

AN ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW GUIDE TO STUDYING ABROAD
AT CAL POLY

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Research Proposal

Many memories have been made during my time here at Cal Poly. I have gone from being a terrified freshman to a worldly and confident senior in only five short years. I would not have been able to achieve this transformation, at least not to the affect it is today, without studying abroad.

Having gone through the process of studying abroad for a year, a program that I found through Cal Poly, it has occurred to me that there are many flaws within the system itself and within Cal Poly's administration of studying abroad programs. I have not found study abroad programs being suggested, recommended, or even required enough among the colleges at Cal Poly; resulting in students missing out on a chance of a life-time.

There are reasons that students are not encouraged to study abroad as well as reasons why students aren't jumping at the chance to go. These reasons consist mostly of: the idea that classes will not transfer and high cost. In order to enlighten students (as well as faculty) about how studying abroad can easily be incorporated into a student's class plan, as well as diminish the deterrent of cost, I propose that more advertising and information should be present for students. There should be flow-charts centered around integrating studying abroad into a student's four or five year plan at Cal Poly. There should also be more cost-conscious programs available for students.

In this senior project I propose to research the benefits of studying abroad, the system Cal Poly has in place to attract students to studying abroad, the administration side of studying abroad here at Cal Poly, how easy it is to incorporate study abroad into ones' plan, the finances of studying abroad, and more. My hope is to encourage more students to study abroad and gain

an experience they will never forget, as well as show Cal Poly that there are improvements that can be made.

Annotated Bibliography

Bartram, Brendan. "Brits Abroad" : The Perceived Support Needs of U.K. Learners Studying in Higher Education Overseas." *Journal of Studies in International Education* 17.5 (2012): 5-18 Print.

The author (a researcher and professor focused on secondary education with regard to international student mobility in higher education) details the views, evaluations, as well as the priorities of students that choose to study abroad. His findings show a mixture of academic, practical, and emotional needs that students have with regard to society. They also have a great reliance on their selves to be proactive and participate. The article includes recommendations made by the students for their home universities as well as host institutions for student preparation not only for the UK but other countries as well. This will be useful when conducting my own interviews of students at Cal Poly whom have studied abroad.

Burn, Barbara B., ed. *Integrating Study Abroad into the Undergraduate Liberal Arts Curriculum: Eight Institutional Case Studies*. New York: Greenwood, 1991: 43-57, 65-91, 125-135 Print.

Chapter 4 entitled, "The University of California: Faculty Support, the Needed Link" by Theda Shapiro. Chapter 6 entitled, "Pomona College: Factors Influencing Students' Decisions to Study Abroad" by Cecilia Cloughly. Chapter 10 entitled, "Internationalizing Undergraduate Education through Study Abroad:

Issues and Outlook” by Barbara B. Burn. This resource is broken up into chapters written by various authors with focuses on various topics at various campuses. Chapter 4 looks at the University of California and the need for faculty to get more involved and in support of study abroad. Chapter 6 looks at why some certain majors are more likely to study abroad and how to increase the amount of students in underrepresented majors to study abroad. Chapter 10 focuses on the need for studying abroad to become an integral part of undergraduate degree programs.

Carlson, Jerry S., Barbara B. Burn, John Useem, and David Yachimowicz. *Study Abroad: The Experience of American Undergraduates*. New York: Greenwood, 1990: 13-35, 55-75, 89-113. Print.

The chapters from this source focus on the findings from The Study Abroad Evaluation Project (SAEP) launched in 1982. The project was intended to give documentation and information of the role of study abroad. The chapters I will use are about how students who study abroad differ from those who remain at home, the impacts of the study abroad experience, and the long-term follow-up effects of studying abroad.

Chang, Dian-Fu. "College Students' Perceptions of Studying Abroad and Their Readiness." *Asia Pacific Education Review* 13.4 (2012): Print.

This article tries to see what university students think are essential parts of studying abroad and goes into which programs are more attractive and why. The

article finds that gender as well as major influences perceptions and degree of importance to study abroad for students.

Eide, Ingrid, ed. *Students as Links between Cultures; a Cross Cultural Survey Based on Unesco Studies*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1970: 1-70. Print.

This source is divided by chapter written by different authors on the topic of study abroad. I have chosen to use information I have found throughout Part I of this text. This includes chapters from Thomas Marshall, Otto Klineberg, and Diether Breitenbach. This first part of this resource go into the strategy behind international exchange, psychological aspects, and various evaluations of studying abroad such as the academic and social balanced experience.

Goodwin, Craufurd D. W., and Michael Nacht. *Abroad and Beyond: Patterns in American Overseas Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1988: 91-101. Print.

Focusing on chapter 6 of this source, it is about innovation and the origin of constructive change within the university system with regard to studying abroad. This chapter goes into the liberal arts, science and technology, as well as graduate programs that can all integrate studying abroad within their curriculum.

Haines, David. "More Aware of Everything: The Returnee Experience in American Higher Education." *Journal of Studies in International Education* 17.19 (2012): 19-38. Print.

This journal article is focused more on the student returnee from his/her study abroad experience. How the experience has shaped and changed them. It states that it broadens perspectives but also individuates them. It goes into the emotions

and experience of the returned studier abroad who is now back at their home campus in the United States and the experiences.

Horwitz, Richard P. *Exporting America: Essays on American Studies Abroad*. New York: Garland Pub., 1993: 221-239. Print.

The chapter I am using from this source is entitled, “International Education: Its Role in Combatting National Stereotypes”. It goes into the positives of Americans studying abroad because it gives the world and the people they encounter a positive (hopefully) view of Americans instead of the stereotypes that all Americans are unintelligent and sexually liberal, for example. Students who study abroad are US Ambassadors in a way.

Lewin, Ross, ed. *The Handbook of Practice and Research in Study Abroad: Higher Education and the Quest for Global Citizenship*. New York: Routledge, 2009: 1-79. Print.

This resource is about the duty of students as global citizens to study abroad. It states that international education is needed to develop our global civil society. It is like the previous that states that international studies is an important part in making our American citizens global citizens and US diplomats in a way for the world to see. This text is more future focused on what we can do to improve the international push for students to study abroad and in turn what that will do for the United States people as a whole.

Martin, Pam. *Study Abroad Programs: Elements of Effective International Student and Faculty Exchange Programs*. Sacramento, CA: California Research Bureau, 2009: 1-33. Print.

In this text we see research done by the California Research Bureau (CRB) which has collected data on how international education is right now in California. It looks at the demand for programs by country as well as by area of study and the resources available to students with regard to those demands. It goes into the need for US university to actively build and establish relationships with abroad institutions. It goes into the financing aspect of studying abroad and looks to future obstacles that may arise that can be diminished in order to increase enrollment and participation in study abroad programs throughout the future.

Speck, Bruce W., and Beth H. Carmical. *Internationalizing Higher Education: Building Vital Programs on Campuses*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002: 79-87. Print.

The final chapter in this text is entitled, “Internationalizing the Campus: What Do You Need to Know?” and it urges people to begin to start study abroad programs at their university. It goes into what universities need and should know when starting a study abroad office and the best ways to set up programs and information for students. This will be useful when I discuss what Cal Poly can do to improve its study abroad system.

Outline

Section I

Chapter 1: What is “Study Abroad”?

- Defines Studying abroad and everything it can include from a year-long program to student exchange. Address various misconceptions of studying abroad and the study abroad experience.

- Chang, Dian-Fu. "College Students' Perceptions of Studying Abroad and Their Readiness."

- Eide, Ingrid, ed. *Students as Links between Cultures; a Cross Cultural Survey Based on Unesco Studies*.

Chapter 2: Why Study Abroad?

- Horwitz, Richard P. *Exporting America: Essays on American Studies Abroad*.

