



World of Learning

Canadian Post-Secondary Students
and the Study Abroad Experience



THE CANADIAN BUREAU FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

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World of Learning: Canadian Post-Secondary Students and the Study Abroad Experience (également disponible en français)

ISBN: 978-1-894129-67-1

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Cover photo, design & layout: Dan Sokolowski

Printed in Canada on recycled paper

The views expressed in this paper are those of the authors.

World of Learning: Canadian Post-Secondary Students and the Study Abroad Experience

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World of Learning

PREFACE

CBIE developed the *World of Learning* project for two key reasons: to understand why so few post-secondary students in Canada take advantage of their institutional study abroad programs and to identify the ways and means to change the status quo.

The study is important because CBIE firmly believes in the transformational quality of the study abroad experience. It is not just a nice thing to do. It offers the chance for major enhancement to an individual's education, personal and professional development and, ultimately, his or her ability to contribute to making a better world.

It sounds idealistic, but we believe that international study by our students is increasingly a real need. Given the overwhelming global challenges faced by the new generation of students and graduates, a broad worldview, underpinned by direct substantive experience of diverse cultures and alternative concerns, is crucial. Global solutions cannot be found by those whose universe ends in the next town or province.

The findings of this report are both gratifying and troubling.

We are pleased to learn that many education professionals, both staff and faculty members, value study abroad and encourage it. As well, study abroad is valued by the general public – 90% believe that it is valuable and should be available to a broader swath of our student population. Nearly as many believe that financial support should be available so that lack of a relatively small amount of money does not stand in the way of a globalized education for motivated students. Clearly study abroad is not seen by Canadians as an elitist activity, but rather as one that by circumstance is available exclusively to an elite – a situation that needs to be rectified.

Most tellingly, a clear majority of students also appreciate the importance of study abroad and would like to undertake it. But many, though keen at first blush, abandon the option part-way through their study program.

Our report affords insights into the issues and challenges that cause students to opt out, as well as the attitudes and experiences of those who do manage to go abroad – in some cases, against high odds.

Our study's recommendations aim to expand participation from the current derisory level of about 2-3% to at least 15%. We urge institutions and governments to review them carefully and to act on them with urgency.

Canada cannot afford a new generation of graduates whose exposure to the world is confined to the classroom and the media, however in-depth, ubiquitous and helpful these may be.

Karen McBride, President
Canadian Bureau for International Education

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I have been an international educator at heart, in attitude, and scholarship for most of my career as a faculty member and academic administrator. Of the studies with which I have been engaged, *World of Learning* is one of the most ambitious in scope and complexity. A study of this kind could only have been possible through the generous support and thoughtful contributions of many people, some of whom I can identify by name and others, by virtue of their anonymity, can only be recognized by the sector to which they belong. In all cases, partnerships characterize the overall research effort.

First, an intellectual debt is owed to Josef Mestenhauser, Professor Emeritus, University of Minnesota and Barbara Burn, Professor, University of Massachusetts (deceased) whose pioneering work inspired this research. It was with these mentors that I first became seized with the importance of viewing education issues, problems and paradoxes through a student lens. To the 1200+ post-secondary students whose perceptions and experiences with study abroad form the heart of the study, deepest thanks. Your enthusiasm kept the entire research team energized throughout the months of careful and time-consuming analysis.

The inclusion of the Canadian public in this study was a strategic decision, which proved to make significant contributions to the research findings. For their ingenuity, collegiality and diligence, Prairie Research Associates who carried out the telephone interviews and conducted preliminary analysis are credited and thanked. A group of academics and administrators whose work on the study is not directly apparent but whose ideas influenced the scope of the study, its methodology, and access to Canadian employers are the members of the Research Advisory Committee. A special thank you goes out to Paula Brook (University of Alberta), Annick Corbeil (École Polytechnique de Montréal), Sabine Lehr (formerly of University of Victoria), Anne Markey (Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers), Philip Shea (York University), and Catherine Vertesi (Capilano University).

The campus representatives, professional staff and faculty from each of the participating colleges and universities contributed to the verification and contextualization of students' perceptions and experiences with study abroad. Interestingly, while not a criterion for participation, 75% of the focus group and individual interviewees reported having participated in study abroad during their own college or university years – a testament to the lifelong impact study abroad can have on the lives and career choices of post-secondary graduates.

Much appreciation and credit goes to Jennifer Humphries, Vice-President, Membership and Scholarships, and Janine Knight-Grofe, Research Manager, of the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE). For their leadership in launching this study and to their partnership throughout the entire research process, thank you. For their professionalism and patience during the period in which a health issue took me temporarily away from the study, a heartfelt thanks.

Finally, thanks to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), not only for awarding grant funding to CBIE and to the Queen's Research Group through a competitive peer review process, but for the Department's continuing commitment to support of Canadian-based research in the field of internationalization of education.

Sheryl L. Bond, Principal Investigator, on behalf of the entire research team

A report of this scope and substance requires the dedication and commitment of many players. CBIE gratefully acknowledges the financial contribution of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada.

We are deeply indebted to the participating institutions and, in particular, to the international education administrators and faculty members who provided outstanding support in the survey implementation and themselves took part in focus groups and interviews. As in so many of our activities, their professionalism and commitment to international education is to be commended.

Our deepest thanks go to the over 1200 students who completed the comprehensive questionnaire. We hope their contributions will inform the policies needed to make international study opportunities available to far more, even to the vast majority of Canada's post-secondary students, so helping them to develop the skills, knowledge and global-mindedness required in this crucial millennium for our country and the planet.

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1.0: INTRODUCTION

The rapidly increasing interconnectedness of the world has not only brought about a redefinition of what kind of society Canadians want for themselves and their children (Piper, 2003) but what kind of educational programs and opportunities Canadian colleges and universities must be offering students who, as graduates, will need to be internationally knowledgeable and inter-culturally competent within these new realities (Bond, 2007). To that end, the University, with its historical commitment to knowledge generation and its global dissemination, and the College, increasingly influenced by globalization, are seeking to enhance, diversify and rapidly expand the participation of their students in mobility programs.

The institutional vehicle for these mobility-based programs is study abroad. The learning which can be generated through a study abroad experience extends beyond the conventional subject-based content knowledge frequently associated with campus-based courses. Study abroad has the potential to be no less than a transformative experience that alters a student's sense of self and understanding of others in the world. With such far-reaching implications for students, it is reasonable to assume that a majority of students who graduate in the 21st century would begin their studies with the expectation that study abroad would be a core requirement.

However, data released by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC, 2007) show the reality to be far different. Less than 3% of university students graduate having participated in a study abroad program. Such a low participation rate is similar to that reported in studies of US students (see *Open Doors* from the Institute of International Education) but falls significantly behind the participation rates in the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada's other G8 trading partners. Countries other than the US and Canada report participation rates in study abroad programs to be between 18% and 38% (Unesco, OECD).

1.1. Purpose of the study

This study was developed by the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE) and support was provided by the International Academic Mobility Program of Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC). It was overseen by CBIE and conducted on CBIE's behalf by a team of researchers with the Faculty of Education of Queen's University.

The study's purpose is to develop a snapshot of the experience of Canadian post-secondary students' access to and success with study abroad programs offered, for credit or not for credit, by colleges and universities.

Believed to be the first Canadian study of such scope, comprehensiveness and complexity to research the study abroad experience, and one among very few such studies carried out in a Western context (Carlson et.al., 1996), this research has the potential to contribute a strong Canadian voice to the global body of literature. More pragmatically, the research raises social equity questions, the findings of which offer federal and provincial government ministers and education leaders an informed basis for preparing post-secondary students to live and work in a global society and for making this a reality for many more, and more diverse, students.

Three primary questions guided the study:

- 1. Why do some college and university students participate in study abroad programs while others, at the same institutions, do not?**
- 2. Why don't many more and more diverse students participate in the range of study abroad options offered by colleges and universities?**
- 3. What do students learn abroad that they believe they would not likely have learned had they remained on campus during the same period?**

These initial study questions were, in part, drawn from recommendations for new research directions identified by earlier studies. At the same time, other questions were introduced in response to gaps or silences in the literature and which held the most promise of producing results capable of reshaping the ways in which study abroad is understood within the Canadian post-secondary communities of practice. As the study progressed, questions raised by study participants were added to the surveys and interviews. Such an organic process of inquiry is characteristic of qualitative studies (Lincoln & Denzin, 2009), but what was not foreseen was just how data rich and insightful the findings from multiple perspectives would be. The study also benefited greatly from the guidance of an advisory committee comprising study abroad representatives from several institutions, and the executive director of the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE).

1.2 Definition of study abroad

An inclusive approach was taken to defining study abroad, making sure to capture as many different forms and formats as possible. To that end, in this research "study abroad" is understood to include participation in any internationally based program or experience including exchange, clinical placement, field placement, internship, co-op placement, practicum or

Study Abroad includes students' participation in any internationally based program or experience including exchange, clinical placement, field study, internship, co-op placement, practicum or voluntary service/work placement, which are offered by a post-secondary institution, and for which academic credit may or may not be granted.

voluntary service/work placement offered by a post-secondary institution, of varying durations and places, and for which academic credit may or may not be granted. Including such wide-ranging modalities of study abroad is intended to:

- (1) shift the research focus away from the silos produced by individual study modalities,
- (2) broaden student participation such that patterns and themes among modalities may emerge, and
- (3) relocate the dominant lens or perspective to that of students whose grassroots perspective is often overlooked.

Tourist-based programs offered by profit and non-profit businesses, and NGOs which offer service-based programs, are not included in the study's definition or scope.

1.3 Student mobility: the changing context

Study abroad as an individual activity has existed as long as universities themselves. From Erasmus of Rotterdam in the 15th century to the Grand Tours of Europe by the male children of upper-class English families during the 17th through the middle of the 19th century (Brennan, 2004), students have sought learning opportunities not available to them in their home country or region. Individually initiated study abroad at the turn of this century not only continues the age-old tradition, with the forces of globalization privileging those students who are globally mobile, but the number of students, Canadians included, who are arranging their own international sojourns is rapidly increasing.

In terms of institutional recognition of and involvement in students' study abroad, the 1893 International Education Congress in Chicago (Sylvester, 2002) provides insight into the future of formalized international education. At this

event, there were more than 300 senior administrators, approximately 140 papers delivered (the majority from outside the United States) with more than 30 countries represented: overall the Congress stands as one of the first major discussions of the potential of international education.

In the US the first formal study abroad program began in 1923 (Hullihen, 1928) when eight students from the University of Delaware participated in a year-long study program in France. In Canada, the precursors of the current university-sponsored programs originated with the post-war dedication of Lewis Perinbam who was instrumental in setting up the early campus study abroad offices (Bond & Lemasson, 1999). Over the years, Perinbam's visionary efforts grew into what we now know as the Canadian University Service Overseas (CUSO). Whether CUSO offices, initially set up on campuses, were replaced by institutionally funded study abroad offices or not, early CUSO placements were the vanguard of the institutionally sanctioned study abroad programs that continue to this day.

The issue of equity of access to these programs was a public concern from the beginning. In 1959 the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan (CSFP) was established to provide an opportunity for graduate students and researchers to study at universities in the Commonwealth, but public funding was nominal and available to so few that the stereotype of study abroad as only for the privileged elite became difficult to deny. Over ensuing decades, growth in study abroad initiatives was sluggish (Bond & Lemasson, 1999). Moreover, documentation on activities which did occur during this period is scattered and difficult to source.

In Europe, however, important developments were occurring in the late 1980s. The introduction of the 1987 European Region Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students (ERASMUS) brought formal recognition of the importance of study abroad programs to the national level in Europe (Knight, 1999). The primary goals of ERASMUS were to improve the volume and ease of student and faculty mobility in the European Union, and to strengthen relationships between institutions. Soon after the introduction of ERASMUS, the Socrates Program was created which aimed to include non-European Union members in student mobility. More recently the EU has established ERASMUS Mundus which provides opportunities primarily for non-Europeans to study at European universities. These programs are not the only opportunity for students to study abroad in Europe, but their establishment has provided an identity for student mobility and a language in which mobility can be discussed.

Very recently study abroad in the US has received increased attention with the introduction of the Simon Study Abroad Foundation Act, based partially on the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program (NAFSA, 2009). It is a major bill to increase the quality and range of programs and the diversity of students who participate in study abroad. Its primary goals are to send up to one million US students abroad annually within the next ten years and dramatically increase funding to assist students and aid institutions in creating these opportunities.

Canada seems to lack the broad goals and vision of those found in Europe and the US. There are programs targeting specific regions such as the Canada-European Community Program for Co-operation in Higher Education and Training and Program for North American Mobility in Higher Education (HRSDC, 2009). As well, AUCC reports that Canadian institutions engage in more than 3,000 exchange programs worldwide. But no framework or overarching vision is evident.

2.0: WHAT CAN BE LEARNED FROM THE LITERATURE?

Available demographic data gives us a point of departure to understand the current state of study abroad as represented in the literature, which is heavily dominated by the United States, United Kingdom and Australia and which may not accurately reflect the Canadian context or any non-western context, the latter of which is not pursued in this study.

There are two main sources of data for analyzing demographic information in study abroad. In Canada there are surveys from AUCC (Knight, 2000; AUCC, 2007). In the United States, the *Open Doors* survey, published by the Institute of International Education (Bhandari & Chow, 2008) offers a comprehensive annual account of study abroad activity in that country. The AUCC data is not as detailed as the *Open Doors* data but it provides a window to understanding the present state of study abroad in Canada and it allows for some comparisons between Canada and the US. We are not aware of similar data for Canadian college students so the vast majority of studies referenced herein concern university students, unless otherwise indicated.

The most recent AUCC data (2007) estimated that nearly 18,000 Canadian students participated in a study abroad experience in 2006/2007. This data includes all students participating in an international activity for academic credit. These study abroad students represent about 2.2% of the current Canadian university student population which is one percentage point higher than reported in the 2000 study (Knight, 2000). These low participation rates exist despite 93% of Canadian institutions indicating a medium or high desire to promote and support out-of-country experiences for their students (AUCC, 2007).

Recent data from *Open Doors* show that 241,791 US students studied abroad in 2007/08 (Bhandari & Chow, 2008), an increase of 8.5% over the previous year. *Open Doors* states that the total represents 9.4% of the undergraduate degrees granted in 2006/2007. Unlike the Canadian data, the US data include short-term programs – e.g. as brief as a few weeks. In fact, an earlier *Open Doors* (Marcotte, Desroches, & Poupart, 2007) which did not include short-term activity, put the US participation rate at just above 2%.

While the numbers indicate an upward trend in both countries, study abroad remains a modestly utilized opportunity.

Study abroad participation is a set of learning engagements which can occur at any, or several points during a student's program of study. In 2000, of those Canadian students who studied abroad, 62.6% studied abroad in their third year, 21.4% in their second year, 12.9% in their fourth year and 2.7% in their first year (Knight, 2000). The US data indicates a stronger preference for studying abroad in the later two years of a program of study with 37% of those who study abroad doing so in their third year and 21.1% in their fourth year (Bhandari & Chow, 2008). Again it should be noted that the US data include short-term study abroad which can occur between terms or during the summer and could explain some of the divergence between Canadian and US figures.

An area where the data are changing considerably in the US can be seen in the decreasing amounts of time students are spending abroad. In 1996/97, 32.8% of US students participated in the summer term, 40.2% for one semester, 10.7% for an academic year and 3.3% for eight weeks or less. In 2006/07, 38.7% participated for the summer term, 36.3% for a full semester, 4.3% for an academic year and 9.8% for less than eight weeks (Bhandari & Chow, 2008). This change in length of time abroad has spurred some research (Dwyer, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2003) which sought to see if outcomes are affected by the duration of the study abroad period. Dwyer (2004) found that learning outcomes in full-year abroad programs were the most significant but there were some instances where outcomes from a short-term and single-term program were similar. The rise of short-term programs presents a challenge for international education professionals, as the shorter durations account for much of the growth in participation but these programs are also associated with less significant learning outcomes.

2.1 Where do Canadian students go to study?

Though study abroad has been and still is a global phenomenon, the destinations that attract the most students are highly concentrated. In Canada data about the areas of interest, but not the specific countries in which students actually study, are available. The main regions and countries of interest for study abroad students are Western Europe followed by Australia/New Zealand and Mexico. The least popular are Africa, Central/Eastern Europe and the Middle East (Knight, 2000). Unfortunately at the national level there is no more detailed breakdown but in examining some institutional level data these findings are reinforced.

In the United States, the diversity of destinations is increasing but Western Europe is still the destination of choice. Nearly half of all study abroad students from the US were in the UK, Italy, Spain or France in 2006/07 (Bhandari & Chow, 2008). China is the next most popular destination and hosts 4.9% of US students abroad. Though the rank order of the most popular destinations is unchanged from the previous year, study abroad destinations outside Europe are the fastest growing. Ecuador, China, Argentina, India and South Africa all saw the percentage of US students coming to their country increase by more than 20%. Viewing study abroad destinations more broadly, US students' top three destinations in 1996/97 were Europe (64.5%), Latin America (15.3%) and Asia (6.1%). Studies ten years later show the rank order to be relatively unchanged but with a falling interest in going to Europe (57.4%), the interest in Latin America remaining the same (15%), and the only increase showing up in the numbers of students in Asia (10.3%).

It has been argued that study locations in the less popular destinations offer different or more enriching learning opportunities. Wells (2006) suggested that the learning potential is greater in these areas than traditional locations due to the more challenging nature of the environments. But there is concern (Woolf, 2007) that demand for study abroad programs in non-traditional locations might be driven by a desire from politicians and program administrators to have more "exoticism" (p. 504) in their offerings. He worries this might reinforce the notion of "voyeurism" (p. 504) by privileged students observing a developing country. If more ethnically diverse students begin to participate in larger numbers in study abroad programs, it will be interesting to see whether interest in a broader range of country contexts will emerge.

2.2 Does the program of study influence the decision to study abroad?

Just as the destinations for students who study abroad is narrower than might be educationally desirable, the disciplines and fields which are more likely to encourage their students to study abroad also vary. The *Open Doors* survey (Bhandari & Chow, 2008) reports that the Social Sciences account for approximately 21% of students who study abroad, 20% are in Business and Management, 13% in the Humanities, 8% in Fine or Applied Arts, and 7% in each of Physical Sciences and Foreign Languages. Other departments including Education, Health Sciences, Engineering, Math and Computer Sciences account for the remainder. These breakdowns by discipline are relatively unchanged from a decade ago.

Unfortunately, no comparable data for Canada could be found in either of the AUCC surveys or in the Canadian literature. One study (Guest, Livett, & Stone, 2006) which attempted to examine the low participation from science and engineering programs suggested that this was due to the regimented nature of these academic programs and the challenge of finding suitable overseas partners or setting up acceptable programs overseas. Language of instruction may be an issue, but no data exist on this matter. No inferences can be made from the country of destination as to what language a student may be studying in, or if they are taking language courses while in non-English speaking countries.

