead a different or the same SA/SA program
  - found SA/SA to be a worthwhile use of time and energy
  - felt more connected to the mission of their institution
  - improved relationships with colleagues
  - felt renewed or energized
Faculty who led study away / study abroad programs reported a variety of positive changes – including attitudes and behaviors.
Faculty Narratives: Shifts in Learning

• Pursue new research areas
• Develop a secondary expertise
• Become more interdisciplinary
• Develop intercultural and bilingual learning
• Improve problem solving
• Rethink assumptions
Faculty Narratives: Attitudinal Shifts

- Renewed interest/fueled work
- Intentionally seeking to teach to transform
- Happier, braver
- Greater spirituality, more empathy
- Deeper reflection on own identity
- Tackling global learning more aggressively
Faculty Narratives: Behavioral Shifts

• Increase flexibility as a teacher
• Identify as a more effective leader
• Contribute to global goals across the curriculum
• Become more modest, more realistic
Faculty reported that their institutions do not support the things they say they value in global learning.
Perception of Institutional Values

• **59%** believed “to a great extent” that “**Global learning** is a priority for my institution.”

• **22%** believed “to a great extent” that “**Supporting faculty** members who lead global programs is a priority for my institution.”
Demographic variables were not related to leaders’ perceptions and reported impact on teaching, research, and service.
No significant relationships (p=.05) between these factors and behavioral and attitudinal outcomes:

**Factors**
- Tenure Status
- Academic Rank
- Sex
- Marital Status
- Parental Status
- Program Destination
- Academic Discipline
- Amount of leadership responsibilities for Study Abroad Program

**Outcome Variables**
- Teaching
- Research
- Service
- Positive Feelings
- Negative Feelings
Faculty members integrated many other recognized High Impact Practices (Kuh, 2008) into their SA/SA programs.
94% (n=64) of Survey II respondents reported that they incorporated at least one other High-Impact Practice (Kuh, 2008) into their (HIP) SA/SA program.
86 % of Survey II respondents reported that they incorporate more than one HIP into their pedagogy. Faculty who used two HIPs most commonly combined:

- collaborative work + writing
- collaborative work + service learning
- collaborative work + undergraduate research

(Kuh 2008)
Discussion Questions

• What are the implications of the findings regarding faculty development and institutional policies on your campus?

• How do your (personal) experiences leading study away and study abroad programs compare to the findings?

• How does your campus articulate the relationship between support for faculty global learning and support for student global learning?

• How do the findings of the survey challenge you to rethink your beliefs and assumptions about SA/SA?


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