Section II

Chapter 1: Start Planning

- Planning is such an essential and important step in one’s studying abroad experience. Preparation is key.

- Chang, Dian-Fu. "College Students' Perceptions of Studying Abroad and Their Readiness."

Chapter 2: Financing

- The importance of seeking out information. Being proactive about the programs being offered at university.

- Lewin, Ross, ed. *The Handbook of Practice and Research in Study Abroad: Higher Education and the Quest for Global Citizenship*.

- Speck, Bruce W., and Beth H. Carmical. *Internationalizing Higher Education: Building Vital Programs on Campuses*.

Chapter 3: What to Expect

- Haines, David. "More Aware of Everything: The Returnee Experience in American Higher Education."

Section III

Chapter 1: Cal Poly Should Enforce Study Abroad

- Burn, Barbara B., ed. *Integrating Study Abroad into the Undergraduate Liberal Arts Curriculum: Eight Institutional Case Studies.*
- Lewin, Ross, ed. *The Handbook of Practice and Research in Study Abroad: Higher Education and the Quest for Global Citizenship.*
- Martin, Pam. *Study Abroad Programs: Elements of Effective International Student and Faculty Exchange Programs*

Chapter 2: Cal Poly Study Abroad Process

- Need interviews/more research

Chapter 3: Cal Poly Improvements

- What Cal Poly needs to improve upon within their study abroad programs.
 - Bartram, Brendan. "Brits Abroad"
 - Goodwin, Craufurd D. W., and Michael Nacht. *Abroad and Beyond: Patterns in American Overseas Education.*

Section IV

Chapter 1: Personal Experience and Testimony

1 Introduction

Learn without borders

-University Studies Abroad Consortium (USAC)

Many memories have been made at Cal Poly. Many have gone from being terrified seven-teen year old freshman unsure about life and the universe, to worldly and confident seniors in only five short years. Cal Poly has prepared people for life in many ways. It prepares individuals with abilities to work as a team, to be innovative thinkers, to finish something started, but most importantly to take chances. Cal Poly has transformed many lives, not only on an educational level but an intellectual and personal one. Without Cal Poly, many would not have made the best decision they have ever made: the decision to study abroad. Getting this message out to the Cal Poly community is vital to the success of the study abroad department as well as the success of Cal Poly's students and community.

From studying abroad one has the opportunity to gain a new perspective of the world in which we are all a part. Study abroad students increase their language skills, improve decision-making and problem-solving skills, broadly expand their network connections, discover interests that would have otherwise been unknown, and more which will later be discussed. As Dr. Alyssa Nota, a USAC Resident Director, says, "Study abroad will distinguish you forever. So many skills that you develop as a study abroad student. It sets you apart from millions of other college students" (University Study Abroad Consortium, 2013). We will discover that study abroad is much more than taking classes overseas. It is a true international exchanging of ideas, cultures, experiences, passions, and knowledge. This exchange is what develops study abroad students into a student category of their own. In this paper we will cover what actually constitutes "study

abroad” and everything it includes. We will go deeper into several of the different study abroad pathways Cal Poly offers, focusing on: Cal Poly-led Programs, CSU International Programs, and Independent Study Programs; defining each and explaining the differences and unique advantages between them. We will take a look at some Cal Poly student, faculty, and staffs’ personal opinions and views on the subject with regard to the different pathways offered. From these opinions we will assess the study abroad department and determine any improvements that can be made concerning Cal Poly’s study abroad approach.

There are countless positives associated with studying abroad. With these positives, however, come some negatives. These negative aspects of studying abroad are based around planning, finance, and course credit transfers. Students are primarily deterred from studying abroad because they have not planned out their courses throughout their college career thus far with study abroad in mind. Students are also deterred by the falsity that studying abroad is grossly more expensive than staying at Cal Poly. The third and final negative side of studying abroad is the belief that not all course credits taken abroad will transfer and students’ graduations will be prolonged. Study abroad has struggled greatly with overcoming these negatives, but when researched and examined they are found to be largely false generalizations. These false generalizations are preventing Cal Poly students from even taking the first steps in seeking out information about studying abroad because they assume they cannot afford it financially or time-wise. We must combat these false negatives in some way, either by implementing mandatory study abroad programs for all majors or proving to students their first day at Cal Poly that they can and will be an international learner, with the correct guidance.

Planning, financing, or concerns of course credits failing to transfer should not be deterrents of studying abroad for Cal Poly students. In this paper we will discuss the importance

of planning and preparation to one's study abroad experience. We will address studying abroad financing, financial aid, scholarships, and misconceptions made regarding how to pay for studying abroad. We will also tackle the issues study abroad students face when they return to their home campuses with regards to credit transfers, re-adapting socially, and how study abroad has changed their views of university as a whole and improve the Cal Poly community.

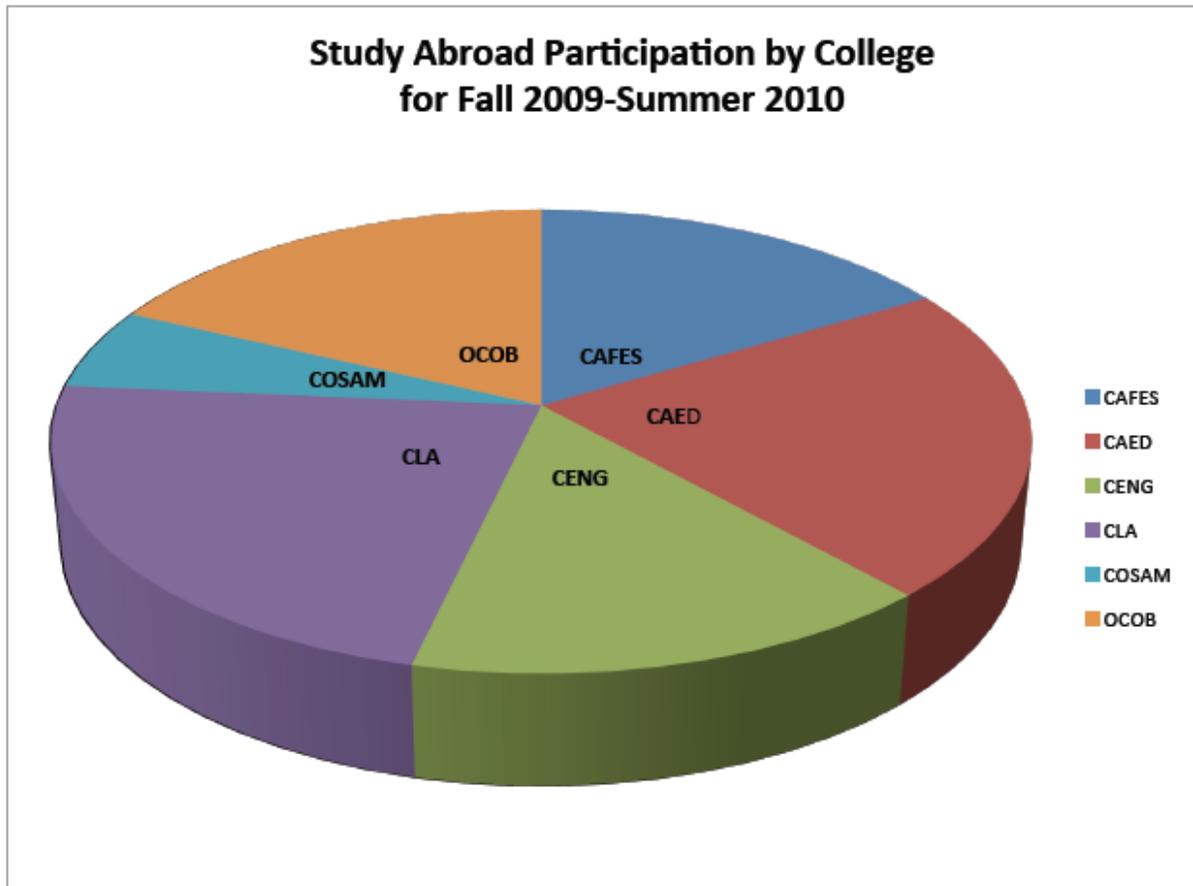
Going out and studying abroad is not the only way to improve Cal Poly's community and imprint on the world. Studying abroad is also about accepting students here. It is about a worldly exchange between cultures, countries, and universities. Study abroad in its most basic description is in fact simply young people, whom are the future of the world, crossing oceans and borders to learn what a different group of people can teach them, and then returning to re-teach their own people. It is about a connection between two places. By sending Cal Poly students out into the world while also accepting foreign students in, it improves Cal Poly's name and image while also greatly enriching and diversifying its campus culture. In this paper, we will not only obviously examine Cal Poly's ways of sending students out, but also examine their policies on welcoming others in.