2.3 Why do students study abroad?

The reasons why students participate in study abroad are less well-known than how many, where and for how long they do. However some data exists on institutional and student goals for study abroad going back 50 years. Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1958) describe institutions' motivations to participate in study abroad programs as being to "promote international understanding, develop friends and supporters of the United States, contribute to the economic, social and/or political development, aid in the education or professional development of outstanding individuals and contribute to general knowledge throughout the world" (p. 369). These findings contrast with motivations offered in the same study by American students participating in a program in France, who said that their reasons for studying abroad were to "gain professional advancement, acquire an understanding of French Culture, become at home with French Language and to have adventure" (p. 369).

In the mid-1980's a large-scale review of study abroad students from the United States, United Kingdom, France, Sweden and the Federal Republic of Germany was commissioned (Carlson, Burn, Useem & Yachimowicz, 1991). This research included 12 American and nearly 30 European universities. Students reported that their primary reasons for studying abroad were to gain a cross-cultural experience, improve foreign language skills, live in/make acquaintances from another country, and travel. Less important to students were improving career prospects, gaining more familiarity with their subject material or establishing ties with one's own family or ethnic heritage. Overall, from a student perspective, cultural reasons exceeded academic reasons for studying abroad.

However, these consistent views of student motivations were challenged in a study of American, French and Chinese study abroad students. It was found that American and French students were primarily motivated by the possibility of a new experience whereas the Chinese student motivations were almost equally explained by

desire to improve social situation, have a new experience, search for travel and search for liberty (Sanchez, Fornerino & Zhang, 2006). Perhaps this can serve as a caution about generalizing motivations from one nationality to another. Student motivations and institutional motivations for study abroad are not always in alignment. Teichler and Steube (1991) published findings that showed “students participating in study abroad programmes have different motives, experiences and successes abroad than those emphasized by the type of programme they are embedded in” (p. 346). In AUCC’s survey (2007), Canadian institutions were asked why they participate in study abroad programs. Institutions responded that developing global citizens (44%) was their top reason for promoting study abroad followed by strengthening international understanding (23%), developing intercultural awareness (11%) and as a means to increase job skills and employability (5%).

Aside from student or motivational rationales for participating, research on factors enabling participation has also been conducted (Kinsella, Bossers and Ferreira, 2008). One study reported that students’ enablers to their participation in a work placement abroad were “external financial support, champions for the concept, international connections and access to communication technology” (p. 79).

2.4 Who participates in study abroad and who does not?

Given that nearly all studies point out that participation in study abroad has the real potential to change students’ lives (Institute for the International Education of Students Abroad, 2009), who then is participating and who is not?

Demographic information about who participates in study abroad is well-documented in the *Open Doors* surveys. In 2006/2007 (Bhandari & Chow, 2008), 65% of participants were female and 35% were male. These figures have remained constant over the past 10 years in the US; Canadian data reported by Knight (2000) echo these findings with 61% female and 39% male. Higher percentages of female participants are found in nearly every study in a 6,000-document database drawn from North America, Europe, and Australia. Attempts to explain the gender gap (Marcum, 2001; Relyea, Cocchiara & Studdard, 2008; McKeown, 2009) have not generated any commonly accepted explanation.

If we accept (as is strongly documented and argued in the literature over decades of research and reports) that a study abroad experience has the potential to offer students

wide-ranging educational, personal and career benefits, shouldn’t the increasingly diverse student population be at least as represented in study abroad as they are in the general student population? One might think that to be a reasonable assumption, but the facts do not bear it out. In 2006/07, 82% of study abroad participants were white, 6.7% Asian, 6% Hispanic/Latino(a) and 3.8% Black or African American (NAFSA, 2007). This data is almost unchanged over the past decade despite the 140% increase in total participation.

In terms of overall university enrolment, white students make up 57.5% of all current students but 82% of students who participate in study abroad. Asian Americans make up 7.3% of students participating in study abroad and are proportionally represented but Hispanic/Latino(a) students are underrepresented at 11.9% of the population versus 6% study abroad participation, and African American students make up 11.3% of the population but only 3.8% of study abroad participants. It has been suggested (IES Abroad, 2009) that students outside of the dominant group do not participate in study abroad. The IES Abroad study offers possible explanations for the continuing underrepresentation of racialized¹ students. Among the possible reasons identified, the following are the top three:

- (1) students do not yet know that a study abroad experience is possible for them because they may not have anyone in their immediate or extended family who has ever participated in study abroad programs;
- (2) students are completely focused on finishing their undergraduate studies on time, with no delays, and assume that study abroad will postpone their graduation; and
- (3) students may never have been told there is a connection between future personal and professional success and the study abroad experience (p. 2).

Targeted study abroad awareness, financial support, institutional support and communication strategies are recommended by the IES to help increase diversity in the study abroad community (IES Abroad, 2009).

The representation of racialized groups in Canada cannot be commented upon because the literature is basically silent on this point.

In 2007, the *Open Doors* survey added a new item to the annual questionnaire in order to seek information about

¹ Racialized is defined here as “categorized or differentiated on the basis of race”. While the term “minority” is still used in the United States and Canadian literature, the Canadian Race Relations Foundation, following the recommendation of the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, promotes the use of the terms “racialized individual or group” instead of “visible minority”. This paper uses the terminology promoted by the CRRF.

students with disabilities who participate in study abroad. The survey reports that 2.6% of students were identified as disabled, though a large number of institutions responding to the survey did not complete this section. This is an important first step in the recognition of the diverse groups that participate in study abroad. However many groups of underrepresented students such as first generation immigrants, economically needy, single-parents, mature students, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) students and First Nations students do not have their participation counted explicitly in the data and thus the challenges of these groups are sparsely reported. No published data exist in the Canadian context to understand just how broad or limited study abroad participation is among various ethnic and other minority groups.

While rates of participation in study abroad are increasing, they remain quite low, especially in North America. Considerable research has attempted to examine what prevents more students from studying abroad. A NAFSA study (2003) focused on general obstacles to study abroad. It found that the most common impediments were financial (40%), academic (22%), health and safety-related (11%), and parents or family (11%). Earlier work on racialized participation in study abroad found that African American students were more likely to report financial concerns as a reason not to study abroad, as well as worries about second language skills, than white students (Hembroff & Rusz, 1993).

In Canada, similar responses were found. Lack of funds or financial support was the most commonly cited barrier (69%), as well as no perceived benefits (9%) and low awareness and commitment of faculty (7%; AUCC, 2007). Financial concerns continue to dominate the responses to these questions about barriers, though Canadian universities report an increase in funding for study abroad, up from 63% of institutions offering some funding in 2000 to 81% in 2007. Funding issues have been found to influence the decision of whether to participate or not for groups such as single parents, mature students, and first generation students (IES Abroad, 2009).

A study on factors affecting participation in international practicum opportunities reinforced the AUCC findings. Students on international nursing placements reported that the major challenges in going abroad were finances, availability and timing of placements, and procedural complexity (Kinsella, Bossers and Ferreira, 2008).

2.5 What do students learn while studying abroad?

Vandeberg (2007) noted that the number of studies looking at various components, perspectives, and questions arising from post-secondary participation in study abroad was rapidly increasing. Fewer than 200 articles on the topic were published in the 1970s; compared to over 675 in the 1990s and more than 300 up to 2004. Possibly the first research paper discussing outcomes from study abroad came from Hullihen (1928) in his report on the University of Delaware program in Paris. He noted that students who had participated reported it a success and were enthusiastic about the potential of the year abroad. Feedback from students indicated that after their year in Paris they had broadened their interests, worked harder, made more progress on their subject, become more independent and changed their attitude towards education. Hullihen also reported that students referred to the knowledge they gained of France, French culture and the language.

The International Committee for the Study of Educational Exchange commissioned a study to determine the impact of exchanges and the degree to which relevant goals are realized (Klineberg & Hull, 1979). The study was launched in 1976 and included students from and studying in 11 different countries (n = 2536). The study found increased levels of intellectual development, personal development, independence and self-confidence associated with the study abroad experience but with varying degrees of significance depending on the country of origin and destination.

Another major research project, the Study Abroad Evaluation Project (SAEP) was launched in 1982 (Carlson, Burn, Useem & Yachimowicz, 1991). The authors acknowledged that much of the existing literature was not “systematic and few investigations have employed longitudinal, quasi-experimental designs” (p. xvii). This project sought to understand what difference study abroad made to students in their undergraduate careers and later lives. The project included 30 European institutions, 12 American schools and nearly 1,000 students. The study found that students made significant improvements in second language skills, that less frequent interaction with home culture students correlated positively with international learning and integration, and that students developed more knowledge of other countries and a deepening understanding and concern for international issues. This study also found that career factors were important in choosing to study abroad and that students considered study abroad essential to their development. The authors do caution that there was not a procedure that could be utilized to summarize potential future effects of students’ experiences abroad. These results involved American and Western European students and should not

be generalized to a broader study abroad population, as differences in students and program characteristics can be significant.

Two additional areas of outcomes assessment most broadly researched are second language gains and the development of intercultural skills. Early work on language acquisition from study abroad by Carroll (1967), showed that students who spent time abroad, and more time was better, achieved higher development in second language skills. In the late 1990s a major research project called the European Language Proficiency Study (Coleman, 1998) found significant correlations for students studying in four different European Languages between their proficiency levels and the total time spent in second language countries; the number of visits also correlated. Interestingly, a recent study by Freed, Segalowitz & Dewey (2004) compared students who study languages on a regular class schedule at home, those who study at home in an intensive format, and those who study language abroad. They found that gains in oral proficiency were most significant in the at-home intensive group, followed by the study abroad, and then the regular class group. They also found that writing in a second language outside of class had a significant link to oral language development.

Gains in cross-cultural development have been widely researched as well. Based on data from the SAEP project, Teichler and Streube (1991) found that students participating in study abroad improved their knowledge of the host country substantively and that students expected and reported corresponding improvement in cultural enrichment. Kitsantas (2004) found that compared to their pre-departure levels, study abroad students reported enhanced cross-cultural skills and global understanding, and that they felt better prepared to work in a multicultural environment. Cross-cultural development, awareness, and personal development in business students were all found to have increased significantly while studying abroad in the United Kingdom (Black & Duhon, 2006). Other studies found increased awareness of home culture and self (Dolby, 2004), values development (Lindsey, 2005) and intercultural communication skills (Williams, 2005) over the course of the study abroad period.

Dedicated research into the outcomes from study abroad associated with colleges is growing as well. A few publications have noted the overall growth in participation of college students in study abroad (Blum, 2006), the assessment tools used to examine their own study abroad programs (Gillespie, 2002), and the effect on recruitment and retention (Lozado, 2008) that study abroad has at the college level. The examination of study abroad programs

offered by the college sector is a growing field of inquiry that is probing issues both similar to and different from those of interest to the universities.

2.6 What is the impact of study abroad on career choice?

A relatively new area of research which is attracting the attention of scholars and policy makers alike is the impact of study abroad on career choice. Global worldview (AUCC 2002, in Marcotte, Desroches, & Poupart, 2006) and the capacity to work in international contexts are increasingly seen to be important skills for graduates, though this may be more so in some disciplines than in others. Dwyer (2004), however, using a sample of more than 3,700 students who participated in international programs over the past 50 years noted that students who undertook full-year programs were more likely to have engaged in international work, pursued an international career direction, or worked for a multinational company than students who participated in a short-term program.

Orahood, Kruze and Peterson (2004) noted that only 10% of institutions in the US examine these outcomes as part of their ongoing assessment. A survey of human resource managers noted that interpersonal skills were the most important for a potential candidate (Doorbar, 2003) and that students who studied abroad are more likely to have these skills. Curran (2007) made a similar link between the skills that employers are seeking and the gains that are most often associated with study abroad. Orahood et al. (2004) also found that business students who studied abroad were more interested in international positions than those who did not: 82% of students were interested in working abroad while only 51% of non-study abroad participants indicated a desire to work abroad. However, within this same group of students, only 20% actively promoted discussion of their international experience upon their return.

Despite this growing body of research on outcomes it cannot be assumed that gains from study abroad are uniform for all participants. Destination, language of study, duration of study abroad, as well as student motivation and personal characteristics can influence the degree to which the cognitive processes cited above are realized. The abundance of demographic data and research from US study abroad participants has contributed to understanding the field. But the lack of similar data and research in Canada, along with a relatively small research base of underrepresented students in study abroad globally, suggest that further research is required.

3.0: METHODOLOGY

With less than 3% of Canadian post-secondary students participating in study abroad programs in Canada, it would appear that the majority of students (and their institutions) do not find the learning experience to be meaningful to their studies, careers, and lives as Canadians. If there was such recognition, access to the study abroad experience would not only be widely demanded by students but offered by colleges and universities, moving the position of study abroad from the margins to the core of programs of study on the basis that what study abroad offers is key to what it means to be an educated graduate. It is clear that the study abroad status quo is not able to produce the kinds and magnitude of shifts in perspective, meaning and resourcing required by Canada, and that are already available to post-secondary students in many other countries. Contesting the status quo opens the possibility that systemic inequity and structural hegemony (Dolby, 2008; Perdreau, 2008) are active and operating in ways that keep the numbers and diversity of student participants in study abroad artificially low.

3.1 Data collection

Given the complexity of the phenomena studied, the use of multiple research methods was required. To develop a useful snapshot of who participates in study abroad, who does not, and why, required that some questions be structured in such a way that numerical responses (how much and how many) could capture the meaning. On the other hand, questions that ask students to think about why something happens require more reflection and explanatory power that is not predetermined by the researcher(s) who designed the question. Both types of data (quantitative and qualitative) are interrelated, giving the study scope and depth. Triangulating data from multiple sources, as was done in this study, is a “strategy that adds rigor, breadth, and depth to any investigation” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 4).

This section of the report describes (1) the steps taken to gather the data, (2) the post-secondary colleges and universities that participated in the study, (3) the instruments and approaches to data collection used, and (4) the demographic profiles of each of the study’s participant groups.

Student Survey (web-based): The 35-item survey drew on the relevant research findings and recommendations as reported in academic journals and at professional conferences, with most questions using a combination of fixed choice and open response prompt. The particular section of the survey directed to those student participants

who had completed a study abroad experience drew on the work of Barbara Burn (1991, 1996) whose widely respected research, carried out in the United States, investigated student-centered factors that prevented university students from participating in study abroad programs.

The on-line survey was accessible to students at the participating institutions, using the study’s access code, for a one-month period (March-April 2009) with completed surveys posted to a secure server made available by Queen’s University. A total of 1,267 useable surveys were submitted.

Public Opinion Poll: A ten-item survey was carried out in collaboration with Prairie Research Associates (PRA). The survey questions were included in a national Omnibus Project poll that was carried out in autumn 2008. A total of 1,000 members of the Canadian general public participated in the research survey by telephone.

Employer Survey (web-based): A ten-item survey, with half of the questions inviting open responses, was posted on a secure server made available by Queen’s University. An announcement describing the study and inviting employer participation was distributed by the executive director of the Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers (CACEE) to the organization’s 150 employer members.

Individual Interviews: Carried out on campus and by telephone, individual interviews played an important role in the overall data collection strategy. Lasting about 90 minutes, the data collected during the semi-structured interview was used to help triangulate the study’s findings. The interview was intended to generate a more in-depth understanding of the study abroad experience as witnessed or experienced by professionals in the education community who develop policy or programs in study abroad, or teach courses which feature a study abroad component.

In reporting the findings of interviews, to protect the identity of participants, contributions are identified by a letter and a number. The letter indicates which group of

This study was reviewed by the General Research Ethics Boards of each of the participating institutions. Letters of ethical clearance are available upon request.

PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS

Fanshawe College

Grant MacEwan College
(now University)

Université Laval

University of Regina

St. Lawrence College

Saint Mary's University

Thompson Rivers University

York University

3.2 Study participants: access and profiles

Nearly 2,500 people (students, faculty, professional staff of colleges and universities, employers, and the general public), and eight colleges and universities from across Canada (Alberta, British Columbia, Nova Scotia, Ontario and Québec) participated in the study. Although a wide range of stakeholder perspectives are gathered for this study, it is the experience of the post-secondary student that is the focus of this study; data collected from the Canadian public and employers, faculty and professional staff is used to amplify the themes identified by student participants. In this section, the in-depth description of the study's participants will involve: (1) describing how participants were identified and invited to participate in the study, and (2) presenting the demographic characteristics of each group.

Access to Students: A letter announcing the study was sent by CBIE's president to heads of each of CBIE's post-secondary member institutions. The heads who received this letter decided whether or not to include their institution in the research. A total of 14 presidents and rectors originally responded to the CBIE invitation, but only eight were able to identify a campus representative to facilitate local arrangements for interviews; secure ethical clearance from their Research Ethics Board; and broadly distribute the student survey within the research period. Students, faculty, and professional staff from the following post-secondary institutions were therefore invited to participate in the study: Fanshawe College, Grant MacEwan College (now University), Université Laval, University of Regina, St. Lawrence College, Saint Mary's University, Thompson Rivers University and York University.

Student profile: The main research instrument used to reach students was an on-line survey. It was in the interest of the study to include as many students and as diverse a student population as possible, so the study's URL and access code needed to complete an on-line survey were released to all students registered at one of the participating post-secondary institutions. Table 1 describes the student participants by a range of demographic factors, each of which has been found to influence participation in study abroad.

Note: In the following tables percentages do not always add up to 100% due to rounding

participants is reporting, such as s=students, p=public opinion, f=faculty and ps=professional staff, then a number is associated with the letter indicating which specific participant made the contribution. Contributions not associated with any one participant are reported as group responses.

Focus Group Interviews: Each campus representative was requested to identify up to ten faculty members, department heads, program coordinators, deans and students who are publicly known to be or to have recently been associated with study abroad programs. With written permission to share contact information, every effort was made to contact each person on the list to participate in a focus group interview. Depending on the local interest of faculty and staff, some institutions mounted a single focus group while others held several. Each focus group lasted about 60 minutes and was digitally recorded by the researcher. While confidentiality could not be ensured, steps were taken to make sure that participants in the focus group, many of whom knew each other as colleagues, understood the importance of privacy and confidentiality of the discussion. Pseudonyms are used anytime individual data is presented in this report.

Document Analysis: Public documents including mission statements, strategic plans, study abroad policies and program information were collected on each campus where focus groups and individual interviews took place. These documents present a general account of the priority assigned to study abroad in the overall institutional mandate – or the lack thereof – and provide a compilation of study abroad programs offered by participating institutions.

