Low in Sodium: The New Blandness of Study Abroad Programs

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Introduction

- **Trump Effect**: climate of hostility towards inmigrants and globalism in general
- Drop in foreign student enrollment
  - 6.6% (ACYR 2017-2018); Open Doors
- Due to:
  - Social & Political Environment in the US
  - Feeling unwelcome
  - Student Visa Delays
Low in Sodium: The New Blandness of Study Abroad Programs

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SVP, Academic Affairs & Initiatives, CEA Study Abroad
PROVOCATIONS
Too Much Sodium?
What has become normative?

- In Higher Education
- In International Education
In the words of Julie Lythcott-Haims, former Dean of freshmen at Stanford

- “The point is to prepare the kid for the road, instead of preparing the road for the kid”
- “There are now classes to teach children to practice failing, at college campuses around the country and even for preschoolers.”
- “Learning to solve problems, take risks and overcome frustrations are crucial life skills...”
- Snowplowing also known as lawn-mowing or bulldozing “has become the most brazen mode of parenting of the privileged children in the everyone-gets-a-trophy generation”.

ceastudyabroad.com
Enough Sodium?

Flight (flight) vuelo
Baggage, Luggage (equipaje
Gate (geit) Puerta de salida
Suitcase (suitcase) maleta

I want a collect call with number...
Where Things Were

University of Georgia: UGA en España
2001-2007

Language and Culture programs
- Valencia and Cádiz
- Valencia, Cádiz, Seville (Business)
- Valencia, Cádiz, Seville, Trujillo (Health)
- Valencia, Cádiz, Seville, Trujillo, Margarita Island (Health)
- Valencia, Cádiz, Seville, Trujillo, Margarita, Cuba

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Where Are We Now?
Open Doors: 2018 Data Trends

Host Regions of U.S. Study Abroad Students

- **Europe**: 54%
- **North America**: 1%
- **Latin America & Caribbean**: 16%
- **Middle East & North Africa**: 2%
- **Sub-Saharan Africa**: 4%
- **Asia**: 12%
- **Oceania**: 4%

Europe hosts over half of U.S. study abroad students.

332,727 U.S. students studied abroad for academic credit in 2016/17.

Undergraduate Participation in U.S. Study Abroad

1 in 10 U.S. undergraduates studies abroad before graduating.

cea.com
32% of U.S. study abroad students are hosted by the United Kingdom, Italy, and Spain.
Open Doors: Top Majors/Programs 2018

Top Five Major Fields of Study of U.S. Study Abroad Students

- **STEM Fields**: 26%
- **Business**: 21%
- **Social Sciences**: 17%
- **Foreign Language & International Studies**: 7%
- **Fine & Applied Arts**: 6%

Duration of U.S. Study Abroad

- **65% short-term**: summer, or eight weeks or less
- **33% mid-length**: one semester, or one or two quarters
- **2% long-term**: academic or calendar year

Source: ceastudyabroad.com
MLA: Language Enrollment Trends 1998-2016

Language Enrollment at Four-Year Universities Across the U.S.

Source: Modern Language Association
Open Doors: Race/Ethnicity Changes

RACE/ETHNICITY OF U.S. STUDENTS ABROAD

2006/07
18%

2016/17
29%

The proportion of U.S. minority students studying abroad has increased modestly over the past ten years.

Open Doors is conducted by the Institute of International Education with the support of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. Online at: www.iie.org/opendoors
## CEA Data: Changes in Enrollment Over Time

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### Significant Growth
- Prague
- Florence
- Barcelona
Language Enrollment

**Spanish**

- Spanish

  - 2010-2012: 2500
  - 2016-2018: 1500

**French**

- French

  - 2010-2012: 90%
  - 2013-2015: 80%
  - 2016-2018: 70%

**Italian**

- Italian

  - 2010-2012: 120%
  - 2013-2015: 100%
  - 2016-2018: 80%
Language v. Engineering v. Business
Course Enrollment

Language

Engineering

Business

2010-2012 2013-2015 2016-2018

Students
Percentage of Total Enrollment (Language)

Students
Percentage of Total Enrollment (Engineering)

Students
Percentage of Total Enrollment (Business)
Internship Enrollment

Number of Students

Percentage of Enrollment

0% 1% 2% 3% 4% 5% 6%

0 20 40 60 80 100 120 140 160 180 200

2014 2015 2016 2017 2018

ceastudyabroad.com
Mojo Program

What is a Mojo?