After overviewing what studying abroad is and all its benefits, we will primarily focus on Cal Poly and its view and process of studying abroad. We will dive into Cal Poly's study abroad office and explore everything it is doing in order to get as many students possible to take this amazing chance of a lifetime. We will look into the behind the scenes work done in regard to organizing programs and making agreements of exchange, we will explore the study abroad office's advertisement and marketing scheme, as well as the interest and level of support among faculty and staff. Cal Poly's true goal for study abroad is getting students to plan on studying abroad before they step foot on campus their first day. This is the true challenge and we will look

at all the benefits this mindset would have on Cal Poly and the study abroad department.

Studying abroad at other universities may be seen as a liberal arts idea, but not here. Here it is considered and respected among all majors. Alongside all of this information will be several interviews from students, faculty, and staff to get a view of some of Cal Poly's personal opinions and experiences regarding study abroad.

Figure 1:



College	Number	Percentage
College of Agriculture, Food, & Environmental Sciences (CAFES)	133	16%
College of Architecture & Environmental Design (CAED)	177	22%
College of Engineering (CENG)	124	15%
College of Liberal Arts (CLA)	184	23%
College of Science & Mathematics (COSAM)	46	6%
Orfalea College of Business (OCOB)	145	18%
Total	809	100%

Cal Poly International Center Data

2 What is “Study Abroad”?

Learn by GOING.

- Cal Poly Study Abroad Website

In this chapter we will go over a variety of terms that encompass study abroad as well as its history and how we have come to know and love what study abroad is today. Study abroad can best be termed *international education*. It is not only studying overseas to pass a class, it is an education that one can only receive if gone overseas. It is a unique education that is passed from nation to nation. Studying abroad is an exchange of education given and received equally by the host country and the foreign student. Fraser and Brickman defined the term *international education* as:

A dynamic concept that involves a journey or movement of people, minds, or ideas across political and cultural frontiers. The development of a “Worldmindedness” can become the goal of any school, and hence, any school can become truly international (Lee, 2012, 17).

Study abroad is exactly this. It is a movement of people to different places, bringing their ideas and cultures with them and learning to interact and embrace new ones. With this movement of people, with study abroad in other words, there is a development of a “worldmindedness” which is the development of viewing the world as one and connected. This development is the goal of a university that wants to have astounding study abroad programs. If a university wants to have its students study abroad, it must also embrace foreign students itself to become “truly international” and create a worldly campus culture (Hansen, 2002).

Hans Schattle states that international education is rooted in the idea of global citizenship.

He says:

The idea of global citizenship has emerged since the late 1990s as a key strategic principle in higher education. At scores of colleges and universities in the United

States and abroad, the current era of globalization has been accompanied by renewed scholarly interest in an international dimension of citizenship as well as numerous initiatives with the specific aim of inspiring young people to think and live as global citizens (Schattle, 2009, 3).

As the world is becoming increasingly connected with globalization, there has been a growing interest for our younger generations to get out into the world and develop their “worldmindedness”. As the world is becoming increasingly concerned with internationalizing, the higher education system is equally interested. Sven Groennings explains internationalization as “one of the most powerful substantive developments in the history of American higher education” (Hans De Wit, 2002, 2). However in order to truly understand study abroad, otherwise known as international education or internationalization of the higher education system, we must first ask the questions of when, where, and why did this concept begin.

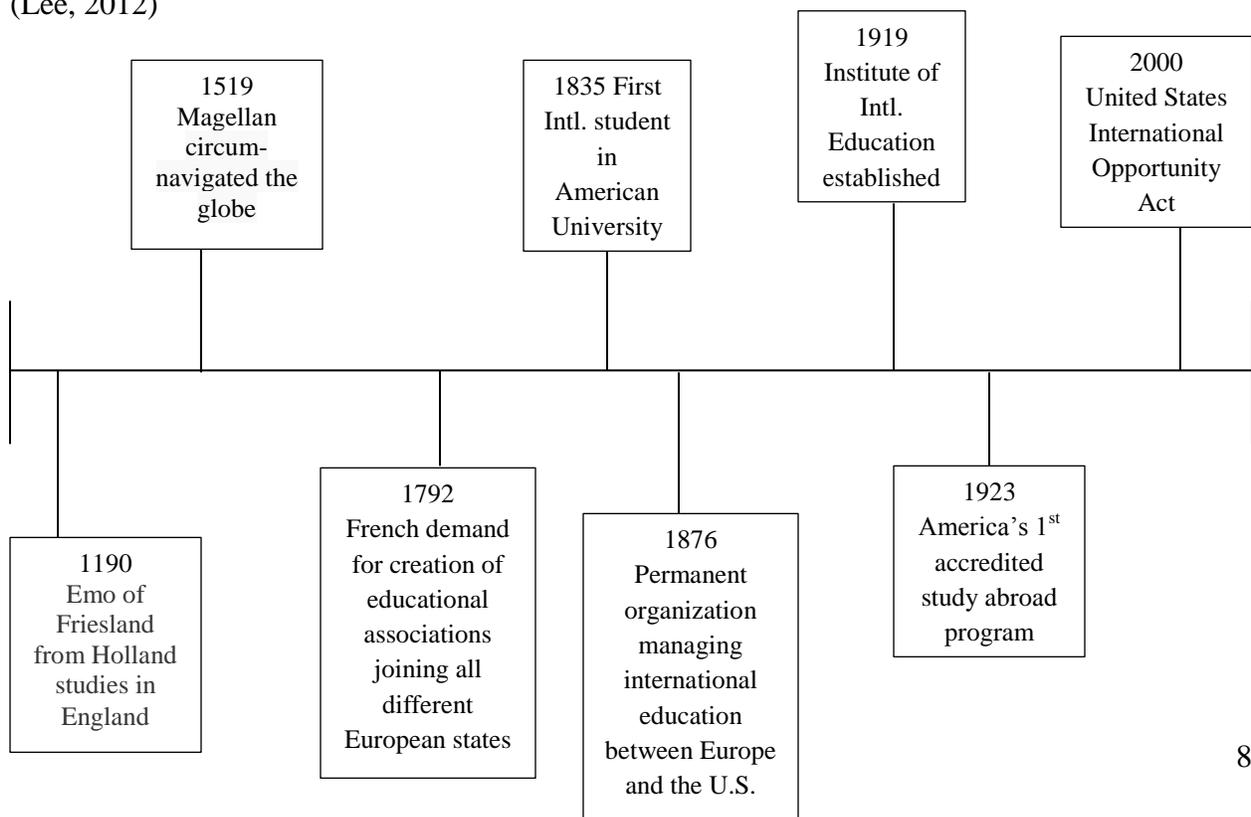
The literal definition of the term “study abroad” can be stated as the act of a student leaving their homeland to pursue an educational opportunity in another land. With this definition we can trace back to an early recorded study abroad trip in 1190. This was Emo of Friesland from northern Holland who left his country to study at Oxford University in England. This first example of “studying abroad” has been influencing the education system for almost a thousand years. From Emo Friesland, to the great world travelers of the 15th and 16th centuries, to the first ever study abroad student arriving in the United States in the 19th century and the first officially accredited study abroad program at the University of Delaware in 1923 (The Oxford Guide, 2011).