Table 1: General student profile	
Demographic Characteristics of Students	(n=1,237)
Student Status	
Full-time	85%
Part-time	8%
Gender	
Female	69%
Male	27%
Program Status	
Undergraduate	87%
Graduate	7%
Post Graduate Certificate	2%
Diploma	2%
Advanced Diploma	2%
First Half of Academic Program	46%
Second Half of Academic Program	45%
Dependents	
0	91%
1	6%
3	3%
Self-identification: Disability²	
No	89 %
Yes	7%
Self-identification: Ethnic Affiliation	
Yes	21%
No	74%
Total	1237

Students attending both colleges and universities participated in the study. While Table 1 provides a general overview of the student population, Figure 1 shows the relationship between the numbers of student participants from the college and the university sectors.

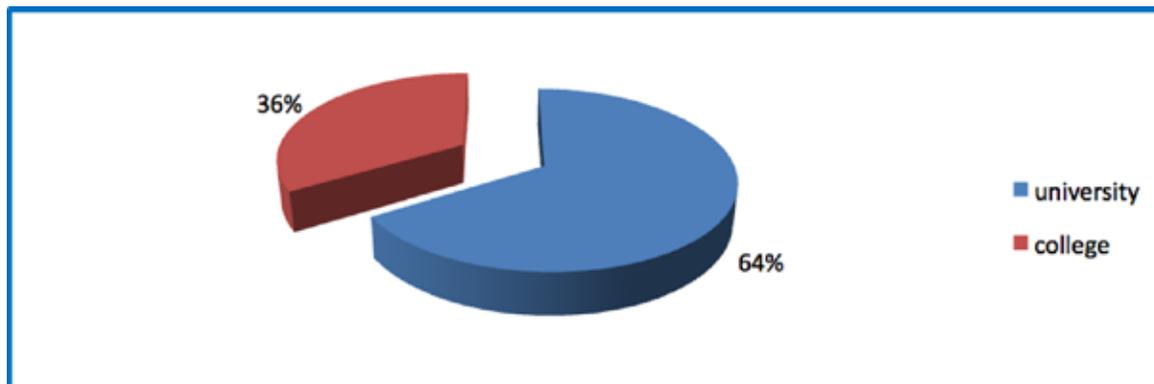
Given that the university to college student ratio is two to one, survey responses were weighted to provide an accurate representation of difference between the two populations that could be attributed to institutional difference and not sample size.

As was noted in the introduction to the report, colleges and universities, albeit to varying degrees among the institutions, claim different histories, missions, programs, and loyalties. It is not surprising then to suggest that study abroad experiences would likely manifest themselves differently on multiple levels in each of the two post-secondary contexts. In disaggregating the student profile by college/university, some of the meaningful ways in which the students' demographic characteristics are similar or different become clear. For example, while the percentage of female to male students in the two sub-populations is quite similar, when looking at the data on diversity, colleges report offering a more diverse range and type of educational programs but the university is shown to have more diverse students on the basis of ethnicity, ability/disability than do the colleges.

The implications of the profiles shown in Table 2 are discussed in Section 4.

Access to Faculty and Professional staff: To identify the faculty and professional staff, at five of the eight participating colleges and universities, who have a demonstrated interest in or teaching responsibilities for study abroad, the campus representatives sought volunteers from among the academic community who are known to their colleagues to have this experience and expertise. All those whose names were forwarded to the researchers received an invitation to participate. Based on their availability at the time of the scheduled on-campus

Figure 1: Student participation by college/university



² According to the Ontario Human Rights Code, disability covers a broad range and degree of conditions, some visible and others not. A disability may have been present from birth, caused by accident or illness or developed over time. The term includes physical, mental, and learning disabilities, mental disorders, hearing or vision disabilities, epilepsy, drug and alcohol dependencies, environmental sensitivities as well as other conditions. *Principles and Procedures: Accommodating employers with disabilities*, Queen's university accessibility committee, July 1, 2009

Table 2: Characteristics of student participants by college/university

Student Status	College	University
Full-time	88%	95%
Part-time	12%	5%
Gender	College	University
Female	72%	73%
Male	28%	27%
Program Status		
Undergraduate	23%	60%
Graduate	1%	3%
Post Graduate Certificate	5%	0%
Diploma	4%	0%
Advanced Diploma	3%	0%
Other	4%	0%
First Half of Academic Program	53%	43%
Second Half of Academic Program	39%	52%
Self-identification: Disability³		
No	91%	94%
Yes	9%	6%
Self-identification: Ethnic Affiliation		
Yes	13%	28%
No	87%	72%
Total		n=1237

interviews, the actual number of volunteers far exceeded expectations, running from a high of 25 people on some campuses to a low of ten participants on others, with the variance in large part due to scheduling conflicts. The focus group interview lasted 90 minutes and the individual interviews ran up to 60 minutes.

Faculty and professional staff profile: By the end of the study over 120 faculty and professional staff had participated in the interviews at five of the eight participating colleges and universities. Two characteristics of the faculty and staff are singled out here for closer scrutiny, gender and affiliation with a particular field or discipline.

o Gender:

While women are over-represented (72%) in the study's faculty population, compared to their total numbers in the full-time academic population (32%), the two to one ratio with women significantly more likely to participate in the study than men is a statistic that has been reported in earlier studies also carried out in the Canadian context (Bond et.al, 2006; Bond, Timmons & Descroches, 2009). Why so many more women than men participate and take an active role in international education and research, or, asked differently, why men do not participate in the same magnitude, has been examined in the literature but without reaching any demonstrable explanation.

o Disciplinary Affiliation:

At several points during the on-campus interviews, participants pointed out that faculty affiliated with certain disciplines or fields of study were likelier to encourage students and/or to participate themselves in study abroad. For example, faculty members in Nursing were perceived to be much more engaged in study abroad over a lengthy period of time than were faculty members in other disciplines. On the other hand, faculty members in fields which one might think would have a natural international link, such as Culinary Arts, were not. The data presented in Table 3 identify the range of fields and disciplines represented by the faculty (and staff) who participated in on-campus interviews. While looking at this particular table, it is important to point out that some academic fields/disciplines were more heavily represented in the various interviews than others; this fact is not made clear in the table. With the exception of the over-representation of some fields, the representation of academic units across the college and university was quite broad, with volunteers representing the arts, applied sciences, fine arts, humanities, professional schools, social sciences, sciences, as well as a wide range of technical and service fields. If it is possible to extrapolate from this finding, then faculty interest in study abroad does not necessarily cluster around certain fields associated with international issues, such as Development Studies. The data also makes it clear that interest in study abroad is not a proprietary interest of professional schools, as some of the interview participants originally thought.

Access to Canadian employers: To access employers on a national scale, CACEE agreed to distribute a brief on-line survey to its members. Response was minimal despite several reminders. It is not possible to understand the lack of response, although it is possible that study abroad as a theme did not resonate with employers. Given the weak response, data generated is used with caution and not intended to represent either the opinions of the CACEE membership or Canadian employers at-large. The findings are used to augment or clarify the data generated by other participant groups, particularly the other group that is external to the post-secondary sector, the Canadian public.

Employer profile: An obstacle to student participation in study abroad programs – widely reported in the public media as well as in scholarly papers – is the belief that (1) study abroad is “not needed” to get a job in a field related to the student’s program of study, and that (2) employers do not value what students may learn from participating in study abroad programs.

While the total number of respondents was less than desired, the range in diversity of sectors, locations, and roles represented by the 17 employer participants offers useful insights into what is valued by employers, why, and to what effect on hiring graduates. Table 4 shows the

Table 3: Profile of faculty & staff participants		
Disciplinary Affiliation		(n=124)
Gender		
Women		75%
Men		25%
Fields Represented		
Biology	German	
Business	Health	
Chemistry	History	
Culinary Arts	Journalism	
Design	Law	
Economics	Medicine	
Education	Modern Languages	
English	Natural Resources	
Engineering	Philosophy	
English as a Second Language	Political Science	
Fine Arts	Psychology	
Geology	Social Work	
Geography	Tourism & Recreation	

demographic profile of the employers who participated in this study.

Canadian public profile: A public opinion poll contributed important contextual information about the extent to which the general Canadian public was informed about and receptive to study abroad as an important component of post-secondary education. To create a good representation of the adult Canadian population, a total of 1,000 members of the general public were contacted on the basis of information generated by a database of published Canadian telephone numbers, almost 9 million records nation-wide. By randomizing the final digits of the telephone number and the inclusion of unlisted numbers, a database was compiled that ensured full coverage of Canadian households and an equal opportunity of being selected for an interview. Quotas were set for each region of the country with special attention paid to Canada's three largest markets: Montréal, Toronto and Vancouver. However, the sample slightly under-represents British Columbia and over-represents Atlantic Canada. These differences do not appear to have a significant impact on

the overall results. Appropriate sampling methods were followed to ensure equal numbers of men and women with the only qualification for participation based on being 18 years of age or older.

Table 5 presents the demographic profile of those who participated in the public opinion poll, after weighting. About half of the respondents reported having at least some post-secondary education and about 1 in 3 reported having at least one non-adult child in their household who is 17 years of age or younger. About six in ten reported that English is the first (and only) language they learned and still speak. About 1 respondent in 4 reports s/he first learned, and still speaks, French. About 1 in 7 reports they first learned and still speak a language other than English or French.

Canadians who took part in the national public opinion poll were asked if they or anyone in their immediate family had ever studied at a post-secondary institution in another country, even for only a few weeks or months. It was explained that such study could include anything from an exchange program lasting a few weeks or months to completing a degree in another country. Those who reported studying abroad also reported that they have at least some post-secondary education themselves, speak a language other than English or French, and come from a household having an income of \$80,000 or more.

It is not surprising that those with at least some post-secondary education are also more likely than others to report that they or someone in their family had studied abroad, since the type of study abroad refers to a post-secondary institution in another country. It was also not surprising that those who report that the first language they learned and can still speak is something other than English or French are also more likely to have studied abroad. The members of the group who have studied abroad are likely to include many first generation Canadians who were educated abroad before coming to Canada. Finally, it is understandable that participants from households with a family income of \$80,000 or more report studying abroad. The lack of financial resources was identified in the general literature review as one of the primary reasons reported by students as why they did

Table 4: Profile of employers		
Role/Position	Sectors	Province/Canada-wide
Human Resource Personnel (with direct and indirect policy roles)	Banks	Canada-Wide
Owner(s)	Distributor/Wholesaler	Alberta
Self-employed	Manufacturing	British Columbia
	Marketing	Ontario
	Oil & Gas	Québec
	Utilities	

Demographic	(n=1,000)
Age	
18 to 24	9%
25 to 39	25%
40 to 64	47%
65+	19%
Gender	
Female	53%
Male	47%
Region	
Atlantic Canada	9%
Quebec	24%
Ontario	40%
Prairies	9%
Alberta	10%
British Columbia	8%
Education	
Less than high school	14%
High school	29%
Post-secondary	54%
Income	
Under \$40,000	25%
\$40,000 to 60,000	19%
\$60,000 to \$80,000	11%
Over \$80,000	24%
Household Composition	
Children under 18	33%
No children under 18	66%
First Language Spoken	
English	62%
French	24%
Other	15%
Total	998

not participate in a study abroad program. Further results of the Public Opinion Poll are presented in Section 4.

3.3 Participants' overall study abroad profile

Before analyzing and interpreting the data generated by the range of instruments and interviews, it was important to know just how many of the study's participants (employers, faculty, public, and students) had themselves participated in a study abroad program. Earlier studies have consistently shown that those who

have participated in study abroad report more positive assessments of the experience than do those people who have never participated. The data presented in Table 6 show the percentage of the public and the study's other participant groups who have studied abroad. Depending on the size of this sub-population, analyses of variance can be run and a range of questions, based in the study abroad experience, can be explored.

Educational Experiences Abroad: What students learn outside of the formal school experience that is documented

One out of five public participants reported they or a member of their immediate family had studied abroad.

on a secondary school or Cégep transcript is ignored by colleges and universities once the student is admitted to their programs of study. In the case of study abroad, the mistaken assumption is that a first-year student has not had much if any international experience. Too few people make the alternative assumption. Studies carried out in different countries that focus on program evaluation of study abroad also commonly assume that post-secondary students enter their programs of study without prior international education experience.

This practice creates problems that appear when colleges and universities set targets for student participation in study abroad. For example, identifying the target goals for participation at a 30% level, many post-secondary institutions fail to find out what percentage of their incoming students have met the target before starting their higher education studies.

Institutional studies and strategic planning reviews often overlook the mounting evidence (Bond, Brathwaite-Sturgeon, 2005; Hayle, 2007) that post-secondary students actually begin their studies having already had important international education experience. The findings presented in Table 7 show just how active the study's student participants have been prior to and during post-secondary studies.

While these findings show that the majority of college and university students have never studied abroad or traveled

STATUS	STUDENTS	FACULTY/ STAFF	EMPLOYER	PUBLIC
I have never studied abroad	85%	35%	85%	80%
I have studied abroad	15%	65%	15%	20%

abroad for educational purposes, university students are significantly more likely to have studied abroad than their college peers. Such a finding is not totally surprising given the history and mandate of each type of institution. What is worth noting is that the findings of this study, with its relatively large number of participants nationally, supports earlier findings of much smaller, institutional case studies, which were the first to report the growing incidence of other sectors offering study abroad opportunities for Canadian youth, including some for profit. While there has yet to be a comprehensive Canadian study on the involvement of the private and not-for-profit sector in offering international study programs, the growing interest of Canadian youth in global engagement, whether it is offered by post-secondary institutions or not, is an established fact and a growing trend.

While the scope of the current research does not include international programs offered outside colleges and universities, such as service-based international (travel) programs, the student on-line survey presented a research opportunity to glimpse how active post-secondary students are in living or working abroad. When asked if they had taken part in an international educational program of some nature, 15% of the population responded in the affirmative. This is the same level of participation as students who, during K-12 plus during post-secondary, reported having studied abroad through their school. Whether due to good marketing or because students seize on international study and travel opportunities which pique their interest, or a combination of both, the data make it clear that colleges and universities do not hold a monopoly on learning-based programs in which students of varying age engage.

The data show that many students enter their post-secondary education with much more international education experience than is recognized, or valued, by many colleges or universities. Noting this trend in the data arising in the early analyses, a supplemental question was added to the remaining focus group interviews that probed whether or not and the degree to which prior international learning was recognized, for credit or not, by individual faculty members or by the post-secondary

Scattered evidence was found to suggest that at least a few (and possibly more) student participants, who were born and educated in another country before immigrating and becoming Canadian citizens, may have reported these early experiences as an example of their participation in studies abroad. If that is the case, it is possible that the percent of students in the study reporting having studied abroad (15%) may be lower than reported.

institutions in which the students are enrolled. The faculty and staff at only one of the eight participating institutions indicated by consensus that their institution paid attention to such prior international experiences, particularly at the level of course curriculum and assignments. A few additional faculty participants noted that it was “up to the individual [teacher] to recognize prior international experience” (F27) and that “no one had ever asked them [or their peers] if such recognition was given” (F24). It appears quite possible that more faculty members across the participating institutions value prior international learning, but that such information is not collected or maintained.

3.4 Data analysis

The approaches used in the analysis of the data varied depending on the purpose of the question and the parameters of response provided the respondent. For example, if the purpose of a question or set of questions was to find out “how many or how much”, then the approach used in the analysis was quantitative such as cross tabs and frequency tables that provide important descriptive data, and analysis of variance which enables the identification of independent

Questions	College Students	University Students
"I have never studied abroad"	81%	66%
"I have gone abroad for educational purposes"	11%	18%
"I have studied abroad during K-12"	4%	6%
"I have studied abroad during post-secondary studies"	3%	13%
Total	100%	100%

(based on the total number of students responding to these questions)

variables that produce significant variance among the students responses. On the other hand, if the purpose of the question or set of questions was to gain insight into how the students understand their world, then the question itself was structured as an open-ended prompt that used qualitative methods of analysis such as the identification of patterns and themes. By using multiple methods of data generation and analysis, the study is able to build on multiple perspectives to gain a more complex understanding of the research questions.

3.5 Clarifications and limitations

To avert possible misunderstanding about some aspects of the research, the following clarifications and limitations are offered.

First, the various types of study abroad programs or opportunities offered by the participating colleges and universities are, for the purpose of this study, considered as a whole and not examined separately. The goal is to produce a rich overall understanding of students experiences and perceptions with learning in international contexts. There is no intent to carry out an evaluation of programs by type, even though the study abroad literature shows that what students' learn, and to what extent, varies based on factors such as the length of time abroad and the extent of immersion with host nationals.

Second, the research does not present highlights of the range of the study abroad programs offered by each of the participating colleges and universities, nor is the degree of success in attracting students to study abroad measured or reported individually.

Third, while the eight colleges and universities made the student survey available to all registered students, and submitted copies of institutional documents and policies, only five colleges and universities were included in focus group interviews. All eight institutions had volunteered to participate in these on campus interviews, but the research period was too short to include all eight. Any concern that new information might emerge from visiting campuses in different provinces was set aside when the data gathered on four of the five campuses (located in five provinces) had already begun to become quite repetitive.

Finally, the research findings are presented in aggregate and do not represent institutional findings.

4.0 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The study's findings are presented in four parts, and while the focus of the research is on the students' experiences with study abroad, student contributions will be contextualized and amplified by the data generated from the Canadian public, employers, and faculty and professional staff of participating colleges and universities.

4.1 Public Support for Study Abroad

Study participants from the two groups not directly involved with colleges or universities include (1) a well structured, representative, national sample of the Canadian general public, and (2) a small, non-representative sample of Canadian employers. The data generated by these two groups provides important contextual understanding as to the level of public support for study abroad and the reasons for it.

4.1.1 Employers

Although the numbers of employers in the study were not sufficient to allow for any complex analysis or generalization, the descriptive data on its own does suggest the strength of support for, and concerns about, study abroad within this small sample of employers.

The first question was intended to shed light on how well informed the employer group was about study abroad in Canada. Given three options from which to select, the respondents were asked to identify the correct participation rate among 0-5%, 6-10%, or 11-20%. Roughly one-third of respondents thought the rate fell between 11 and 20%, one-third reported it was between 6 and 10%, and one-third knew the correct participation rate fell between 0 and 5%. Their overestimation suggests that these employers were not well informed about study abroad. Three out of the 17 employers did not respond to the question.