- A Mobile Journalist (Mojo) is a student blogger, photographer, or videographer. Students are selected from a pool of applicants to create high quality content for CEAs social media accounts. This content is used to help introduce students in the coming terms what life onsite is like.

Where do we have them?:

- Spring 2019:
  - Spain – Seville (1 - Blogger)
  - Spain – Alicante (2 - Bloggers)
  - France - Aix-en-Provence (2 - Photographers)
  - France - French Riviera (1 - Blogger)
  - Italy – Rome (1 - Blogger)
  - Ireland – Galway (1 - Blogger)

How many per site?:

- Depends on site/semester
- This Spring we have 6 sites represented.

MOJO Blogger Program

- Create 7 high-quality written blog posts
- Create 2 high-quality video blog posts
- 2 social media updates per week

MOJO Photographer Program

- Create 7 high-quality photo sets with 10 photos each
- Create 2 high-quality written blog posts
- Create 2 high-quality video blog posts
- 2 social media updates per week

MOJO Videographer Program

- Create 5 high-quality video clips of 5 -10 minutes each
- Create 3 high-quality video blog posts
- 2 social media updates per week
Moodle

- Pre-departure program with 5 sections
  - Setting expectations
  - Health and Safety
  - Academics
  - Preparing to Depart, Preparing to Arrive
  - Thank you and Safe Travels

- Feature videos from onsite and home office staff. These videos include tours of the study center, and housing. They also include introductions from the onsite staff and a primer on local culture

- In the term we launched this program (Spring 2019) 480 of 516 students (93%) found it at least slightly beneficial.
Career Readiness & Bridging the Skills Gap

- National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) defines career readiness as: “...the attainment and demonstration of requisite competencies that broadly prepare college graduates for a successful transition into the workplace.”

- “Requisite Competencies” represent the “skills gap” that managers are seeing in new graduates:
  - Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
  - Leadership
  - Teamwork/Collaboration
  - Career Management
  - Oral/Written Communications
  - Digital Technology
  - Professionalism/Work Ethic
  - Global/Intercultural Fluency
Introduction-2

• The reverse effect: US college students going abroad
• Third Party Providers and Study Abroad Offices
• No Data yet from ACYR 2018-2019
• Types of programs chosen
• Program site destinations: Euro-centered vrs Latin America
• Interest in Experiential Learning Opportunities for credit
• ACYR, Semester Programs vrs. Customized & Short-Term Programs
Case Study: Puerto Rico
Hurricane María: September 20, 2017
The Fall 2017 Semester Program at USC

- SSA students evacuated the day before Hurricane hits
- Local universities closed 1 month; reopened with electricity and potable water
- Local students returned to campus in mid-October
- Majority of US students do not come back to campus; take courses on-line
- Accommodations not acceptable; not “what I paid for”
- **Mainstream media coverage in the US**
- All 35 European students stayed on campus and got involved in pressing, hands-on service learning opportunities
- Ended the semester by saying it was “the best experience of their lives”
Aftermath
TRUMP HELPS PUERTO RICO BY THROWING PAPER TOWELS
Help & Learn SVL 2018 Summer Programs

• Mandatory language course; Spanish offered at many levels
• Variety of service learning projects in education, manual labor, public health
• NGO’s asking for volunteers
• Families from inland towns offering to host students to help build communities; teach children after months of no formal schooling
• Avalanche of concerns and fear-based questions coming from parents and universities: Is it safe down there? What about accommodations? Is the air conditioning working in the dorms?
• More than 20 applicants; all fell through due to media image built around Puerto Rico: insecurities, parents or schools not authorizing trips
US Embassy in Havana
Havana Programs

- Double Hit: Hurricane Irma (September 2017) and Sonic Attacks inside the US Embassy (November 2017)
- Embassy operates with minimum personnel necessary
- No family members permitted to reside
- Travel 3 Warning
- Fall 2017: 3 students
- Spring 2018: 3 students