It began with one man who took the chance and left his homeland to learn abroad almost a thousand years ago. This brave act triggered others to seek out and learn of the great importance of this practice. It urged men to explore unknown seas to learn of unknown lands to

the west. It urged Napoleon and Emmerich de Vattel (a Swiss diplomat) in 1754 to believe in “the exchange of professors among various nations” and they maintained the idea that “the peace and security of each nation was dependent upon the peace and security of all” (Lee, 2012, 17). There was a great need and demand for the exchange of ideas in the classroom and abroad which was believed to better each individual society. This demand is directly linked to the growing interest and demand of the last couple century’s advancements for international education. In 1876 the first permanent organization for international education came about connecting European countries and the United States and less than a hundred years later in 1923 the U. of Delaware program was launched (Lee). Looking back to the first launched program from today’s eyes, we can see “over eighty years of nation building, cultural and educational reciprocity, and two world wars [that] have brought us to where we are today. Whether it be for language acquisition or volunteerism, degree completion or cultural exposure; the act of studying overseas remains a meaningful and worthwhile experience” (Dorres, 2007, 2).

Timeline of Study Abroad Progress:

(Lee, 2012)



3 Why Study Abroad?

Studying Abroad is an opportunity for students, and faculty, to really broaden their horizons and discover themselves.

-Raymond Zeuschner, PhD.
CP International Center Director

In this chapter we will discuss the positives associated with studying abroad. Some of these positives include: gained valuable life experience, personal growth, improved skill-sets, etc. We will also discuss reasons why Cal Poly students should study abroad, with an interview of Cal Poly's International Center Director: Raymond Zeuschner, PhD.

In the United States today, there is the notion that “any exposure to foreign environment during one’s formal education is better than none” (Goodwin & Nacht, 1988, 12). We have this idea in our culture and country that there is value behind studying abroad. There is this idea that if one has the opportunity to go and be exposed to a different and foreign environment than one should take that opportunity because only good can result. This can be summed up by Thomas Marshall when he states, “Every country, whatever its educational level, offers in its own culture, language, art, history and institutions, and in its geography, climate, natural resources and animal life, many subjects for study of compelling interest to students all over the world” (Marshall, 1970, 7). Denise Rochat and Margaret Skiles Zelljadt of Smith College state that studying abroad not only promotes fluency in another language as well as “contributing to the development of an internationally aware citizenry” (Rochat & Zelljadt, 1998, 72). But they also state that, “students should be provided with this unique potential for intellectual and personal development and growth” (Rochat & Zelljadt, 1998, 72). Lambert describes this personal development as a “personal pilgrimage from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism” (Lambert, 1989, 113). Adler notes that the purpose of studying abroad creates a “change from a monocultural to an intercultural frame of reference” (Steen, 2007, 20). These all have some basic themes in

common with regards to why one should study abroad. When the why question is asked, the answers are language acquisition, a development of a global citizenry, as well as personal development and intellectual growth (Rochat & Zelljadt, 1998, 72).

There are many positives to studying abroad which will further be discussed in this chapter, but first we must combat one of the negatives: culture shock. Culture shock happens when our “culture clues, the signs and symbols which guide social interaction, are stripped away” (Piet-Pelon & Hornby, 1992, 2). Culture shock happens when we experience a culture unlike our own and is directly linked to Lambert’s description of how studying abroad as changing from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. Ethnocentrism is believing that one’s own culture is the real and true culture of the world. It is a narrow view of the world, one in which is hard to overcome without studying abroad. From going out into the world one’s view changes to a more ethnorelativist mindset which means that “cultures can only be understood *relative to one another*” (Bennet, 1993, 46). And so, in order to gain from all the many positives associated with studying abroad, we must first struggle. As they say, no pain no gain. When studying abroad there is at first a struggle, but in the end there are many rewards.

Language acquisition is extremely important in today’s globalizing world. The ability to communicate with another country and another people in their national language is the key to creating a more global community as well as improving one’s skill-sets. Solaun declares that, “we must live, study, and work and even play alongside our foreign peers, and this can only be done effectively by developing the sensitivity and awareness that comes with a real understanding of the target language” (Stearns, 2009, 248). This means that if we really want to understand and work with different countries, especially from a world-market viewpoint, we must truly understand their language because that is the key to their culture. Language is said to

be the “main route to cultural understanding” (Goodwin & Nacht, 1988, 15). This valuable language acquisition is achieved the quickest and with the least amount of effort through studying abroad. In an experiment done by PLoS One, scientist created an artificial language consisting of only thirteen words and divided a group of people into two groups using different techniques to teach this language. One technique was teaching people in a formal classroom setting, while the other was taught through immersion. After each group learned the language they did not use it for 5 months and were retested to see how proficient they still were. The study showed that both groups retained the information taught, but “the immersion group displayed the full brain patterns of a native speaker”, said Dr. Ullman, a neuroscientist at Georgetown University (Bhanoo, 2012). This shows that if the key to truly understanding a culture is through their language and language immersion is the key for someone who is learning a foreign language to think like a native speaker, than the key to successful globalization is immersion (studying abroad).

The development of a positive global citizenry reputation for the United States is another positive associated with studying abroad. As Peter Stearns says:

Global efforts in American higher education have two basic purposes: first, to improve the knowledge and skills of American students to function adequately in an increasingly intense global environment. Second, to use the prestige of American higher education to improve the nation’s standing abroad and to forge relationships, both individual and institutional, that provide mutual benefits in this vein (Stearns, 2009, 17).

Not only is it important for our world to come together as one, but it is important for our world to change its thinking in order to do this. This thought process change for the future can only happen with our young minds in university now. It is no secret that the United States has a mixed reputation among the different countries of the world. There are many assumptions and negative

generalizations made about the U.S. and Americans that can be changed and possibly reversed if we, as Americans, begin going out into the world and changing these views ourselves. If enough countries and enough different peoples meet Americans, become friends with them, learn what we really are about and who we are as a peoples then maybe their view of our country will change. Studying abroad can do this. It not only improves the knowledge and skill-sets of our own students but people abroad as well. Breitenbach says that study abroad is “intended to establish friendly relationships between the various nations, to promote mutual understanding between the peoples, and thus contribute to securing world peace” (Breitenbach, 1970, 80).

Another positive is of course the increased personal development and intellectual growth of students studying abroad. Not only are they taking courses and academically learning, but they are also learning a great deal about themselves. Studying abroad teaches students how to live, survive, and thrive in a completely new and different environment. Stearns states that “the claim that study abroad can be a life-changing experience remains valid for enough individual students, arguably, to make the whole effort worthwhile. The finding that, on average, study abroad does broaden horizons, and where relevant improve linguistic capacity, is also important” (Stearns, 2009, 85). A report by the National Survey of Student Engagement done in 2007 shows that study abroad does in fact correlate with higher order thinking and with positives both in education generally speaking as well as personal-social development. This report also shows that students who studied abroad often participated more in activities to advance their education after return and “felt they gained more from college than their peers” (Stearns, 2009, 85). An interview was conducted with Cal Poly’s International Center Director, Dr. Raymond Zeuschner. A portion of that interview regarding why Cal Poly students should study abroad can be found.