The next question was straightforward, asking employers if students should be able to have a study abroad experience before they complete their post-secondary programs. The response was a resounding affirmative, with sixteen out of seventeen participants saying YES. Probing why employers reported study abroad was important to Canada, the next question asked them to identify what the student might learn abroad that he or she would not have learned through studying at home. The following quotes are indicative of the general direction and tone of the employers' overall response:

[Study abroad] develops an appreciation for differences among people, cultures and international business as well as a sense of independence. As an employer, I can

safely assume a student with study abroad experience will more likely be self-sufficient over someone who is not. (E12)

Most importantly, it is to learn about themselves and the culture in hopes of breaking down some preconceived notions of the differences we all possess. For someone who has travelled extensively or done study abroad one can see that we as people are much more similar than we are different and we need to embrace our diversity and learn from one another. This is how we will succeed in our jobs and in our societies. (E3)

Students become more inter-culturally competent and you know the reason I bring that up is that they become way more attractive to employers... a student who is inter-culturally competent can communicate better and be a more effective employee...Employers love to hire students with international field experience and students can pick their careers more easily. (E16)

Given that the North American literature suggests students are concerned about the importance of the study abroad experience, the next question on the survey probed that point but from the employers' point of view. All participants had reported having responsibilities for hiring. When asked if they would hire a graduate with study abroad experience over a graduate who did not have such an experience, over 50% of the employers responded YES, with 40% of employers being a bit more cautious, expressing concern that qualifications other than study abroad, such as "fit with the team" (E15) can play just as important a role in hiring. The following employer quotes represent the direction and tenor of the concerns expressed:

I would hire a student with study abroad experience over someone who does not have this experience but fit with the organization and the student's other qualifications would be taken into account. (E1)

International experience can be very interesting and useful but it really depends on how the candidate presents these experiences and how the candidate fits the position and the team as well. (E6)

One employer made it clear that he would prefer a job candidate that

... has only Canadian experience, as international experience isn't important in the industry. (E11)

A few employers expressed hesitation about hiring a graduate with study abroad experience in the absence of

specific information regarding the length of the program, its location, and possible learning outcomes. The following comments capture the nature of these concerns:

It [hiring] depends on whether the student studied in London or Rangoon.

It [hiring] depends on what the study abroad experience was and how long the student studied abroad.

While support for hiring a graduate with study abroad experience over hiring a student without it was not unanimous, the majority of employers made it clear that study abroad should be accessible to post-secondary students, based on the benefits to both the individual and society. Ninety-one per cent of employers identified the importance of cultural and other benefits as reflected in the following comments:

The study abroad experience makes a student...

- *More independent and self-sufficient*
- *Understanding of cultural differences inside and outside the workplace and what impact these differences can have*
- *Cultural differences in business and relationship-building*
- *Tolerance to ethnic groups and a broader understanding of the world*
- *More world experience and experience adapting to an unfamiliar environment*
- *More life skills and language skills*

It is important to note that in all descriptions of the benefits of study abroad to the graduate, the country, and the employer, not one participant mentioned the importance of the more instrumental type of learning associated with being more knowledgeable about the field or the study of study. It is the “experience itself” that is valued, a finding that will be repeatedly reported by members of other participant groups.

Having expressed cautious but positive support for graduates with study abroad experience, the final question on the survey sought to understand who employers think should pay for making study abroad accessible to post-secondary students. The question offered various funding options including: (1) government-funded, (2) student self-funded, (3) a combination of government and student self-funding, and (4) an open option that sought participant-generated alternatives. Two-thirds of the employers favoured the combination of government and student self-funding, with two of the 17 employers reporting that they could not support any government funding “until they were convinced that participation in study abroad generated the learning outcomes important to the business sector” (E5, E9).

Based on the responses to open-ended questions, employers who themselves had participated in study abroad, when compared to those employers without that experience, provided much more detailed and informed responses and more positive responses on questions relating to increasing the numbers and the funding for study abroad.

4.1.2 The Canadian Public

The value of study abroad

Participants were asked if they or anyone in their immediate family had ever studied at a post-secondary institution in another country, even for only a few weeks or months. It was explained that this could include anything from an exchange program lasting a few weeks or months to completing a degree in another country.

Those who reported studying abroad have at least some post-secondary education themselves, speak a language other than English or French, and come from a household with an income of \$80,000 or more.

It is not surprising that those with at least some higher education are also more likely than others to report that they or someone in their family had studied abroad, since the type of study abroad refers to a post-secondary institution in another country. It was also not surprising that those who report that the first language they learned and can still speak is neither English nor French are also more likely to have studied abroad. The members of the group who have studied abroad are likely to include many first generation Canadians educated abroad before coming to Canada. Finally, it is understandable that participants from households with a family income of \$80,000 or more report studying abroad. The lack of financial resources was identified in the general literature review as one of the primary reasons reported by students for not participating in a study abroad program.

Those who said that either they or someone in their immediate family had studied outside Canada were asked to share the most valuable thing about studying abroad. The fact that those with more education, more economic privilege and more linguistic diversity are the strongest supporters of study abroad calls to mind the stereotype that only those students who are already privileged have access to the funds needed to participate and, possibly, have awareness of the transformative potential of study abroad.

Respondents were asked if they agree or disagree with a series of four statements about study abroad. Generally, Canadians have very positive associations with the idea of studying abroad and a majority agrees that studying

abroad does everything from helping students better understand the world around them to increasing Canada's global competitiveness.

1. *Study abroad helps Canadian students better understand the world around them.* Over 9 in 10 respondents agree (including 51% who strongly agree), with only about 6% reporting that they somewhat or strongly disagree. Respondents with prior study abroad experience show stronger positive attitudes.
2. *Studying abroad enhances students' overall educational experience.* About 9 in 10 agree or strongly agree with this statement including 40% who strongly agree. About 8% somewhat or strongly disagree.
3. *Study abroad increases the job potential of graduates.* About 8 in 10 agree with this statement, including 29% who strongly agree. About 15% disagree or strongly disagree.
4. *Having students study abroad increases Canada's global competitiveness.* Almost 8 out of 10 agree, including 28% who strongly agree. About 16% somewhat or strongly disagree.

The idea of study abroad

By far the most common reason mentioned for saying that studying abroad is a good idea is that it will make the student more knowledgeable of different cultures. This speaks to a wide variety of positive attitudes that stem from exposure to other cultures, including making individuals more tolerant, understanding the similarities as well as differences among cultures and, in general, the notion that exposure to different cultures leads to respect of these differences. Figure 2 shows the breakdown by percentage the responses of the Canadian public to the question "is it a good idea to study abroad?"

The ten percent of respondents who say that study abroad is a poor idea (n=87/837), as shown in Table 8, seem to base their responses on a range of fears, including concerns over safety, to concerns about the absence of a member of the family, that it is too expensive, or, the most common response, that it is simply preferable to study in Canada. A few fear that students will not come back to Canada but rather stay in the country in which they have gone to study.

In reviewing the North American literature in preparation for this study, the role that parental encouragement played in influencing whether a student would decide to study abroad or not was found to be significant. In fact, parents were found to have more influence on their adult child's decision to study abroad than did the student's own peers.

The Canadian public believes in the value of study abroad.

The single most common thing valued about study abroad is the exposure students get to different cultures and languages.

Many point to the availability of better courses or variety of courses offered abroad. Most point to the very nature of the program itself as being "life-changing."

The poll question took as its point of departure the strong public support (88%) for the general idea of study abroad for post-secondary students and asked the public participants if as parents they would encourage their own child or children to study abroad. As shown in Figure 3, three in every four poll participants report that they would encourage their children to study abroad if they had the opportunity to do so.

A range of demographic variables such as age, gender, region, education, and income were used to determine if any single variable or combination of variables had a significant influence on whether the parent or family encouraged their children to participate in study abroad. No statistically significant differences (at the .000 level) were found. There is some suggestion, however, that younger respondents (those under 39) are more open to encouraging their children to study abroad than older participants (65 years or older). This suggestion that there may be differences in attitudes toward study abroad between the younger and older members of the public was found in several of the poll questions but the study did not take up this point for further investigation.

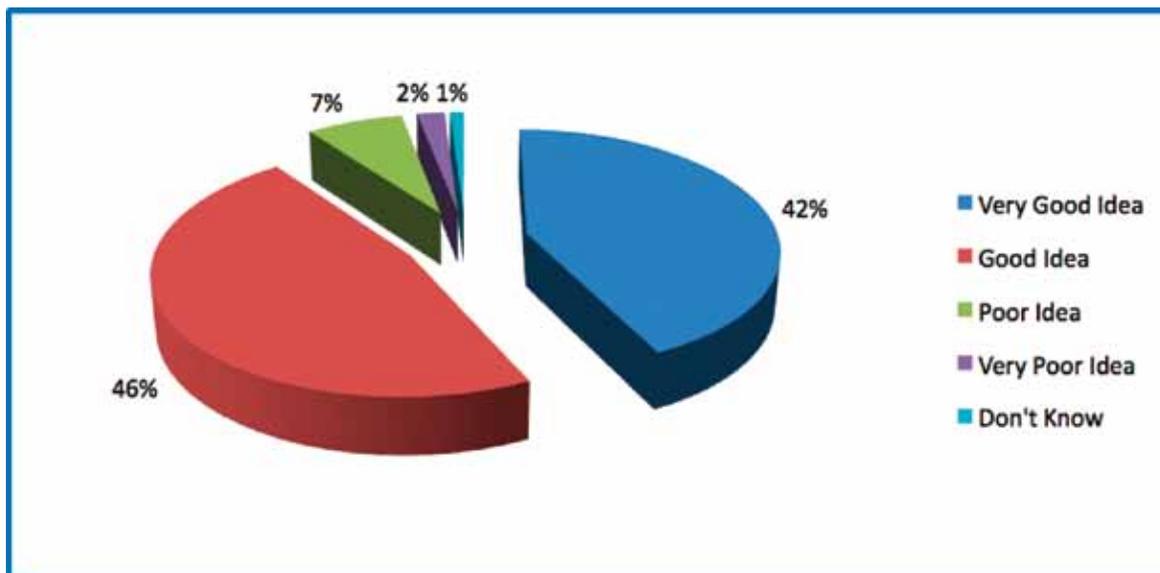
o The benefits of study abroad

The next question on the poll probed what the public perceived as the main benefits of study abroad. The answer to this question would provide some insight into how aware or informed the Canadian public is of the goals of study abroad and asks the public to comment on which benefits they perceive to be the most important to Canada. Figure 4 presents the findings and points to the fact that those benefits accrue not only to the student who participates, but to Canadian society and the labour force generally.

By far the most common reason the public gave for their strong positive stance toward the benefits of studying abroad is that the experience will make the graduate more knowledgeable of different cultures.

Table 8: Public opinion: Why study abroad is a poor idea	
Prefer to study in Canada	57%
Security concerns	16%
Too expensive	10%
Other	7%
Fear student will stay in other country	6%
Do not know	5%

Figure 2: Public opinion: Is it a good idea to study abroad?



This speaks to a wide variety of positive attributes that stem from exposure to other cultures, including making individuals more tolerant, understanding the similarities as well as differences among cultures, and in general, the notion that exposure to different cultures leads to respect of these differences.

Others say that study abroad is a “character-changing” experience. This finding may include such ideas as it builds character, provides opportunities to make friends and connections, or generally creates positive memories for the students. Other respondents say that study abroad will broaden students’ horizons intellectually, personally, or financially, and better position graduates to get future education or employment benefits.

A few members of the general public suggest that students will get a better education abroad. While this may speak to the idea that studying abroad – even for a short time – makes for a better education, it also refers to the belief by some that post-secondary education in other countries is superior to that in Canada.

o Access and funding

The poll to this point probed the perceived merit of study abroad in general and for an individual participant in

study abroad. The final two questions shift to focus on strategic policy issues, that of access and funding. The first question sought to determine the strength of the public’s opinion about every post-secondary student having access to study abroad during their academic programs. Figure 5 shows the public’s response.

Interestingly, while almost nine out of 10 poll participants think it is a good idea to give young women and men the opportunity to study abroad, only seven out of 10 say that such opportunities should be made available to all students. This suggests that for a group of participants, these opportunities should exist, but not necessarily for all students. Based on the questions asked on the poll, it is difficult to explain this difference, but it may reflect the belief of some respondents that students in certain types of programs or with certain interests do not benefit from or need such opportunities.

Residents of some regions of the country are more likely to think such opportunities should be made widely available. Participants in Atlantic Canada (84%) and Ontario (79%) are the most likely to think this, while those in Québec (50%) are the least likely.

There are differences corresponding to the language first learned and still spoken. Participants who first learned

Figure 3: Public opinion: Encouraging children to study abroad

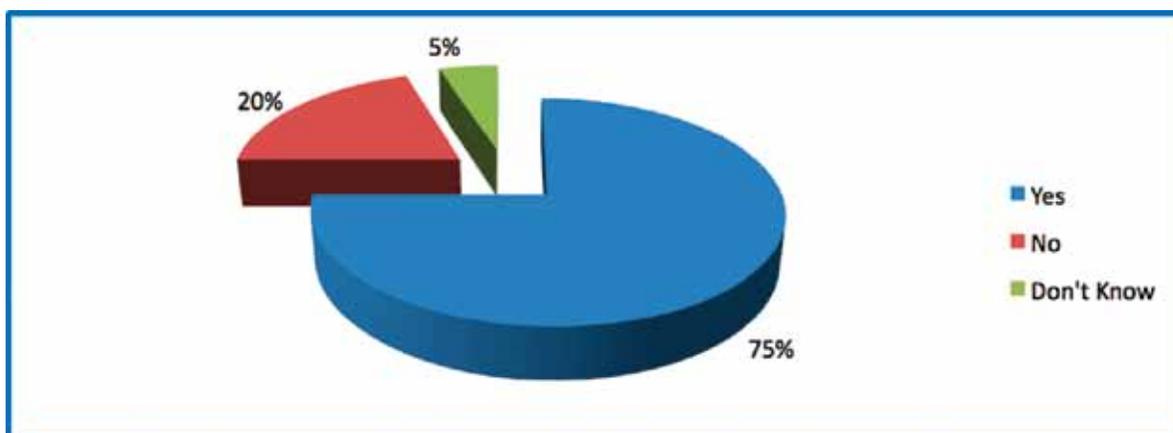
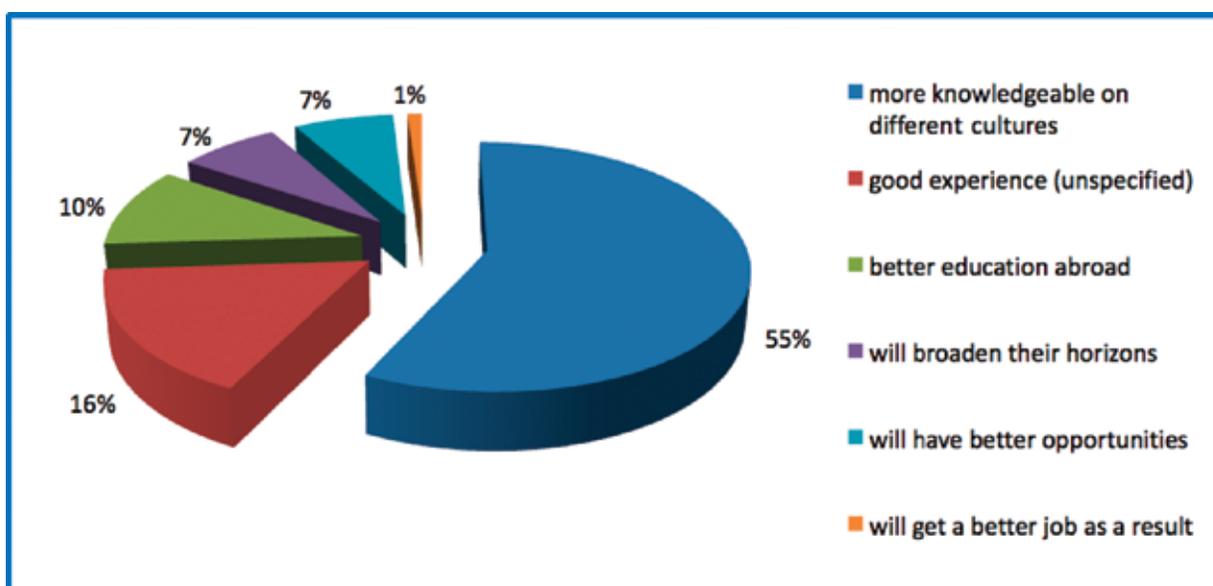


Figure 4: Canadian public: The benefits of study abroad



French (53%) are less likely than those who first learned English (76%) to think study abroad opportunities should be available.

Looking more carefully at the strength of support for reporting that all students should study abroad, it became clear that the support within the entire participant population varied by age category. The findings point to the fact that younger participants are more likely than older ones to think that such opportunities should be made widely available. For example, 85% of those 18-24 years of age think this, compared to fewer than 60% of those 65 years or older.

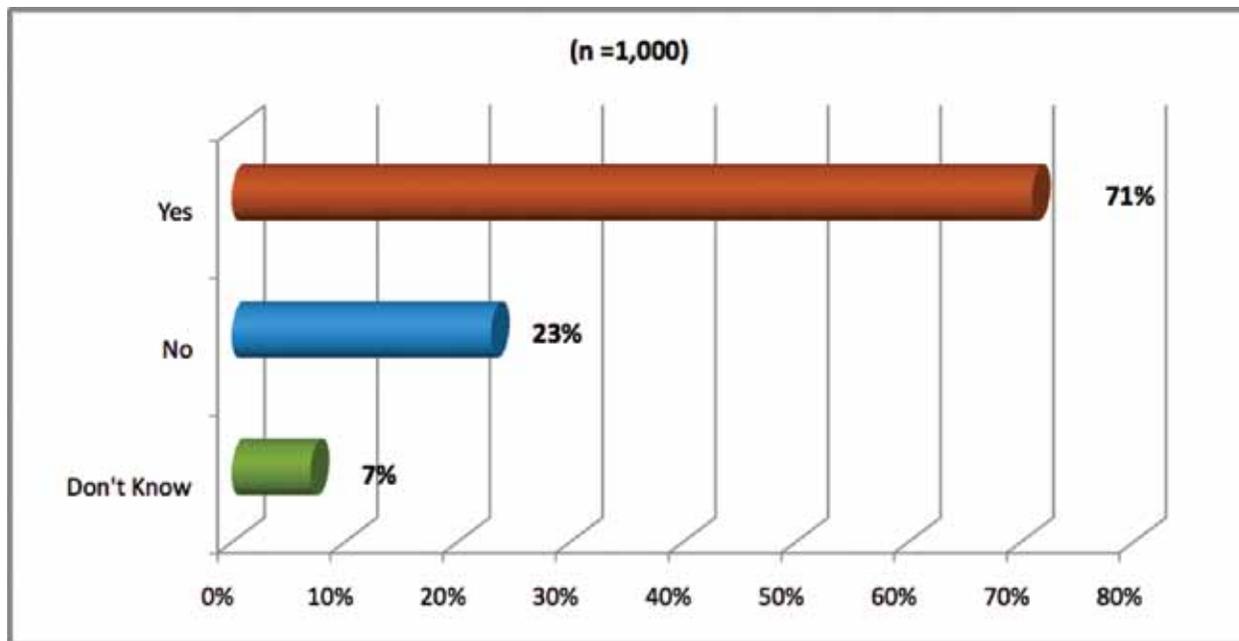
The final question, “Who pays?” probes whether and the extent to which the public would be prepared to earmark public funds to cover the costs of study abroad for post-

secondary students. While no vehicle for the distribution of public funds was suggested, the majority of public participants recommended public funding.