- Some schools do allow students to travel if they write a letter justifying the Travel 3 Warning
Caribbean Programs

![Graph showing Semester Students from 2015 to 2019 for Havana and Puerto Rico.]
The Rise of Custom Programs

- Safe Heaven; everyone wins
- Guided, protected cultural experience
- The interaction and immersion are controlled, it’s a “free-risk” environment; a low in sodium taste of culture and local community
- Private buses, no public transportation, catered meals; pre-selected svl opportunities
- Courses are customized following US syllabi; instructed by their faculty
- Details are all worked out, security & safety provided by on-site staff 24/7
GW Study Abroad Programs
OFFICE OF STUDY ABROAD PROGRAMS

WHERE?

335 Programs
75 countries
178 cities

WHAT KIND?

GW programs (20%)
Direct Exchanges (10%)
Partner/Provider Programs (60%)
GW Short Term Programs Abroad (10%)
GW Study Abroad Numbers
TOTAL STUDY ABROAD PARTICIPATION (AY, SEMESTER, STAPS, AND NON-GW SUMMER PROGRAMS) AY 2012-17

- Percentage calculated as GW SA participants over total AY enrollment data from GW OIRP; number of undergraduate degrees conferred; percentage change is AY 2012 :: AY 2017
- N = 7,616
TOTAL GW UNDERGRADS: AY/SEMESTER PROGRAMS – AY 2012-17

- Percentage calculated as GW SA participants over total AY enrollment data from GW OIRP; number of undergraduate degrees conferred; percentage change is AY 2012 :: AY 2017
- N=4,949
GW Academic Year Programs
REGION FOR ACADEMIC YEAR PROGRAMS – AY 2012-17

- Sum of Latin America & Caribbean
- Sum of Middle East
- Sum of Europe
- Sum of Australia & Oceania
- Sum of Asia
- Sum of Africa

N=290
Lower overall counts per year are due to N/R responses not being included
GW Semester Programs
REGION FOR SEMESTER PROGRAMS – AY 2012-17

N=4,636
Lower overall counts per year are due to N/R responses not being included
Study Abroad Regions for GW Colleges
CCAS BY REGION

- Sum of Latin America & Caribbean
- Sum of Middle East
- Sum of Europe
- Sum of Australia & Oceania
- Sum of Asia
- Sum of Africa

N=728

Lower overall counts per year are due to some responses not being included
(Students going to North America, <1/year)
SEAS BY REGION

- Sum of Latin America & Caribbean
- Sum of Europe
- Sum of Australia & Oceania
- Sum of Asia
- Sum of Africa

N=228
Lower overall counts per year are due to some regions not being counted
MILKEN BY REGION – AY 2012-17

- Sum of Latin America & Caribbean
- Sum of Middle East
- Sum of Europe
- Sum of Australia & Oceania
- Sum of Asia
- Sum of Africa

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<th>Year</th>
<th>Sum of Latin America &amp; Caribbean</th>
<th>Sum of Middle East</th>
<th>Sum of Europe</th>
<th>Sum of Australia &amp; Oceania</th>
<th>Sum of Asia</th>
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<td>16.7%</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
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<td>19</td>
<td>21.1%</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
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<td>5.6%</td>
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<td>5.3%</td>
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N= 104
GW Faculty Led Short Term Locations
JANUARY SHORT TERM BY REGION – AY 2012-17

- Sum of Latin America & Caribbean
- Sum of Middle East
- Sum of Africa

N=91
SUMMERS BY REGION – AY 2012-17

N=703
Lower overall counts per year are due to some regions not being counted
Some Thoughts to Consider

• When the economic or social situation of a country is visible through mainstream US media all sorts of alarms go off for international education

• Puerto Rico: Live Aid concerts, with mega super stars, David Begnaud of CBS reporting daily though Facebook-Live on how the inland towns were doing; different reality in metropolitan area

• It becomes difficult for the provider to interest schools and applicants in more genuine and challenging programs that put students outside of their comfort zone

• Shift to Customized, where students remain inside their comfort zone with bullet-proof jackets

• The largest generation of 19-21 years old with mental health issues

• Students no longer have to "figure it out on their own", are not inclined to step out of box

• Could this be the new blandness of study abroad programs?