Interview: Study Abroad Positives Portion

Q: What does Study Abroad mean to you?

A: I can sum it up really well just in the word: opportunity. It really is an opportunity for students, and for faculty, to really broaden their horizons and actually discover themselves. It allows people to get out of their comfort zones and just experience something new. Our students come from every major on campus...

Q: What are some positives of Studying Abroad?

A: Study abroad enhances the quality of the experience at Cal Poly in terms of its culture, its reputation goes up, students may start coming here more from international places. We have one of the smallest proportions of international students here at Cal Poly among the CSUs because we've made no effort to reach out to them. Cal Poly has, since its founding, had a very state focused mission that we are here to serve the people and the students and the families of California and to go outside of that is to get off of our mission statement. Because of this there is sort of a discouragement of seeking foreign students...but if we really wanted to increase the opportunity of California residents, we would double the amount of international students. We hope that international students will help to diversify the campus which would then foster domestic diversity as well. It's the right thing, we live in a global world, and students here would benefit and learn from international students as well as vice-versa. Not only that but students who do study abroad tend to finish faster than students who don't study abroad because of summer programs offered and the completion of general education courses allowing them to spend more time on major courses during the school year at Cal Poly. Another statistic is that nationally, students who studied abroad finished university with a higher GPA than students who

don't. There are these myths out there that its too expensive and too timely, when in fact it is the opposite. Why isn't everybody studying abroad?

Below are some charts indicating the breakdown of study abroad participation in regards to general participation and participation based on gender. Figure 1.1 shows study abroad participation totals at Cal Poly between 2004 and 2012. Figure 1.2 shows study abroad participation according to gender.

Figure 1.1:

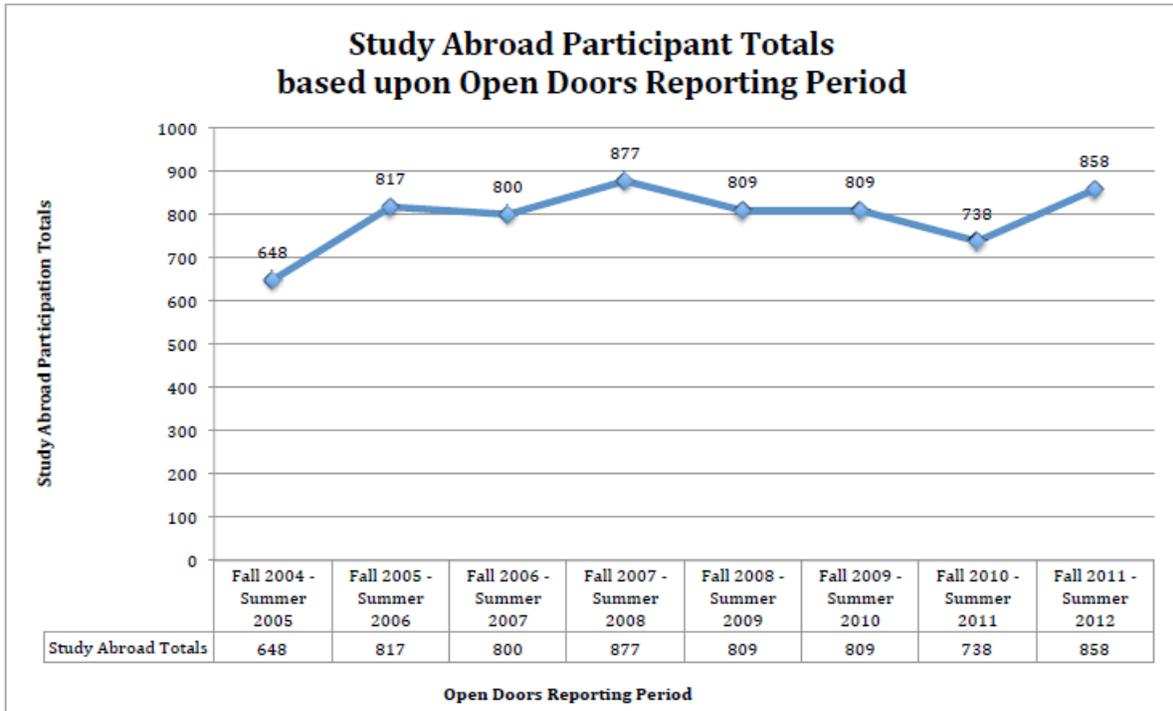
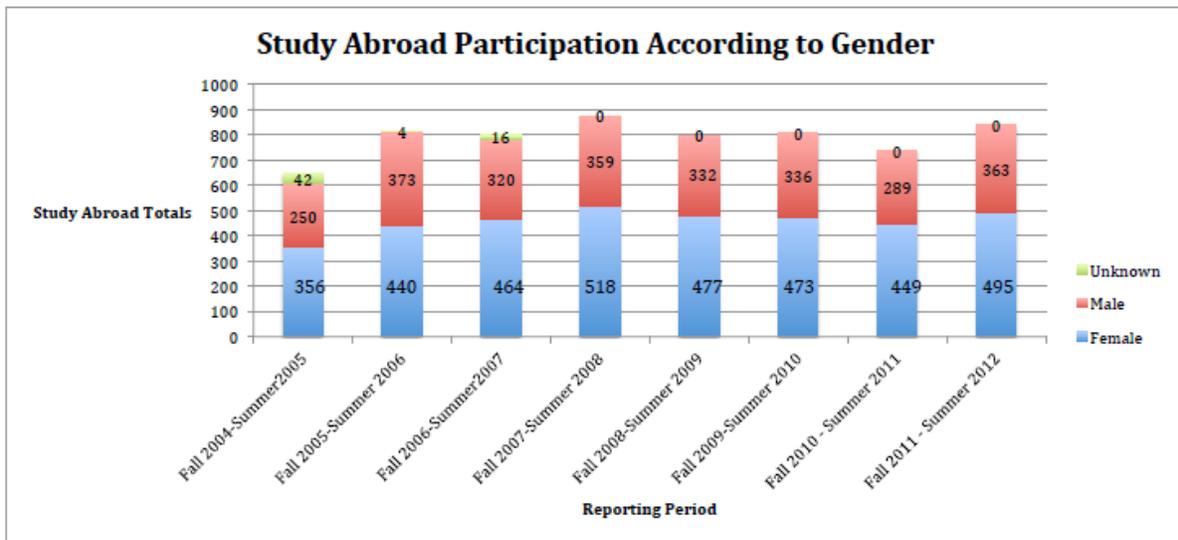


Figure 1.2:



Cal Poly International Center Data

4 How to Study Abroad at CP

Start Early!