As shown in Table 9, eight participants in 10 (81%) say that it is at least somewhat important that there be programs that provide financial assistance. This includes 41% who say it is very important. Conversely, almost one in seven participants say it is not important to provide financial assistance.

Younger participants are not only likely to say that providing financial assistance is important, they are likely to think it is very important. For example, just over half of those 18-24 say it is very important (52%) compared to 38% or less of those 50 and older.

Figure 5: Public opinion: All post-secondary students should have the opportunity to study abroad



Women are more likely than men to say that financial assistance for studying abroad is very important. While about 48% of women say it is very important, 35% of men say the same.

Regardless of region, the vast majority of participants say financial assistance is at least somewhat important.

Participants from the employer group, admittedly too small to reach any conclusions, were more cautious in their recommendation for funding than was the general public. While employers who had studied abroad agreed public funding should be made available to students, employers who had not studied abroad were much more likely to suggest a shared funding scheme in which the cost would be split between the student and a government funding program. This more cautious support may be explained by a lack of information or understanding of the potential of study abroad to introduce significant learning experiences of a kind (inter-cultural understanding and international awareness) most important to the relations between nations in an increasingly globally connected world.

o Conclusions

In general Canadians support the idea of students studying abroad for at least some period during their college or university education. Indeed, the concept of studying abroad is widely supported by Canadians in all regions and all demographic subgroups. The idea of studying abroad appears to be associated with very positive benefits both for the students and for Canada as a whole.

Studying abroad is valued inherently. Often respondents say that the experience itself is what they think is the most valuable, but also many say it is the opportunity to learn and understand another culture. This very positive attitude toward the concept of studying abroad may reflect Canada's own outward focus and its being a country of relatively low population that depends on international cooperation to make its way in the world. Thus, as a people, we are open to other cultures, and believe that good can come from being exposed to that which is different from what we know.

The public sees studying abroad both as fulfilling the traditional liberal education goal of understanding, while also believing that it makes students more marketable post-graduation, as well as increasing Canada's own global competitiveness. It then is not surprising that most Canadians would encourage their own children to study abroad if they had the opportunity, and that they support the idea that public resources should be made available to post-secondary students studying at Canadian universities and colleges to have the opportunity to study abroad. Both are in keeping with Canadians' sense of themselves as outward-looking and open to the world around them.

This conclusion holds strategic importance for the ways in which Canadian colleges and universities think about the centrality or marginality of study abroad and the impact that choice has on the accountability of the institution to meet its commitment to students and on the totality of the educational experiences offered to students. Can institutions ignore or downplay the importance of

Table 9: Public opinion: Importance of financial assistance

	Percentage of respondents
Very important	41%
Somewhat important	40%
Not important	14%

international study which, according to so many, has the potential to significantly alter a student's life?

The next part of the report will juxtapose the public and employer findings to those generated by students, faculty members and professional staff of colleges and universities.

4.2 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The public's commitment to the idea of study abroad and to access for all post-secondary students was unanticipated. The research data was collected during a period of global financial challenge. The national discourse was overwhelmingly focused on the effects of recession such as rising unemployment, decline in hours of work and benefits, and growing uncertainty about the timing of recovery in the financial markets and in Canadian households. With increasing calls for governments to tap into public funds to cushion job losses, there was reason to believe the results of the Public Opinion Poll would not be favourable to study abroad. On the contrary, the Canadian public showed itself to be a strong advocate for study abroad even though the benefits identified were mostly indirect and would accrue to society over time. In such a receptive national context, how do colleges and universities assess the centrality or marginality of study abroad in relation to what it means to be an educated person?

o The institutional context

Colleges and universities express their values and goals in a range of ways including public documents such as mission statements, strategic plans, and official web pages which announce the educational programs and extramural learning experience available to students admitted for study. The work of Knight shows that as of a decade ago (1997) the majority of Canada's colleges and universities had already added an international or global emphasis to longstanding mission statements. To the extent that a policy statement can be understood outside the context in which it is written, a look at a selected sample of documents shows some of the ways participating colleges and universities express and position their commitment to the provision of an internationalized education for those who graduate. For example:

Thompson Rivers University (TRU) is a comprehensive, learner-centered, environmentally responsible institution that serves its regional, national, and

While the Canadian public expects colleges and universities to graduate students capable of being engaged in the world and in its labour force, post-secondary institutions still treat study abroad as a "bit player" in the theatre of academe.

international learners and their communities through high quality and flexible education, training, research and scholarship.

L'INTERNATIONALISATION DES ACTIVITÉS: La mondialisation de la plupart des domaines d'activité et le caractère de plus en plus diversifié des populations amènent à une ouverture sur le monde. L'internationalisation de ses activités constitue une priorité pour l'Université Laval qui souhaite non seulement accroître sa présence et sa visibilité à l'échelle internationale, mais aussi créer et animer, sur le campus, un environnement propice aux échanges interculturels.

...the mission statement refers to enriching the lives of individuals and meeting the changing needs of our diverse communities. In an increasingly interdependent world, this means that our communities expand well beyond London, Ontario, and Canada. Luckily, as an educational institution we have great breadth and depth in resources and expertise that can allow us to contribute a great deal to the diverse international community, especially in developing countries. (Fanshawe College)

Pointing to these particular policy statements is not intended to convey any assessment that some participating colleges and universities are more or less supportive of study abroad. What is intended is that while there is evidence colleges/universities support their internationalizing efforts through various policy statements and strategies, they collectively confirm what the focus group participants had independently made clear throughout the interviews: post-secondary institutions in Canada have accepted the importance of being international in scope and content in a way not previously recognized or valued by those same institutions. This finding runs counter to findings of an earlier study (Bond, 2005) in which faculty expressed skepticism about the academic merits of internationalizing learning (on and off campus) seeing it as an "invention of business-oriented administrators." To find out if the faculty and staff participants in the current study were likewise skeptical about internationalizing learning, a focus question probed this point in particular.

“Is the focus on learning in international contexts (as study abroad) a sustainable commitment or a fad?”

This question was posed to all focus group participants. In response, the interview participants unanimously, although in one case begrudgingly, agreed that study abroad is not a fad but a sustainable and important element of the overall education of students. The tenor of the discussions around the sustainability of study abroad is captured by the contributions of these faculty participants:

Regardless of how colleges and universities express their commitments, the academic community has accepted that study abroad is basic to an education which, given the times in which we live, must be international as well as national in scope and content. The reality is that our graduates need to learn how to live and be successful in this global context. (F34)

It's here to stay because it offers students something important which is not otherwise available on campus. (F2)

I always argue that culturally Canadians are vastly more accepting of diversity so we should be able to quadruple study abroad per capita of the US which is dramatically more inward-looking than we are...and we let the financial issues for the most part get to be barriers. There are all sorts of creative thinking that could go on into where we could see it as a way of saving in our institutions rather than costing us money. Nobody is taking that bull by the horns. Now that I am close to retirement, I have a different perspective than what I had even 3-4 years ago, at the end of a 30-year career in the academy. (F31)

The group interviews also discussed what indicators demonstrate the commitment of an institution to internationalizing student learning. Overall, it was agreed that such indicators should include but may not be limited to:

- (1) The number of academic and professional staff assigned to work on study abroad initiatives;
- (2) The amount of funding made available to offset the students' expenses to study abroad, and
- (3) The infrastructure provided to sustain the study abroad operation (centrally and de-centrally) over time.

Positioning how their institutions might fare in such an assessment, the focus group participants reported that the number of professional staff assigned to build and sustain institutional commitment to study abroad ranged from a

low of one to a high of 20. While participants could see how such variability might be associated with the size of the institution, the gap between and among institutions was at times perplexing and at other times infuriating to the participants.

Another interesting point was raised by participants in the focus group interviews. A few faculty or staff, even though they are associated directly with one or more study abroad programs, reported that they did not actually know how many people across the institution were working in support of study abroad. In some of these cases, the lack of information was the result of a growing trend toward decentralization of such responsibilities to the faculties and schools. Questions such as those shown below were raised about the benefits to students of centralization as compared to decentralization of institutional and academic support for study abroad. For example, some institutions have made “engaging the world” or “global-mindedness” a primary feature of teaching, research, and service but in others there is little reported “trickle-down” effect of a renewed mission statement as it relates to the everyday academic activities of faculty and students. The next section probes more deeply questions about institutional commitment and student participation in study abroad.

o Institutional commitment and response

It was generally agreed by the focus group participants that both colleges and universities appear to be branching out to new types of international collaborations, partnerships, campuses, and programs of study including those such as study abroad in which Canadian students directly participate. It was also agreed that student demand was driving some of these new international initiatives, including study abroad. Concern was expressed, however, that even if the post-secondary institutions create more study abroad opportunities, the student participation rate will not necessarily grow. Concerns expressed centered on why more students were not participating in study abroad as expressed in the following quotes:

When I was an international student, I was passionate about getting out in the world to experience different things, so it is particularly difficult for me to understand why our undergraduates seem to want to stay at home and won't even consider taking a job outside the city. I simply do not get it! (F29)

It's part of the student culture, whether you want to go abroad or not. It is self-selecting, and it's a tragically small proportion of the students who seem to have that mindset. (F37)

How do I get students to study abroad when probably 20% or more have never been to Toronto let alone been on an airplane? (F19)

Many of our students still live at home with their parents. For some, it is a financial necessity but for many it is simply a comfortable life and they do not think about leaving home, let alone leaving the campus, or their friends...not unless the university or the program of study requires participation in a study abroad program. (F14)

These statements express concerns about the apparent lack of interest in study abroad and the fear or complacency that is keeping students from reaching beyond their comfort zone.

“How,” asked one participant, “can I get them [students] to study in Europe when they are still living at home with their parents and their best friends are those kids with whom they have gone to school since kindergarten?”

Other challenges – such as cost, length of time away from home and friends, as well as the specific location of the international study venue were thought be compounded by post-9/11 security concerns.

Setting up a study abroad experience within a course or program was, according to some faculty, time-consuming and often required them to help students fundraise to cover costs. Two faculty participants noted that they had paid from their own pockets the difference between what a student could raise and the actual costs of the study abroad venture, as there were no institutional funds available.

While some face challenges in trying to meet student demand, others have the opposite problem:

I find it very difficult to fill all the spots in our exchange programs. Students worry they will have to stay on an extra term – which will cost them more – or they won't be able to graduate with their friends. For those who have already studied abroad, they're prepared to pay that price but others, well not many come back with their applications completed or if they do they find they are too late...they have no more electives left in their program and our Faculty won't count exchange for core course credit. The lack of planning is especially true for the men. (PS11)

The demand depends on where the exchange institution is located. If it is in Europe, the demand is usually strong. If it [the exchange] is in ... Malaysia or South Africa, well it is hard to find students to go there. It's better if one of our faculty knows someone at the exchange institution so they can mentor our student. (F7)

Students have to compete on the basis of marks and a proposal to get accepted for one of the four spots available. Considerable interest is always shown when

the announcement of the exchanges go out, but when they find out they have plan in advance, figure out all of the details on their own, and still have to have high marks and a strong proposal....the number of applications actually submitted is low. Sometimes we cannot fill the spots and I wonder what we could do to get more students involved. (F11)

Based on the collective experience of those participating in the focus groups, it was generally agreed that institutions could be doing a lot more than they are. For example, some types of study abroad programs are seen by the participants to be more attractive to students than others. Knowing how to attract students and ensure access, promising situations exist. Such situations included where:

- (1) Study abroad is required in order to graduate, or the academic culture of the Department values study abroad as a normal part of being an educated practitioner, as sometimes happens in professional schools such as Education, Nursing, or Business;
- (2) The length of time abroad is short - two or three weeks – or longer if offered in the summer rather than during the academic year;
- (3) A particular course includes a field study component that is led by the course instructor who is both passionate about the subject and aware of the learning possibilities that exist in other country/culture contexts.

Given that the focus group participants were originally nominated because of their interest in study abroad, in no way do they represent a cross-section of faculty among the participating institutions. We do not know what a cross-section of faculty might have suggested as ways to increase participation and percentage, but these focus group participants have both interest and expertise from which to examine that question. Faculty and professional staff assumed that if study abroad was a requirement, then the institution would have to find the resources necessary to mount such an initiative. As attractive as option one appeared to be to those who value study abroad (including all of our participants), most expressed doubt that their institution was prepared to make learning in international or intercultural contexts a reality for more or a majority of students. It would be a “big leap forward that would require leadership on all levels and, of course, resources” (F17, F24).

Pragmatically, participants turned to other options that colleges or universities have to consider if post-secondary education is actually going to engage many more and more diverse students than are reached currently. It was noted that the shorter courses were more attractive than

exchanges but the question was “why?” Why are these shorter experiences, which have less engagement with host nationals, more attractive to students? Barriers and enablers which exist within colleges and universities will be taken up shortly and address at least in part the question of why the longer courses are the least likely to attract students.

Contrary to the belief that “nothing changes,” focus group participants recognized the permeable nature of student culture pointing out that “once you get students going [abroad], more will go” (F31).

If it is not the institution’s responsibility to support student culture in ways that promote internationalizing learning, then whose responsibility is it? Clearly a few participating institutions reported a significant investment in study abroad but in general institutions were not seen as reaching their potential to educate.

A troubling point for the focus group participants was “why doesn’t every student demand access to study abroad and benefit from these programs?” This question took up more than its fair share of interview time, making it clear that focus group participants were both interested in and concerned about the non-participation issue. In an early interview, one faculty member suggested there was likely a strong relationship between institutional context and student choice, asking: “What was the likely relationship between the importance a college or university attached to study abroad and any variability in the students’ participation rate?” (F33).

Once the question was raised, it was included in the focus group interviews that followed. Unfortunately, there was insufficient data available during the research period to answer the question definitively. However, based on several self-reports, augmented by institutional documents, faculty and staff from three universities reported their own institution was strongly committed and engaged with getting students to learn about and from the world, with such engagement being demonstrated by: (1) the reported number of staff assigned to study abroad, (2) the amount of financial support made available to students to travel, and (3) the infrastructure provided to ensure sustainability. Solely on the basis of these self-reports the participation rate at each institution was identified: two were at or slightly beyond 10% and one was over 20%, all three well above the national average of 5%. This finding, however tentative, suggests that the responsibility for a student’s choice to participate does not reside solely or even mainly with the student but rather with the college/university whose norms shape the academic/organizational culture out of which policies, rules and procedures grow. It is important to remember that these cultures, policies and procedures were built

up over time to support and facilitate the effectiveness of learning that would take place on campus. As effective as these might be for on-campus study, they often are reported as barriers for students wanting to study abroad, or even at another institution in Canada.

o Student interest in global-mindedness³

It is important to remember that participation in a study abroad program is not the only measure of how aware and involved post-secondary students are with global issues, self-awareness, and ways to understand or relate to different cultures, people, and ideas.

“Global-mindedness” (Sabine Lehr, writing in the *Journal of International Education*, uses this term) is defined as a mindset, a way of seeing oneself in relation to others, where beliefs and knowledge are both more complex and contradictory than what the student is likely to have previously experienced, characterized by interest in global issues and cultures. To find out how many students represented themselves as being “globally minded”, a survey question asked: How interested are you in world issues, events, and cultural issues?

While the percent of students interested or very interested was quite high, there are gender differences in how students responded to the question. Male students were found to be more interested than female students in keeping themselves informed of world issues, international events, and cultural issues (at the .01 level of significance). This suggests that while more women than men responded to the survey and more women than men participated in the focus group and individual interviews, the smaller group of men report a positive affiliation with global-mindedness. Whether this difference can be explained by other independent variables such as disciplinary affiliation is as yet not known.

o Encouraging global-mindedness

With 88% of student participants reporting they are interested or very interested in being globally minded, what role if any have the colleges and universities played in creating this mindset? Does it have anything to do

<i>Interest</i>	
Don't know	7%
Not at all	<1%
Not interested in other people/cultures	3%
Interested	45%
Very interested	43%

³ Interest in global issues, events and culture is, for the purpose of this study, called global-mindedness.

with the institution's commitment, or do students enter post-secondary education already being globally minded? To probe more deeply how students come to be globally minded, a survey question asked students to identify who encouraged and what engaged their global mindedness.

Table 11: Engaging the world through sites of learning	
Sites of learning	
Reading assignments with global focus	
Choosing required courses with international focus	
Choosing course electives with international focus	
Joining clubs/organizations that attract people of different cultures	
Attending presentations of visiting faculty with global focus	
Attending cultural events	
Carrying out research on international issues	
Using the Web to keep up with global news	
Working with international students in class/on assignments	
Having friends who come from different backgrounds/cultures	

One might ask “if the students access these sites, and learn from them, can the university take credit for encouraging these opportunities?” In the next section, responses to encouragement, suggest that students do not perceive these venues and opportunities as being driven by the institution but rather by the faculty members or student groups which operate and create opportunities of their own volition. It begs the question as to how active, overt or systematic is the institution's approach to providing and resourcing these venues.

With such a strong show of interest in being globally minded, what encouragement to be globally engaged did students report receiving from their college or university? Asked to respond by indicating Yes, No, or Don't Know, students were asked: “Graduating students who are globally knowledgeable and culturally aware is a priority of my college/university.”

Table 12 shows that approximately half of the students reported they “don't know” or “don't agree” that their college/university is committed to educating graduates who are globally minded.

4.2.1 Research Question One: Why do some students from a particular college or university participate in study abroad while other students at the same institution do not?

Table 12: Institutional commitment to global mindedness			
	Don't Know	Don't Agree	Agree
College and University Student Responses	30%	21%	49%

The following student survey questions taken together produce a rich understanding of the study's first research question. These are presented as ‘steps’ in the student engagement process leading towards participation in study abroad:

- o are you aware of study abroad?
- o how did you hear about study abroad?
- o who encourages you to study abroad?
- o is your college/university committed to study abroad?
- o are you interested in participating?
- o is it possible you will study abroad?
- o is it likely you will study abroad? and
- o have you already participated?

The analysis of the data generated by each of these nine survey questions will be presented serially and then aggregated for the purpose of reaching some conclusions. The faculty and professional staff data is used here to amplify the students' findings.

1) Awareness of study abroad?

It is encouraging that three out of four of the students report being aware of study abroad opportunities offered by their college/university, so it is clear that some form of communication is working. The content of the information and the format in which it appears will be introduced in the next section. For now, attention is on the significant differences that were found to exist between the responses of college and university students. The data show that 90% of the university students report being aware of study abroad programs, and only 51% of the college students report being aware. Given the colleges have only recently begun to offer study abroad programs of various kinds for their students, having 51% of students reporting they know such programs are available should be recognized as an achievement.

While it is true that both the colleges and universities have achieved a level of success in making their study abroad opportunities known, the fact that less than 3% of post-secondary students, overall, actually participate is sufficient cause to probe more deeply into the reasons why awareness does not translate in much higher levels of participation.

The findings show that the challenges facing colleges begin with increasing students' awareness; after all, college students cannot be expected to participate if they don't know or are unsure if such programs actually exist. For universities, the challenge starts one step further along the process of translating awareness to practice. The gap between awareness and participation in universities is alarming, made even more so because universities have been offering such programs for decades.

	COLLEGE	UNIVERSITY	OVERALL
Awareness of Study Abroad			
Don't know (if offered)	43%	7%	21%
No (not offered)	5%	<1%	3%
Yes (offered)	51%	90%	77%

2) How did you hear about study abroad?

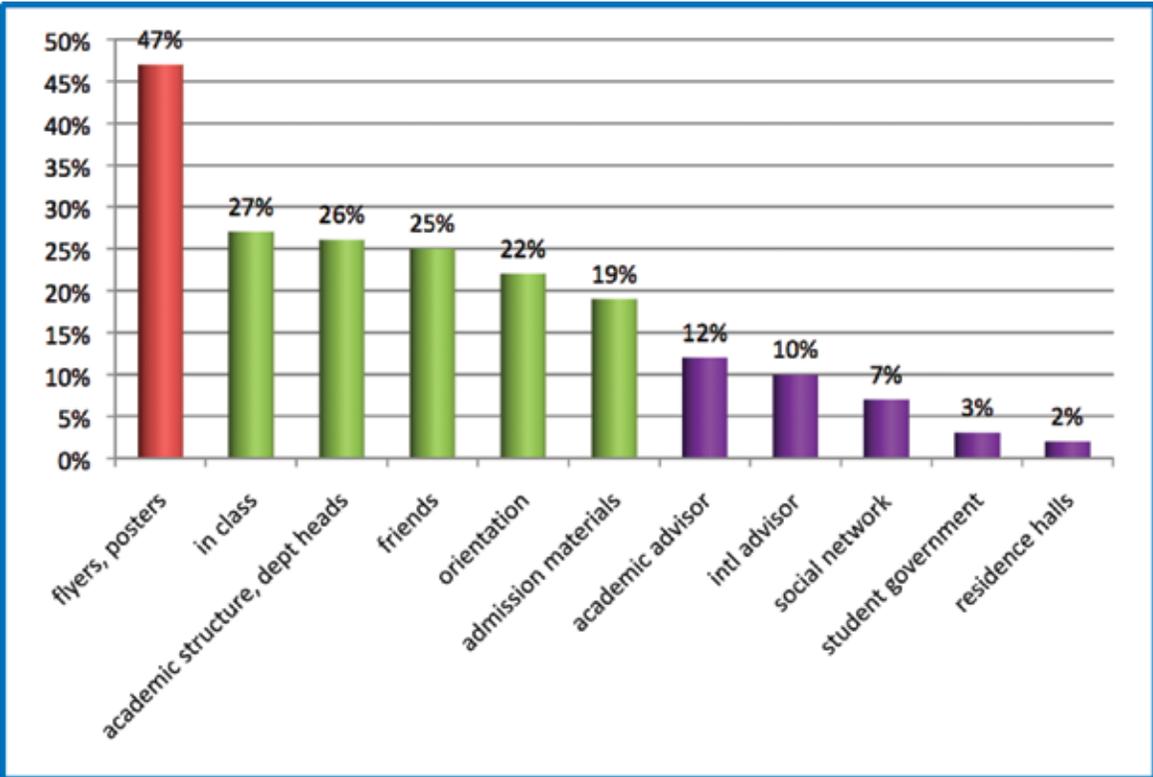
To find out who and/or what students identify as the source(s) of their study abroad awareness, a number of possibilities drawn from the literature served to create a list from which students could select more than one choice. In addition, students could write in their own thoughts and ideas in the open-response field following the question.

Figure 6 presents the sources of information, which are shown in rank order. Group one, shown in brown, include the most effective sources of information. Group two, shown in green, identifies sources of information that are much less effective than those in group one but are still impactful. Group three, shown in purple, includes sources of information that are the least influential.

“Flyers and posters” are the most frequently identified source of information that produces student awareness of study abroad opportunities. The reported effectiveness of posters raised concern among members of several focus groups. Seen by some in the interviews as “static” (F31), “one-way communication that too often relies on stereotypes” (F7, F12), faculty participants wondered if students remember posters because they often show exotic places, such as students on beaches, at castles or with other iconic images. Bulletin boards in public places across the campuses and on departmental bulletin boards are a visible reminder to students that they could be somewhere else that is more “fun and exciting”. Clearly posters and flyers are catching the eye of students in such a way that they remember what the poster was intended to convey (study abroad opportunities), but are they bridging awareness to engagement with study abroad advisers and/or students who have already participated in study abroad?

The second identified source of information about study abroad, shown in green, includes important student-centered events, such as receiving admissions materials and participating in orientation, both of which take place early in a student’s program. If information about study abroad and its role in post-secondary education were included with admissions materials, students are more likely to be aware of and value the study abroad experience. Once the academic year begins, new sources of information are

Figure 6: How did you hear about study abroad?



provided by faculty during class lectures and discussions. Even though such communication can be two or three way, students still report this exchange is only half as effective as posters. Interestingly, though friends are often reported to be influential in the decisions reached by post-secondary students, they are not identified as being as effective as posters.

The last group of information sources, identified in blue, is the least effective contributor to student awareness of study abroad opportunities. Surprisingly, faculty and staff who are academic or international advisers were lumped into this third group along with student government and social networks, such as Facebook. The students did not provide any reasons for these rankings and the results raised more questions than they answered. Academic and international advisers likely have detailed information and expertise to help students move successfully through the study abroad application process. It does not appear to be a lack of expertise that has landed advisers in this third-ranked group. Could it be that very few students actually talk to advisers about study abroad?

Surprisingly, respondents identified both student government and social networks as being the least effective methods of information transfer. Could it be that student government leaders do not recognize study abroad as being important to students and therefore outside the student-driven political agenda? Given the potential of online social networks to reach large numbers of students quickly (and encourage blogging and tweeting), it is surprising that so few institutions were reported by students to have used them as a communication vehicle.

Residence Halls, places where students are likely to congregate, may not in fact be venues conducive to student-to-student communication on this topic. Where do students meet to connect with friends to discuss their courses, ideas and new possibilities for their lives? If the conversations are not happening because of social and cultural barriers to discussing such topics, then the place where students congregate is irrelevant.

When the data and the questions that arise from the data are collectively considered, the result is a finding that the student culture is not seized by the possibilities for learning and change that study abroad is capable of producing. The findings do not support the centrality of study abroad to what it means to be educated. If study abroad was valued by the student collective, discussion and participation in some form would become the new norm.

3) Who encourages the student to study abroad?

The next question asked students to identify from whom, if anyone, they receive encouragement to participate in

Communication about study abroad occurs in silos and is ad hoc making it virtually impossible for the institution to (1) have widespread debate and discussion of the benefits of study abroad, and (2) develop a clear and consistent set of goals and strategies that promote learning off as well as on campus. This situation maintains the status quo and hinders any real change or growth potential.

study abroad. The list of contributors represents diverse domains of students' lives.

Figure 7 shows the top ranked sources of encouragement, which are those which are in the student's personal domain, such as friends, parents and family. Faculty encouragement received the highest ranking among the possible sources in the academic domain. Students identify the faculty members who encourage study abroad as 'champions' – persons who are "passionate about their field" (S416, S722, S66), and about the possibilities for learning something entirely different. The gap between sources of encouragement in the personal and academic domains is notable. This finding confirms gaps evidenced through other survey questions in which the personal influences trump the academic influences repeatedly.

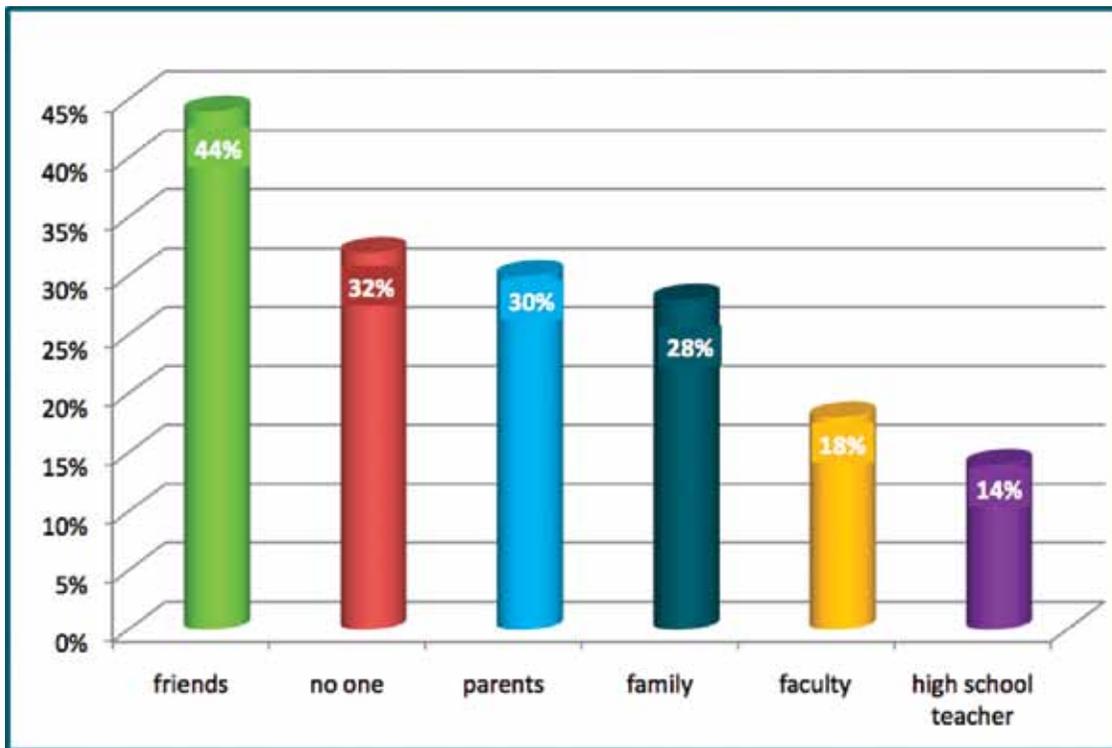
This raises the question as to whether institutions should reach out to parents with information about the ways in which study abroad can enhance their student's education. Alternatively, should institutions enhance their efforts to communicate among the different domains? Can they do both?

4) Is your university/college committed to study abroad?

Nearly half of all students reporting indicate that they (1) find little to no evidence of institutional support for study

The family plays an important role, as do friends, in determining whether a student studies abroad or not. At the college level, parents normally do not expect their adult child to participate but at the university level the parents are more likely to have studied abroad themselves and expect participation.

Figure 7: Top Ranked Sources of Encouragement



* Percentages add up to more than 100% as students could enter multiple responses.

abroad within the academic culture, policies or programs, or (2) they report that if such a commitment to study abroad exists, they are simply not aware of it.

Nearly half of all students reporting indicate they find no evidence of institutional support for study abroad within the culture, policies and structures or they report not knowing if such a commitment exists. It is possible that students are simply not aware of the ways in which their college/university is meeting its commitment to prepare them to live in a globally connected world.

	Don't Know	Don't Agree	Agree
Study Abroad Committed	26%	20%	54%

It is interesting that this question produced a weak ($p = .05$) but significant difference in how men and women responded to the question. Male students were more likely to report their institution is more committed to developing graduates who are globally knowledgeable and culturally aware than their female peers. This apparent gender difference was found both within an institution and among the different institutions as well. There is insufficient data to explain this finding at this time.

5) Are you interested in participating in study abroad?

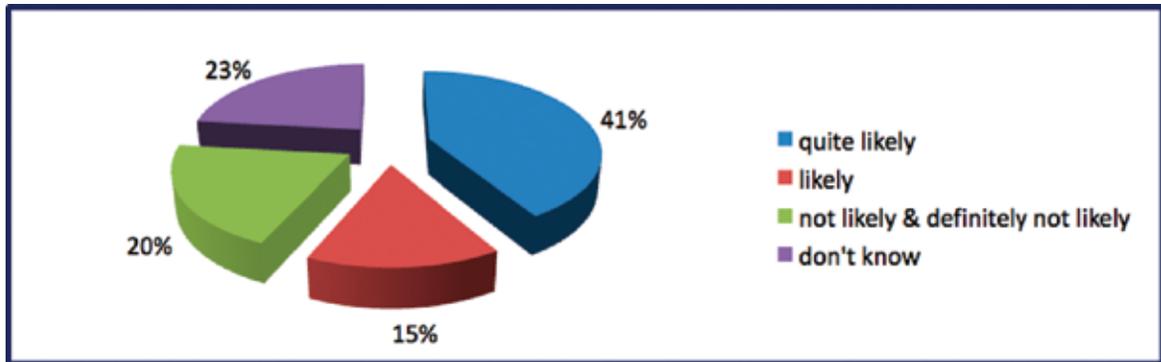
University students were more likely to express an interest in study abroad than were college students (at the $p < .01$ level of significance). This is not surprising given the significant difference in student awareness (as noted above, 90% of university students report being aware of study abroad programs, compared to only 51% of college students).

6) Is it likely that you will study abroad?

The first evidence to suggest a large number of students would not – for whatever reason – convert their expressions of interest into actual participation emerged in response to this question (See Figure 8). That half of the student respondents reported they were likely to participate in study abroad is in itself outstanding, especially when compared to the current statistics that show less than 5% of post-secondary students undertake study abroad. Looking at the data from a different perspective, however, 50% represents a 30% loss between

Interest in Study Abroad	%
No	6%
Don't Know	6%
Yes	85%

Figure 8: How likely is it that you will participate in a study abroad program during your studies?



interest and engagement. What accounts for such a dramatic difference? Is it because students find out that study abroad requires “early and detailed planning for which the student is individually responsible”(PS2)?

A small gender difference ($p=.05$) was found in the students responses to the question of likelihood of study abroad participation. In this case, female participants report being more likely to participate in a study abroad experience than their male peers. This finding is similar to the gender differences found in an earlier study (Bond, et.al. 2006) that examined faculty participation in internationalization-at-home initiatives across Canada.

In all the years I have been in the study abroad office, very few men sign up. (PS20)

In our Faculty, nearly all students who go abroad are women. (F23)

Most of the faculty who take students abroad are women. (F17)

Not all professors agreed that men are not participating in numbers equal to that in the general post-secondary population.

Men participate just as frequently as women, so maybe the difference is caused by Faculty affiliation. (PS9)

In checking to make sure which variable – gender or program of study – accounted for the gender differences in the participation rate, the analysis was rerun producing the same results. Gender, not program of study is the independent variable responsible for producing this effect.

7) Is it possible for you to study abroad?

The next step in the engagement process was to determine to what extent post-secondary students see study abroad as possible. Table 16 shows a further increase in the number of students who say ‘no’ or ‘don’t know’ in response to

the question of possibility, while the numbers reporting engagement at this step continues to decline.

8) Have you already participated?

Steps one through seven of the student engagement process all relate to students’ reported intent to participate in study abroad. Step eight asks about the actual participation in study abroad as reported by 9% of students in the study. This number leaves aside the 5% of students who reported participating in study abroad while in high school as well as the 15% of students who reported having gone abroad for educational purpose but with programs and sponsors not associated with post-secondary institutions.

Table 16: Possibility of study abroad

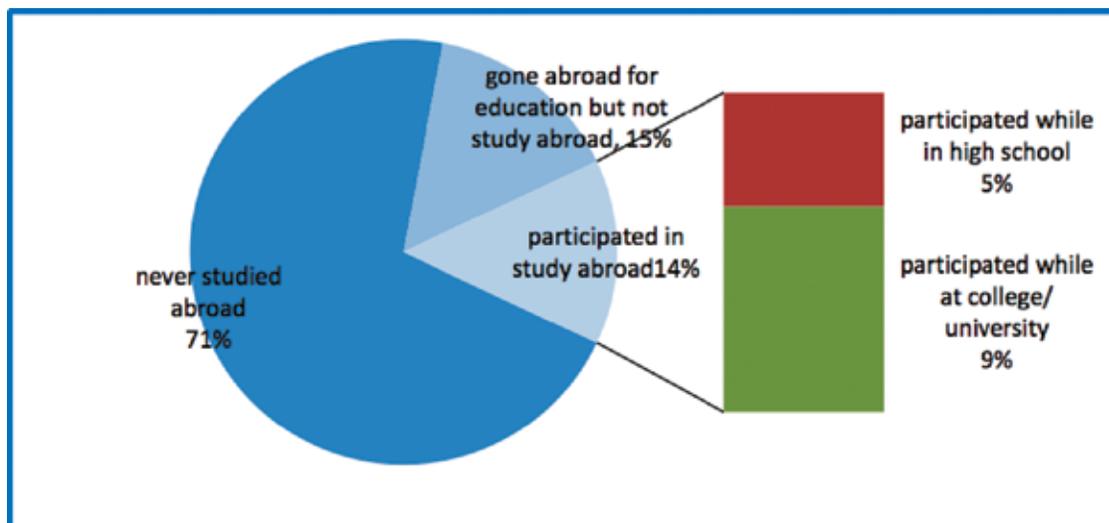
	%
No	30%
Don't Know	31%
Yes	37%

Up to this point, the steps in the study abroad engagement process have been reported sequentially because disaggregating the steps in the process makes it possible to more accurately pinpoint where the losses in student engagement occur.

There is merit, however, in looking at the students’ responses to the engagement process as a whole. Figure 9 shows the filtering effect that direct and indirect barriers have on student engagement at every step of the process and show us where the most significant drop-off of engagement takes place. This figure helps us to understand the answer to research question one: Why do some students participate and others in the same institutions do not?

Figure 9 points out that the keenness initially expressed by students to be globally-minded and to participate in study

Figure 9: Students who participated in study abroad by college/university



abroad turns from a rush to a trickle as obstacles of various kinds and origins dampen even an enthusiastic student's commitment. While it is clear that not all students' efforts are blocked, the data show a large majority are.

The data presented in the panels of Figure 10 only show the points along the engagement process where students make decisions about continuing to pursue or to drop out of the process towards participating in study abroad. The factors that contribute to filtering out or keeping students engaged are those relevant to the post-secondary context. The rate of engagement from interest in global issues to interest in study abroad showed very little decline, but is quite likely related to the reduced level of awareness of the existence of study abroad opportunity that students reported, particularly on college campuses.