- Cal Poly Study Abroad
Mandatory Info. Meeting

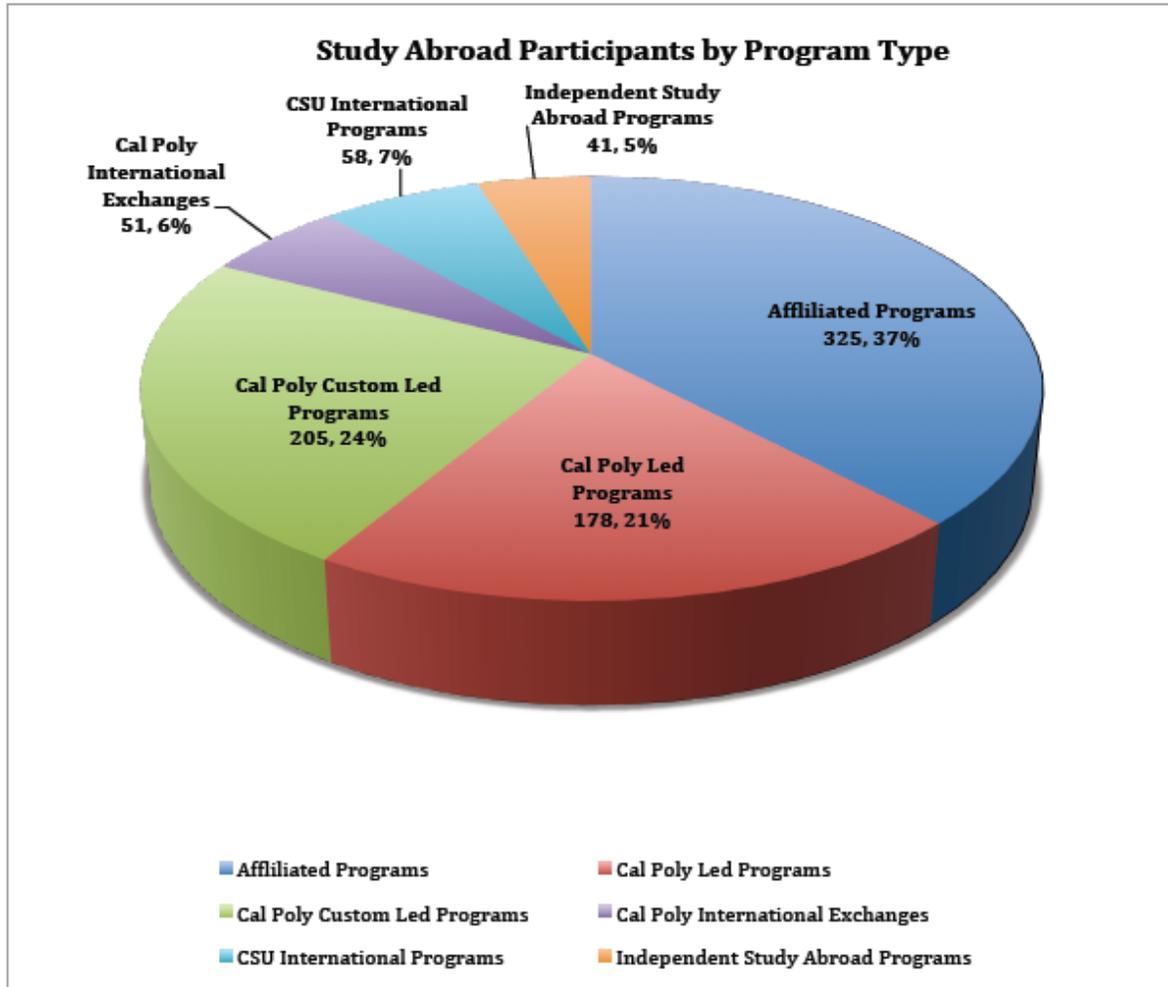
This chapter will focus on planning and preparation; detailing the steps needed to take in order to start your study abroad process. There are many different study abroad programs that Cal Poly offers. When walking past the study abroad office, one can see desks full of different brochures and packets with many different posters hanging from the wall all advertising different programs and different locations. There are six main types of study abroad experiences that Cal Poly offers. These are: Cal Poly-led programs, California State University International Programs, Cal Poly International Exchange Programs, National Student Exchange, Cal Poly Partner Programs, and Non-Affiliated Study Programs. These groups have many different agencies one can choose to work with in order to make their desire to study abroad a reality. We will discuss each type of study abroad program in detail in the following chapters.

Students generally study abroad during their third or fourth year. By this time, many classes have already been taken and credits already been received toward their degree progress. It is hard to work study abroad into schedules if planning does not start happening within their first year. Students should be working studying abroad into their career flow-charts from their first quarter at Cal Poly on. General education classes are encouraged to be saved for study abroad if planning on it. These general education classes are encouraged particularly in the C and D areas. These are the arts and humanities courses as well as society and the individual courses. They are the courses that students are encouraged to save for studying abroad because, generally, most universities abroad will offer forms of them. Once a student has reached their second or third year, they should start researching studying abroad more in-depth.

The first step needed to take when curious about studying abroad is to attend an informational meeting. These are group meetings held throughout the school year regarding study abroad options and how to start planning. Planning is one of the most important steps when choosing to study abroad. After you have attended a general informational meeting and have gotten an idea of what type of program you are looking for and where you are interested in studying, you will meet with a study abroad advisor in the study abroad office (building 38 room 145). Here, you will go over your interests and the programs you are generally interested in. Your advisor will look at your academic progress report and see what classes you have not taken yet. He/she will take your major core classes into consideration as well because certain locations have universities known to be ideal for particular majors. After this discussion has taken place, it is up to you to decide where you want to go, for how long, and with which program. When this decision is made, it is time to start filling out the application and getting all the paperwork completed. Each program has a different application as well as a different preparation process for which we will discuss further. Figure 1.3 shows percentages of Cal Poly students who choose each type of program offered. Figure 1.4 shows the ranking of top study abroad locations for Cal Poly students. Figure 1.5 depicts the percentage of students who choose short-term, mid-term, or long-term study abroad programs (Cal Poly Study Abroad, 2012).

Figure 1.3:

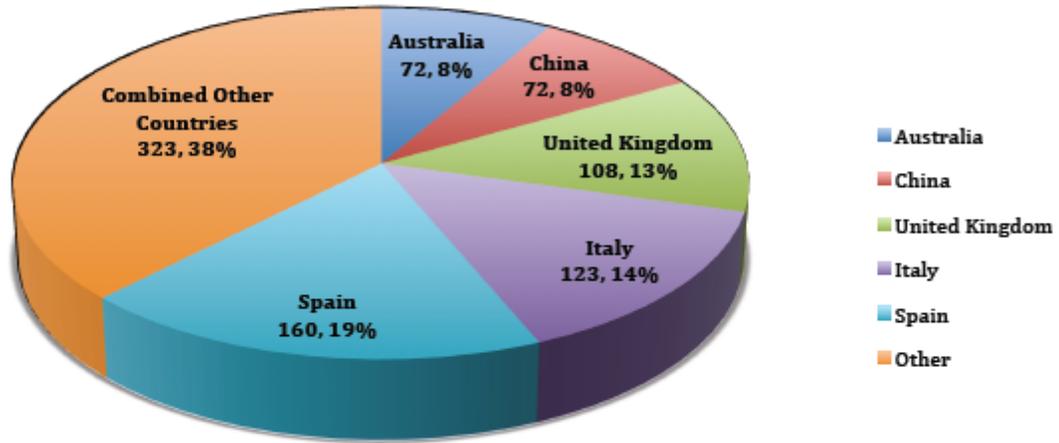
Study Abroad Participation for Reporting Period Fall 2011-Summer 2012



Program Type	Number	Percentage
Affiliated Programs	325	37
Cal Poly Led Programs	178	21
Cal Poly Custom Led Programs	205	24
Cal Poly International Exchanges	51	6
CSU International Programs	58	7
Independent Study Abroad Programs	41	5
Total	858	100