The largest loss of students in the entire process takes place between the expressed interest in study abroad and the likelihood of participating. In part loss is likely related to the low level of encouragement students report receiving from anyone within the institution – an effect buffered, for some students, only by the encouragement they receive from family and friends. For those students whose interest in study abroad is neither encouraged at home nor at school, the likelihood of participation probably declines markedly.

The finding that 56% of the students reported it was likely they would go abroad during their post-secondary studies is quite a “wake up” to institutions which have yet to accommodate studying off campus as a normal way to provide education. If this entire group were to continue to move towards actual participation in study abroad, post-secondary mobility programs would be overwhelmed. There are currently not an adequate

number of opportunities or placements to fulfill that level of participation.

There is a further drop from likelihood to possibility. The next section, which describes the identified barriers to study abroad participation, will discuss the nuances between likelihood and possibility as it is understood by students, faculty and professional staff.

What explains the further 28% plunge that takes place between those who see study abroad as potential and those who actually participate during their post-secondary studies? Why do the remaining 9% of students reach the final level of engagement while their peers do not?

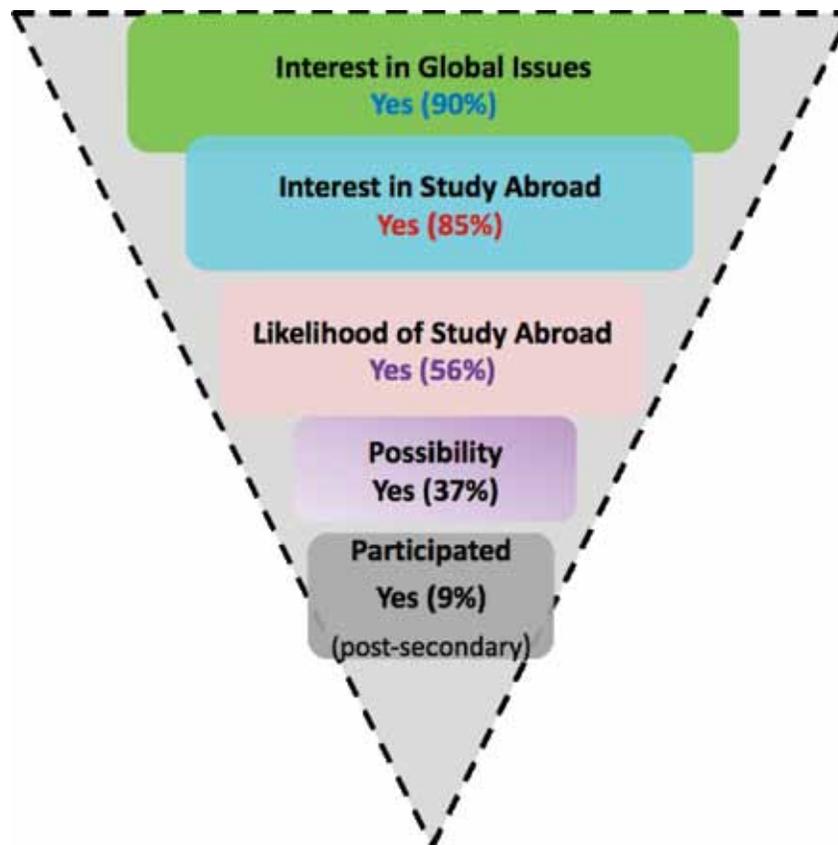
The next section of the report looks at the barriers or obstacles students, faculty and staff identify as responsible for the arguably artificially low participation. The individual and collective results are constructed, deliberately or not, due to the structural and systemic barriers that arise from the normative undergraduate experience. Student barriers will be presented and amplified by the observations and experiences of the faculty and staff who are interested in study abroad to enhance or enrich student learning.

Enablers and Obstacles Students Encounter

Responses related to enablers and obstacles produced the richest data, as was expected. The term enabler refers to internal and external sources of motivation that were found to influence participation. Motivators were identified in students' responses to two survey questions:

- (1) What are the perceived benefits to participation?
- (2) From whom do students receive the most encouragement?

Figure 10: Student interest, likelihood, possibility, and participation in study abroad



The data demonstrate that students think of themselves as being quite globally minded and they are interested in study abroad as part of an overall strategy to develop this global mindset. Exploring enablers and obstacles sheds light on the dramatic divergence between the number of potential mobility candidates and those who actually become internationally mobile.

- o Enablers

Motivators drive students to pursue study abroad, particularly in situations where the obstacles or barriers encountered make success difficult.

Internal Motivators

Internal motivators, shown in Figure 11, are grouped according to the frequency of response.

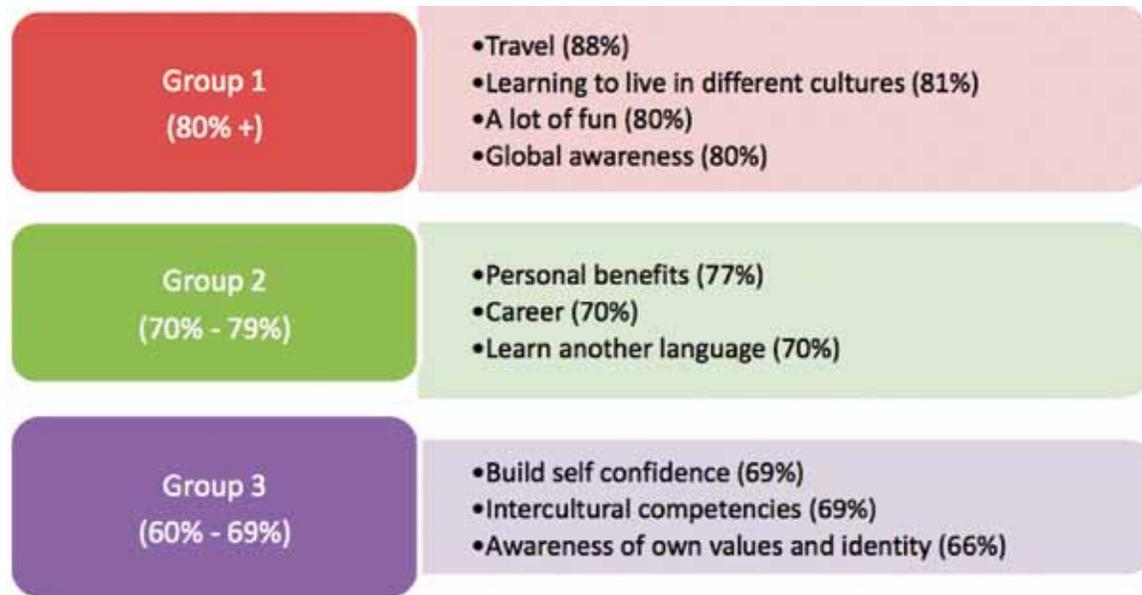
The benefits identified by students in the study can be arranged around two categories, personal and academic. Those students who are participating for the first time are more likely to report that travel and fun are at the top of their list of motivators. On the other hand, those students who have lived in cultural contexts outside of the one into which they were born are much more likely to report

learning to live in a different cultural and global awareness as their top motivators. It is not entirely surprising that travel and fun are ranked so highly by those who have yet to experience such a program; they are drawing on the iconic images and mythologies that accompany much of the study abroad advertising.

Motivators in the second grouping, while not as frequently cited, nonetheless exert important influence. Prior research paid considerable attention to how study abroad would contribute to or thwart career aspirations. As employers need graduates with these kinds of experience, study abroad is no longer seen as a barrier to career advancement.

Motivators in the third grouping are those that require students to be more thoroughly prepared for a study abroad experience in order that they are able to learn as much as possible from the experience. While students who have had a history of independent living or exposure to multiple cultures recognize and pursue personal growth opportunities, students who come into the process without strong self-confidence and independence return transformed, as is demonstrated in the following set of data drawn from focus group interviews.

Figure 11: Perceived Benefits of Study Abroad: Internal Motivators



External Motivators

External motivators are identified in student responses to the survey question which asks from whom the student received encouragement. In particular, encouragement from friends, parents and, to a lesser extent, faculty champions play an important role in helping students reach their goals. It is important to note that parents who have studied abroad are likely to encourage and support their children to do the same – a finding that is consistent with the findings of the opinion poll in this regard.

Focus group participants spoke to the importance of faculty champions, not only to students but also to the sustainability of their study abroad programs.

Funding assistance was identified as both a benefit and an enabler to study abroad, as reported by students, faculty and professional staff. Whether money comes from student-initiated fundraising, government or institutional grants, the receipt of funds gives students symbolic recognition of the importance of their study abroad goals.

Finally, previous study abroad experience emerged as an enabler. Students who had already experienced study abroad reported greater likelihood of participating again.

o Obstacles

As the number of obstacles identified by students is large and varied, they have been organized into thematic groups. The barrier students identified as being most important in each group will be presented in detail, while others will be simply touched upon.

Before the obstacles are introduced, it is important to note that students wanting an alternative learning context such as that provided by study abroad programs must, in fact, negotiate the process and navigate the system largely on their own. While some focus group participants viewed this individual student responsibility as “a necessary step in developing student confidence and independence important to studying in a foreign country”, other members made it clear that isolating the student from important support staff and services places the student at an unfair disadvantage – increasing the likelihood that it is only the exceptional, highly motivated students who are most likely to become study abroad participants.

There are two kinds of barriers: the kind that reside in the realm of the broader post-secondary experience; and the kind that are tied specifically to the study abroad experience. Any one or more of these barriers combined can thwart all but the most determined students or those students who are mentored by a faculty/staff champion. For instance, some of the broader systemic issues that act as barriers to the participation of students might include the rising cost of education, increasing size of classes, the stressors associated with financial aid, and the growing concern over getting a job in one’s field upon graduation.

On the other hand, the academic and institutional barriers that students face in the pursuit of study abroad arise in part because of a perceived threat to the conventions, norms and standards of the home institution, amplified by the fact that post-secondary institutions in Canada have had a mixed history with regard to mobility, including developing provincial and national cooperation between

colleges and universities, and among the institutions themselves.

Figure 12 presents a rank-ordered list of obstacles as reported by students and arranged in categories based on the frequency of response.

It is important to understand the ways in which these barriers operate in relation to one another, able to create an unpredictable dynamic between and among: (1) personal factors, (2) societal factors, and (3) academic/institutional factors. Based on the aggregated data drawn from the student survey and the focus group interviews, it became clear that the difference between which students participate and which do not even though they are enrolled at the same institution is based on an unpredictable combination of (1) the accessibility of financial and non-financial resources, (2) the students' preparedness to step outside their comfort zone to engage new sites and types of learning, and (3) the cultural (disciplinary/field) context which values study abroad.

While the number of barriers identified by students, faculty, and professional staff is large and diverse, there was remarkable consistency across and within each participating group (students, faculty, and staff). Noteworthy because of how frequently each barrier was mentioned in the survey and in the focus and individual interviews, and because there was consensus among all of the post-secondary stakeholders, are the following:

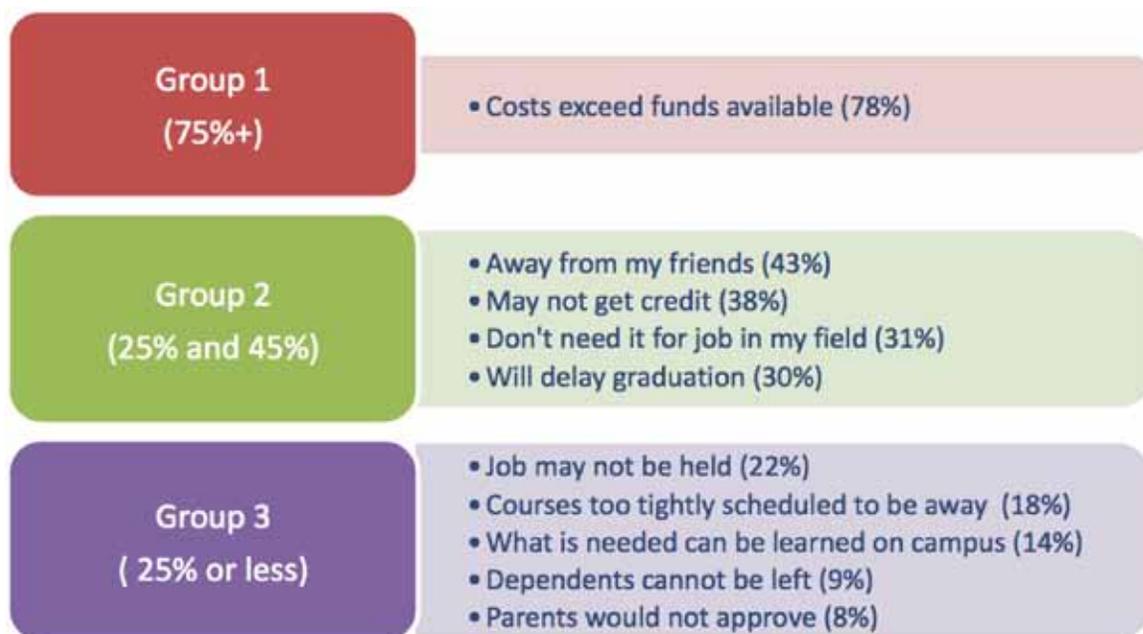
Even the most motivated students find themselves up against institutional norms, expressed in policies, program structures, and underlying attitudes, none of which accept study abroad as a legitimate alternative to studying on campus. In this situation, students are, for the most part, left to their own devices to negotiate individually with the power structures of their home institution.

(1) not only is there a lack of adequate funding available to interested students (in all provinces but Quebec which has a well funded international mobility program) but also the failure of the Student Loans Program to recognize the cost of study abroad as a legitimate expense;

(2) neither post-secondary institutions or the families of students are likely to provide the range of personal and intellectual experiences at earlier stages that prepare students to step beyond their comfort zones, and

(3) institutional barriers which are in place because there is no parallel structure or process to expedite study abroad for students individually or as a group.

Figure 12: Obstacles identified by students, in rank order



Funding Barriers

Fewer than 6% of students reported that they could finance their study abroad participation without financial assistance. Eighty percent who reported needing such assistance put top priority on fair and reasonable access to funds. Interestingly, 16% of the students reported that they did not know if they would require assistance or not, suggesting that they are not clear on the cost of participation.

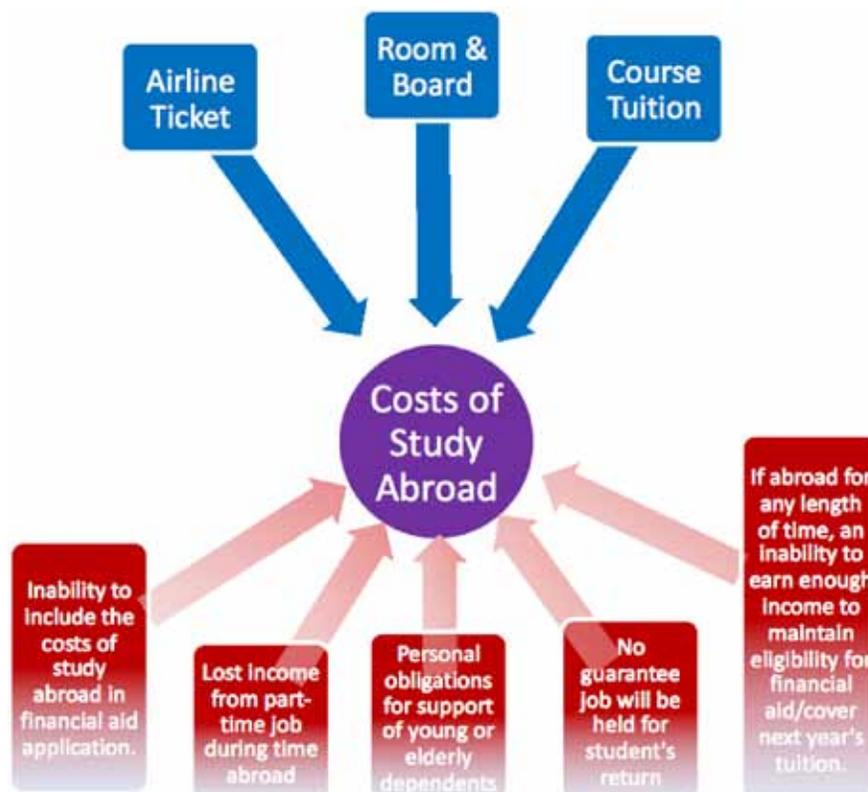
When exploring what costs might be involved, students were apt to report both direct costs incurred by anyone who participates but also indirect costs, which vary from student to student. Figure 13 attempts to present the direct, more widely known, costs as well as the indirect and often invisible costs which cannot be predicted or generalized to all students. The direct costs (airline tickets, room and board, tuition fees) normally appear on the study abroad documentation that students receive when they make inquiries. Indirect costs (support of dependents, potential loss of job, loss of employment income, loss of eligibility for financial aid) may or may not be pointed out in the documentation or by advisers. The student who initially approaches study abroad with excitement may become disillusioned when he or she realizes the actual cost. In some cases, indirect costs are so high that they force students to rethink what is possible in their circumstances.

Costs vary also between different study abroad modalities (time/place). For example, students who register for a course with an international field study component tend to be away for only one to two weeks. It is not unusual, in these cases, for students to engage in personal fundraising to offset the costs of study abroad and to arrange short-term care for dependents within their circle of friends and family.

In addition, some provincial governments offer small grants in aid of such initiatives. However, institutions are much more likely than provincial governments to provide assistance, and at a higher level. For example, among the eight colleges and universities in this study, all but one provided grants, ranging from a low of \$300 to a high of \$3,000. There was no cap on the number of students eligible to receive grants but the total allocation to each student could be adjusted to meet the demand. Colleges were less likely than universities to provide financial support to students and when they did it was a significantly lesser amount.

In contrast, students participating in semester or summer placements incur higher costs due to the longer period abroad, and the need, for some, to secure long-term support for responsibilities at home and to compensate for the loss of employment income, for example. What resources are available to students who face these financial requirements?

Figure 13. Direct and indirect costs of study abroad



In the open response field of the survey, students shared their strategies. Some draw upon their limited savings; some fundraise among family, friends or community; some resort to borrowing from parents to cover costs; some go further into debt through bank loans or other credit; those who are eligible, apply for limited institutional grants in support of international study; some sell possessions of value.

Focus groups could all identify students who had, through their drive and passion, overcome major financial hurdles to undertake international study. However, these are exceptions and not the norm.

The data help us to understand the profile of the student who does not participate. For example, students who have multiple responsibilities at home and at school are less likely to participate in programs of any length. On the other hand, single students living at home may be able to save some of the money required to buy their airline ticket and pay for accommodation and meals. It is probable that single students who have access to family and other resources are most likely to participate. Those with dependents, and who cannot access short programs, are least likely to participate.