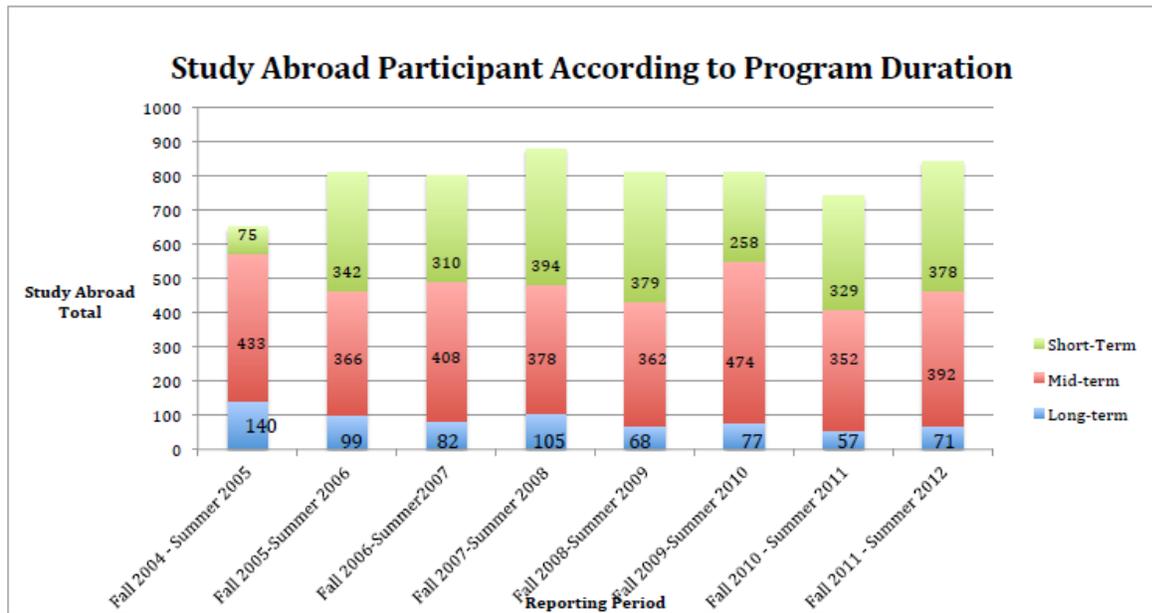
Figure 1.4:

Ranking of Top Study Abroad Destinations



Top 10 Countries	Total	Percentage
Germany	27	3%
Costa Rica	30	3%
Switzerland	31	4%
Thailand	40	5%
Peru	54	6%
Australia	72	8%
China	72	8%
United Kingdom	108	13%
Italy	123	14%
Other	141	38%
<u>Spain</u>	<u>160</u>	<u>19%</u>
Total	858	100%

Figure 1.5:



Duration	Fall 2004 Summer 2005	Fall 2005 Summer 2006	Fall 2006 Summer 2007	Fall 2007 Summer 2008	Fall 2008 Summer 2009	Fall 2009 Summer 2010	Fall 2010 Summer 2011	Fall 2011 Summer 2012
Short-term	75	342	310	394	379	258	329	378
Mid-term	433	366	408	378	362	474	352	392
Long-term	140	99	82	105	68	77	57	71
Total	648	817	800	877	809	809	738	858

Cal Poly International Center Data

5 Cal Poly-led Programs

I didn't have to worry about how classes would transfer. All of them counted.

-Vanessa Rodriguez
Cal Poly-led Spain

Cal Poly-led Programs are the most advertised programs on campus. Flyers and posters can be seen in every building and generally in every classroom. This is because the majority of students who study abroad do so by way of a Cal Poly-led trip, making up 45% (see figure 1.3).

These programs are so popular because students:

Take Cal Poly classes, planned with primarily General Education courses, from Cal Poly professors in fantastic locations on this planet. Experience **Australia** with a program focus on Wine & Viticulture. Experience the art, music, history, and architecture of **London**. Visit the ancient ruins of Machu Picchu in **Peru**. Immerse yourself in the Spanish language, culture and lifestyle in **Spain**. And explore **Thailand** from its historical roots in Chiang Mai to the cosmopolitan capital of Bangkok (Cal Poly Study Abroad, 2012).

The Cal Poly-led programs are so beautiful because they not only provide Cal Poly students with the experience of being abroad, but also give Cal Poly's staff an opportunity to explore as well. Each year professors are chosen to participate in the various locations. It bonds students together with faculty, creating a mini Cal Poly community overseas. These bonds grow fast and strong, and are brought back to Cal Poly's home campus enriching it further. An interview with former Cal Poly student Vanessa Rodriguez shows this.

Interview: Vanessa Rodriguez Cal Poly-led Program Spain

Q: What does Study Abroad mean to you?

A: It means, you're going somewhere you're not familiar with. Usually another country, maybe another state, but it usually means you're planning to go to a new place with a new culture.

You're going for school but also the cultural interaction aspect of it. Learning from the people there.

Q: Why did you choose to do a Cal Poly-led program?

A: Mostly because the other programs are a lot more expensive, almost double the price of Cal Poly's. I also wasn't sure about how the classes of other programs would transfer. With Cal Poly I didn't need to worry about how classes would transfer; all of them counted. I went to Spain so they would count for my Spanish minor. After studying abroad I only had to take one more Spanish class at Cal Poly to get my minor, which was a huge plus.

Q: Would you encourage other people to study abroad?

A: Yes, I definitely would. I would encourage any student who is even slightly thinking about it to go. It's an amazing experience and you learn a lot about yourself and another part of the world that you don't know and aren't used to. People live differently than we do and we need to see that. It's important to experience it and not just read about it. Being in a different country you take yourself out of what you know and grow a lot. I grew a lot in just the one quarter I was in Spain. Just learning about who I was and learning about what I want to do. Now I'm really interested in going abroad and actually working in different countries; studying abroad made that really clear to me. Studying abroad just expands your mind to other mind sets. If you think you have an open mind but have never studied or been abroad, it will get blown away.

Q: Was it hard adjusting?

A: It wasn't hard, it was just new. I didn't have too much culture shock because I already spoke Spanish before going, but the language is still different. Learning Spain slang and sayings was new, even though I speak Spanish I still was learning.

Q: What was the most interesting experience you had while studying abroad?

A: I really loved being able to travel on a mini-field trip. We went to Sicily and it was not touristy at all. I think we saw like one other American group there, so we really got to see the true Italy. We got a little taste of Italian culture and the Italian language.

Q: Do you wish you did a longer program? Or was the quarter length the right amount?

A: I think the quarter was the right amount. But I do wish I had more time to travel. The hardest part was being so close but not having the time to see more places. We only had weekends to really travel.

Q: How was the administration side of this program?

A: I didn't have to do anything when I came back. Everything was already taken care of before we left. All of the faculty that came on our trip were amazing and awesome and on top of things in terms of classes and transferring credits before we went. I think there could be more advertisement. I don't think I would have known about the trip unless I went to the office to ask. I think they could do better with explaining to students what they need to do and how.

Q: What is some advice you have for future study abroad students?

A: Don't be an obnoxious American. Be respectful. Don't go in and expect a place to be a certain way because we are used to our way and going somewhere else is not going to be the

same and it shouldn't. It's not going to be what you expect. Expect to be surprised and go with an open and accepting attitude.

6 CSU International Programs

Going abroad for an entire year is the only way to do it.

- Brian McMahon
CSUIP Spain

This program believes that students should study abroad to enhance their education, build their resume, develop their self-awareness, and to understand another culture. It is California State wide and available to all students attending a California State University. CSUIP is affiliated with over 50 universities in 19 different countries. These countries include: Australia, Canada, Chile, China, Demark, France, Germany, Ghana, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, and the UK. The beauty of this program is that although you are studying outside of the country you still receive resident credit. The Cal Poly Study Abroad Website says:

The goal of IP is to provide international academic opportunities in the framework of a California State University degree program. With a special focus on academic year studies, IP offers participants an array of study options related to specific degree and career objectives. IP is a unique part of the spectrum of study abroad opportunities available through each CSU campus (Cal Poly Study Abroad, 2012).

CSUIP programs are a yearlong and really encourage students to completely immerse themselves in their country of choice. This challenges students to learn in a completely different language by professors that they do not know and are unfamiliar with. This program believes that any time spent abroad that is for less than a year does not give studying abroad justice. A student cannot successfully learn the host language, culture, or immerse themselves in anytime less than a year. “IP gives students the opportunity to develop a deeper understanding of the world and their place within it as well as lifelong interest about the world around them” (Cal Poly Study Abroad, 2012).

The application process is simple, yet time consuming. CSUIP recommends meeting with your IP Campus Coordinator (Monica Schechter) first before beginning the application. The application consists of: the IP Application, 2 faculty recommendations, and transcripts (for certain programs students must submit a foreign language faculty recommendation as well). “Selection is based on academic, linguistic, and personal qualifications, and on the appropriateness of the students' proposed plan of study to their degree objective” (California Statue University International Programs, 2013).

CSUIP is said to be the most affordable study abroad program for California residents. Because students who study abroad with IP are considered to be receiving resident credit, part of the cost is supported by California State taxes. Although cost varies depending on location, financial aid can be used for this program and there are several scholarships that can be applied for such as the IP Scholarship, the Wang Family Scholarship, Japan Scholarships, and the Baden-Württemberg Fellowship Program.

If you are a student who wants to get completely and totally immersed into a culture, someone who wants to return fluent in another language and be able to travel for three months, than this is the program for you. It is challenging yet extremely rewarding. An interview with Cal Poly Senior Brian McMahon was conducted about his experience studying abroad in Spain with CSUIP.

Interview: Brian McMahon CSUIP Spain

Q: What does Study Abroad mean to you?

A: To me, studying abroad means the opportunity to experience something completely new while also getting the opportunity to go to university. You get to be in a new place and are constantly learning wherever you go and whatever you do.

Q: Why did you choose to do the CSUIP program?

A: I chose it because I didn't want to study abroad for just a quarter or just a semester. I figured if I was going to spend my time and money, going abroad for an entire year was the only way to do it. I wanted to really immerse myself in the language and culture of Spain.

Q: Would you encourage other people to study abroad?

A: I would 100% encourage other people to study abroad. Although it is scary and intimidating, and a huge decision to make, I wouldn't have changed it. I learned a lot about myself and I don't think I would have without my study abroad experience. Studying abroad helped me in tons of ways. I would recommend that if other people were even slightly interested in studying abroad that they should do it, but make sure they are prepared and ready for an entire year if choosing CSUIP. There were many people in my program that couldn't make it the whole year and went home early which I think was a huge bummer.

Q: Was it hard adjusting?

A: It was really hard adjusting. We got there and were dropped in the middle of Spain; given 5 days to find our own housing. It was a new language, a new culture, a new city, everything was new. It was exciting and terrifying. I didn't feel completely immersed and comfortable for

probably 5 or 6 months. I would tell people to not be shy and pretend to not be scared. Try to make friends with everybody you meet because that really helped me feel more adjusted once I started making relationships.

Q: What was the most interesting experience you had while studying abroad?

A: I can't say that I had one interesting experience that was the most interesting. Every day was its own interesting and unique adventure. My friends and I would always say that absolutely nothing could surprise us while in Spain because the weirdest things would happen. The experience as a whole has been the most interesting ride of my life.

Q: How was the administration side of this program?

A: This was the part I struggled with the most. I felt like even though I had a study abroad advisor, most of the application process and figuring out what classes to take and what I needed to get pre-approved was up to me to do and figure out. It was honestly really stressful and I felt like I found out about things I needed to do right before they needed to be done. Most of my credits transferred, but some didn't which was annoying and unfortunate.

Q: What is some advice you have for future study abroad students?

A: Enjoy it. Don't be shy and don't be afraid to embarrass yourself. People will laugh at you no matter what, and if you are having a good time and making the most of your experience it will be the best thing you have ever done.

7 Independent Study Abroad

Being able to choose a program that not only gave me great work experience but was so heavily focused on the specific interests.

- Blake Williams
Independent Study
Student

There are thousands upon thousands of study abroad programs and opportunities in the world and Cal Poly only offers a smidgen of them. When thinking about studying abroad, one may find a more suitable or more interesting program for them on their own. There are both some positives and negatives to choosing to study abroad this way.

Don't rush into any program you stumble upon that promises you a virtual vacation with credits attached. Do intensive research about each program you independently find. Cal Poly recommends considering the following items when researching different programs: accreditation, location, courses, language, services provided, housing situation, safety, field-trips, for the program to be with a U.S. group, as well as cost and financial aid.

Only programs with Cal Poly affiliation can use Cal Poly financial aid, and so if this independent route is chosen other means of aid will have to be considered. Also the issue of course credit transfers arises greatly with this option of program. "In order to have the courses considered by Cal Poly for transfer credit the transcript must be issued from a U.S. accredited university, or the overseas university must be recognized by the Ministry of Education in the host country" (CP Guidelines for Non-Affiliated Study Abroad, 2012). It is very important that you seek advising and get all your courses pre-approved before going. If you go before approval, there is a chance that the courses you took may not count toward your degree progress. It is encouraged to take general education or language courses.

After this pre-planning has occurred students need to apply to their independent programs and must complete a Planned Educational Leave form in the Academic Records Office if planning on being absent from Cal Poly's campus for longer than two consecutive quarters. And the final step in completely the process is requesting an official transcript be sent to Cal Poly from your program of choice. Remember this does not mean that all your courses will transfer.

If you are a student that is uninterested or unable to find something within the programs that Cal Poly offers than study abroad independent study is for you. Although it is more planning, more researching, and more work to get your credits to transfer it is worth it in the end if it gets another person to experience studying abroad. Cal Poly graduate, Blake Williams was interviewed about his experience studying abroad independently.

Interview: Blake Williams Independent Study Costa Rica

Q: What does Study Abroad mean to you?

A: The opportunity to travel and live long-term in a foreign country and gain deep insight into their culture, language, customs, and values. It's an opportunity that is readily available to students in this generation and many schools are working to build study abroad programs that cost as much as studying in country. It's a chance to get out of your comfort zone, and live in an environment where everything is novel and new.

Q: What is your definition of "independent study"?

A: Studying outside the context of your home University.

Q: Why did you choose independent study?

A: Because it offered me something that Cal Poly couldn't. Being able to choose a program that not only gave me great work experience but was so heavily focused on the specific interests I had gave me the ability to do and learn things that I never could have learned at Cal Poly

Q: Was it a good experience and why?

A: Yes! Going to Costa Rica was the best part of my entire collegiate career. I was challenged every single day, and was also given deep personal rewards just as often. Every day was something new, and exciting and though it wasn't always easy it was and remains unparalleled in value.

Q: What did you learn from this experience?

A: I learned a foreign language, and so much more about being independent and self-reliant. I developed great leadership skills. I was given many opportunities to work with established professionals in my field of study (social work) and gained so much insight into how to successfully create and establish development programs in developing countries and impoverished communities.

Q: What was your experience like returning back to Cal Poly? Did you feel different? Accepted? Misunderstood?

A: I felt like I had already graduated. My experience might be different than most study abroad returnees because when I was studying abroad I worked full time in the field I was studying and I

was gone for the entire school year, not just the semester. I came back and felt very isolated, and my classes were very uninspiring. I felt like I understand things about the international community that weren't even being addressed in my classes and I felt like my experiences studying abroad weren't appreciated by domestic employers and have not helped me acquire any substantial work domestically. I also suffered severe depression due to the culture shock of returning and trauma I experienced from processing the extreme poverty I lived in daily in Costa Rica. I found myself isolating from friend and community groups at School, and very disconnected both from Costa Rica and from the United States.

Q: What was the process like returning?

A: Most of my credits ended up not being able to be transferred and this was very frustrating to me, but I just had to remain focus on the personal development and accept the fact that it would take an extra year to graduate.

Q: Would you recommend study abroad/independent study?

A: Absolutely. Find the financial means necessary and put yourself up to the task of being a great, ambitious, adventurous study abroad candidate. Go to learn and experience, not to party.

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