The lack of preparedness as a barrier

Faculty and staff participating in the various focus groups agreed that insufficient financial aid was making study abroad impossible for the majority of students. However, given their wider perspective and view of the collective experiences of students, faculty and staff pointed out that many students are simply not prepared to experience the anxiety and discomfort that arises from encountering different cultures and countries especially the first time. They also spoke of students' lack of preparedness to venture outside of their comfort zones, whether personal or academic, to appreciate and seek out challenging contexts in which to learn.

There is a sort of inherent cultural resistance to study abroad and I do not know what the solution is. Maybe that too will change with time but when I cannot get undergraduates to even consider leaving Toronto to go to graduate school...you know, many of them have never been outside of Ontario. I think that there are culturally rigid silos, and that is the world we live in. (F17)

It would be interesting to know how many of our students are familiar with the passport experience. I bet if you took a poll of our students the majority would have no interest or no need for a passport and would be somewhat intimidated by the prospect of having to get one. (PS 17)

If our students do not show an interest in studying abroad... then we have to provide those incremental experiences that push students or challenge their norms so that down the road they might consider studying abroad. Maybe we need to prepare the students, to set the scene. For example, two of us were excited about putting students from two different but interrelated programs together in one class which focused on entrepreneurship. It actually had nothing to do with globalization, but for those students, well they felt they were being told to step outside their comfort zone; some students loved the course, some did not like it at all and dropped the course altogether. ...but, I think that this course is a precursor for being able to say to themselves: "I am used to being in an uncomfortable environment and I can survive"...sure this is a slow, incremental approach but it may be a good long-term strategy.

Yes, we need to change our curriculum, and we need to be more diverse in our teaching and all these other things that will help internationalize learning but I think just giving them some experience that puts them in some sort of a risk environment or pushing them, pushing the envelope a little bit at a time. We have to do it in small steps because if you do it like I did it this year they are likely to fail. (F56)

Certainly one of the things that is necessary is opportunity. If you provide the opportunity for students and the rationale and a path, a critical path that they can follow, it is easier for them to take a risk. (F43)

While none of the students completing the survey said that they felt unprepared, the vignettes and arguments provided by focus group participants were compelling. The gap between the two stakeholder groups (students and faculty/staff) can be accounted for in various ways. For example, students may not be aware of what study abroad entails so they have no basis upon which to judge their preparedness. Put more plainly, students are not aware of what they have not experienced or been taught. Faculty and staff were well informed and claimed a collective perspective based on years of experience working with post-secondary students.

This issue was probed more deeply in response to this question: "If all students were funded to participate in study abroad, could we count on them to go?" In general, focus group participants were skeptical that funding alone would create a dramatic increase in participation rate. Further probing of this skepticism produced a lively discussion about how to prepare students (incrementally or otherwise) for tackling new situations in very different cultural contexts without making them overly anxious. For example, a faculty participant pointed out that she and a colleague had attempted to introduce an interdisciplinary approach to learning about global-mindedness.

Students expect to come to the class and be taught the same things and in the same ways to which they had grown accustomed. Interestingly, they expressed their frustration and dissatisfaction with this new course content and pedagogy. As one of the course designers, I was taken aback when students either dropped the course or attempted to convince us to go back to where they felt comfortable. The question facing the course designer was “How do I get students to entertain going abroad when they have difficulty integrating new cultural concepts and contexts at home?” (F27)

Another faculty member noted that students in her department were likely to have had the same friends since kindergarten.

They have grown up together and have provided enormous support to one another. I suggested to an upper level class that they might want to use some of their time off from school to study abroad. I prepared materials and provided opportunities to receive their questions. One student raised her hand and nearly shouted, “I won’t go unless my friends go.”

As the examples above illustrate, the four areas of preparedness that students might or might not have are:

- Lack of psychosocial readiness;
- No prior experience living far from parents home;
- Little to no experience studying courses that link different disciplines or ways of knowing; and,
- Little to no history with successfully taking on new ways of learning outside of their comfort zones.

A more immediate preparedness issue, as has been noted, is that students are often not prepared for the amount of self-directed work required to gather the documents needed and to apply to the host institutions. Even the most independent and technologically savvy student can get discouraged by this daunting task. This is where the support of family, friends, and a faculty champion becomes a factor in whether the students participate or not.

Institutional Barriers

The lack of demonstrated commitment by institutions to internationalizing learning, in which study abroad plays such an important role, was raised by all members of the post-secondary community who participated in the study. If colleges and universities, using their current strategies, attract few students to study abroad, how do they intend to achieve their current goals which sit higher than the reported 9% participation? How must institutions consider the ways in which their stated commitment to preparing students for the 21st century is manifesting within the academic community?

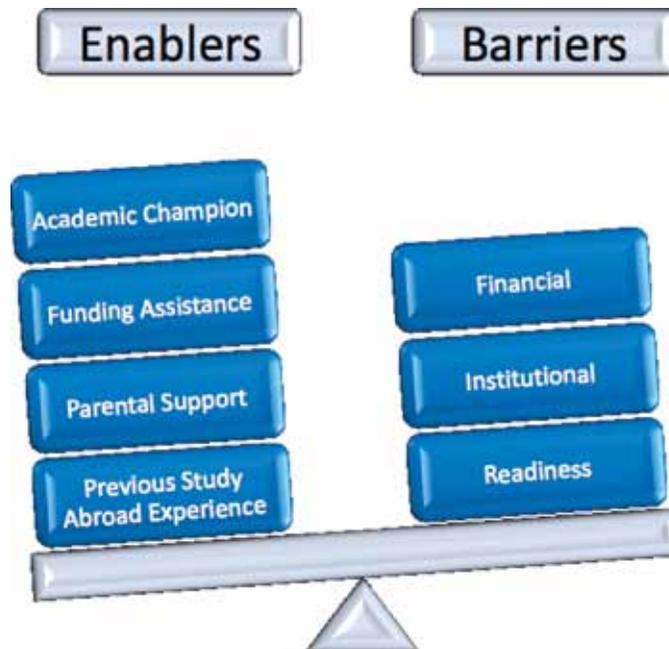
Institutional inflexibility is the underlying problematic. In many institutions, it is next to impossible to implement a program that challenges the cultural norms and structural status quo. Some post-secondary institutions have not yet demonstrated a readiness to envision study abroad as central to their academic mission. Currently, some make sporadic individual accommodations or exceptions to the rule; however these fragmented and ad hoc strategies are insufficient to produce a change in participation rate. Large-scale systemic change – in vision, mission and strategy – is required to more broadly enable greater access and participation. According to the focus group participants, institutional leaders should ask:

- Is credit awarded by our institution for study abroad and, if it is awarded, can it only count as an elective and not a core course?
- Do we clearly articulate and signal the importance of study abroad as part of the educational experience that we envision for our students?
- Are there established communication strategies informing students about their options early in their educational program with us?
- Is information presented in an interactive way, facilitating deeper dialogue about the reality of study abroad?
- Is information presented at the right time – when students are ready to engage with the topic?
- Is information presented in multiple venues, including spaces where students live as well as where they learn?
- Do we recognize our students’ prior international education experience?

The question of preparedness as a barrier is not just about studying abroad but when a student studies abroad as timing can make an important difference to the outcomes. Over half of the students in the study reported participating in study abroad in their last two years of their program. This finding is consistent with other studies. Going abroad in the last half of a student’s program can present a major barrier to participation. For students to seriously entertain study abroad, they must be well informed and early in their program. For example, if students have not thought about study abroad until their third year, they may have used up all their electives, only to find that the department will not count courses taken abroad as part of the core requirements. In these scenarios, the courses taken abroad do not count for anything in their home institutions.

While the obstacles and barriers to study abroad have been laid out, there are elements that enable students to achieve their goals. These enablers, identified by students, faculty and professional staff, as shown in Figure 14, are factors that facilitate student access to and participation in study abroad. The reality for students is that these barriers and enablers compete even while they have to co-

Figure 14: Forces for and against individual participation in study abroad: one possible scenario



exist. To some extent, the success of the student depends on how well she or he is able to minimize the barriers and maximize the enablers.

The scenario, as represented in Figure 14, suggests that the student would likely study abroad. It is important to understand that the specific scenario can be as different as are the students who want to participate. This lack of generalizability makes it impossible to reduce the question of non-participation to a simple remedy.

Mr. Prime Minister

In addition to the fixed choice questions on the student survey and the open discussions among focus group participants, questions about obstacles were probed in more detail by asking each stakeholder group within the post-secondary community to address the Prime Minister. Student answers to a scenario question (Figure 15) provide some insight into challenges and barriers to greater participation in study abroad. The scenario offered students a brief opportunity to speak with the Prime Minister and provide him with some advice regarding his interest in having half of Canadian post-

secondary students participate in study abroad programs. Of the 1237 surveys submitted, 944 students chose to respond to this scenario question, representing 76.3% of the total survey respondents.

Disagreement/Lack of Support

Of those who took the opportunity to give the PM advice, about 4% indicated their disagreement with growing study abroad programs and participation. The primary reasons given for their disagreement and/or lack of support included: perceptions that the PM should address the questions of access to post-secondary education and of student debt before investing in study abroad; feelings that the PM should address “domestic” issues such as health care and the economy; and general questions about the benefits of and rationale for prioritizing study abroad.

The remarks (Figure 16) made by these disapproving students shed light on the barriers to study abroad participation. For instance, their attitudes indicate a lack of understanding about the benefits of study abroad to individuals and to the nation (including economically), lack of clarity about national priorities and the strategic role of study abroad in the “big picture”, and a rigid

Figure 15. Mr. Prime Minister

The Prime Minister of Canada wants half of all students to have a study abroad experience before completing their post-secondary studies. You are invited to speak with the PM for no more than 5 minutes. What advice do you give him about making study abroad opportunities a reality for half of all post-secondary students in Canada?

Figure 16. Discouraging/disagreeing theme

"...just focus on getting people into any post-secondary facility...at this point"

"...he [the Prime Minister] should take care of the students within the country before sending them away to get a more cultured learning experience."

"The benefits of having half of all Canadian students study abroad are likely less than the costs of supporting a [few] students who would need help...fixing health care and domestic education are more important."

"...reconsider this lofty goal...fixing health care and domestic education [are] more important."

"...increase funding to Canadian post-secondary institutions before embarking on funding overseas study."

"...not a good idea with this economic depression."

"I think the most important thing to consider is why we want people to have this experience, and whether or not it is necessary."

"...need to consider both the pros and cons..."

"...the percentage given...sounds unrealistic and unnecessary...it is more important making the study abroad program of a high quality than of a high quantity."

perception that access to higher education and greater participation in study abroad are mutually exclusive goals.

Agreement/Support

An overwhelming number of students who responded to this question indicated their support for government investment in increasing study abroad participation (Figure 17). This was manifested in two main ways: 1) vehement expression of perceived personal, national and global benefits of study abroad experience, and 2) urgent requests that the government and institutions articulate these benefits to the public, to students and to employers. Couched within these generally encouraging statements was advice that offered insight into perceived challenges. These have been grouped as themes and ranked under the following headings: financial/funding; academic/programmatic; awareness/marketing; employment/career; other systemic and personal barriers.

Barriers: Themes identified from the data

Financial/Funding

An overwhelming number (almost 74%) of student respondents referenced financial barriers to participation in study abroad, including numerous references to already high and increasing debt load. Requests, in order of frequency, included: (Figure 18)

1. More funding in the form of subsidies or entirely free programs
2. More scholarships as opposed to loans
3. Reduction of tuition fees overall
4. Consideration of socioeconomic status and students with added financial struggles
5. Waivers or discounts to tuition as incentives for study abroad participation
6. More exchanges (no need to pay tuition fees to host institution abroad so avoiding the high international student tuition payment)

Figure 17: Encouraging/Agreeing Theme

"Awareness of the global situation is a crucial factor in driving the next generation towards sustainable practices environmentally, economically and socially."

"...provides students with an education that school in a formal sense does not provide...[builds] confidence...builds character, makes a person think in a different way."

"...the opportunity to study abroad is a once in a lifetime opportunity...[It] helps build numerous qualities and personal character and also [provides] a chance to see the world from another perspective culturally."

"[Study abroad] will bring a new understanding and new ideas of sharing the wealth in a global market and enable people to see a new vision for a fair, sustainable future for the developing countries and our own."

"Canada is a very culturally diverse country, and it speaks to the character of the Canadian landscape to...encourage opportunities of global interactions for students. The skills obtained abroad will in turn benefit Canada, for students will bring learned skills back with them and be able to perform even more successfully in their careers."

"...studying overseas provides one with the exposure to a different culture, government system, economy, altogether a different way of living...it would be beneficial in helping people 'step out of the box' as well as their comfort zone...it would help one to further develop their beliefs, values and morals and be more globally conscious."

"No matter how much TV you watch or articles you read it isn't a substitute for talking to people who live it every day. The best way to understand anything is to experience it."

"When you [personally] experience intolerance/racism/prejudice for the first time as I did abroad (I am a white male), when you come back to your own society you can see it very well."

"The benefits of studying abroad can be seen in the personal, academic, intercultural and career development of an individual. The increase of one's self confidence, can serve as a catalyst for maturity. It will with certainty have a lasting impact on one's cross-cultural knowledge. Through learning about another culture you will be gaining an understanding of your own culture."

Figure 18. Financial/Funding Barriers

"The key to making study abroad opportunities a reality for half of all post-secondary students lies in: 1) making these programs available; b) guaranteeing that these programs are relevant to the students' degree; and 3) providing financial assistance for ALL students accepted into the study abroad program."

"...prevent further widening of socioeconomic gaps. If only the more affluent half ...are able to attend...it would be detrimental to the equality of the country."

"I would go in a heartbeat if I had enough money to go."

"...education is a right, not a privilege...a lot of people can't afford to attend a post-secondary institution...the government needs to revolutionize the education system so that everyone who wants to attend school can actually afford to do so. Once this is done, then funds can be put towards programs to study abroad."

Academic/Programmatic

After financial/funding barriers, though a distant second, were comments grouped under the theme of academic/programmatic barriers. These barriers were cited by almost 13% of respondents and remarks spoke to a variety of issues relating to course offerings, credit transferability, program flexibility, academic requirements, and quality of experience. Advice, in order of frequency referenced, included:

1. More and greater variety of programs (including duration) and destination
2. Greater flexibility in degree requirements
3. Better matches between programs of study and study abroad opportunities
4. Full credit transfer for courses taken
5. Assurance that graduation delays will be avoided
6. More options for language acquisition
7. Improvement of the quality of study abroad experiences
8. Reduction or elimination of GPA requirement to participate
9. Option to work on additional credit course while away (e.g. online courses) to maximize time/money
10. Greater credit for study abroad courses as incentives
11. Exploration of an international academic curriculum

Awareness/Marketing

About 10% of students who responded felt they did not have enough access to information about opportunities and benefits of participation in study abroad (Figure 20). These students provided the following advice, in order of greatest frequency of reference to the issue:

1. More promotion of programs and earlier (in secondary school)
2. More promotion of benefits to broad array of industries/sectors/employers
3. More global education from grades 1 to 12
4. More partnerships with international institutions/governments

Employment/Career Barriers

A few students highlighted the reality that a large and growing number of students rely on employment income to remain in school. They also talked about the need to ensure that the study abroad experience has practical and tangible benefits on their employability and career aspirations upon return. Advice, in order of frequency, included:

1. Facilitating job security (when leaving employment at home)
2. Facilitating employment abroad
3. Establishing international experience as a norm among employer expectations
4. Providing incentives for employers who hire study abroad graduates
5. Providing recognition of international experience in the form of a letter or certificate of accomplishment from officials/government of country of study abroad
6. Providing a notation referencing experience on resume and/or degree

Other Systemic Barriers (2.5%)

1. Dependents and family commitments
2. Students with disabilities
3. Safety, security and health concerns

Figure 19. Academic/Programmatic Barriers

"...make post-secondary degrees more flexible..."

"...make more online versions of courses so students with a lot of courses can still go study abroad and complete their other courses at the same time..."

"Require that the department sends and receives more students."

"Further develop and initiate partnerships with schools and countries to more easily exchange students in a larger variety of programs."

"...international academic curriculum...recognized and validated in most industrialized countries..."

"Encourage colleges/universities to be more globally oriented."

Personal Barriers (3%)

There were several remarks that pointed to challenges that could be grouped under the theme of personal barriers and include social, psychological, familial and cultural barriers. These were expressed in the following advice given:

1. Address student fears and anxieties
2. Offer more pre-departure information
3. Provide more opportunities with a buddy, the class and/or professor
4. Offer social support and access to counseling while abroad
5. Provide ways for students to communicate with people at home
6. Create venues for students to talk about their experiences when they return

Discussion

The majority of respondents indicated support for government intervention to support the growth of study abroad participation and offered comments that provide insight into existing barriers for students. While some challenges were clearly articulated, some may be hidden or imbedded beneath other barriers. Overt and frequently cited barriers tended to be systemic in nature, such as

financial barriers, academic barriers, and employment barriers (which could also be viewed as financial barriers). Less frequently articulated were individual and personal barriers including social, psychological and cultural attitudes and norms. However, given the number of comments indicating students need more information about the benefits of study abroad coupled with the types of remarks made by students who outright did not support the initiative, it may be appropriate to question whether there are underlying or displaced personal anxieties and fears based on existing value systems, lack of information and misconceptions.

It is apparent that a large number of students who are interested in study abroad are also concerned about access and equity – particularly for the most marginalized students (e.g. by socioeconomic status, disability or single parenthood). This may suggest that any investment in study abroad should be done from a framework that acknowledges and attempts to “level the playing field” for those who have less access by virtue of limited finances, physical and health barriers, and family configuration for example. Otherwise, the policy will continue to privilege those who already have the most access to such opportunities.

“A study abroad program would be great if supported financially by the government; otherwise those

Figure 20. Awareness/Marketing Barriers

“...not enough people are aware of this exciting opportunity...”

“Urge students to become more globally aware during elementary and secondary school – build cultural competence at an early age.”

“...we need help in seeing the value and importance of studying abroad. We feel comfortable and secure studying her because it is all we have known. Why should we even consider studying abroad if it is not required of us...we need concrete structures and systems that will facilitate us studying abroad....”

“Define the purpose of [study abroad] with regard to every single academic program to be offered...Does this benefit both parties, or are the economic and social benefits only for Canadian students?”

Figure 21. Employment/Career Barriers

“...[set] up some form of gaining income while studying abroad.”

“For me, it's more about a work experience program that extends internationally...a chance to find job opportunities...”

“...have an exchange program where the students from other countries exchange over the summer months and are employed by companies in their field of choice. Thus, the income normally produced from the job could then be what pays for the cost of the trip/stay. Each country would benefit from the work that was done and the majority of the cost wouldn't fall directly onto the student, or the government.”

“Make work visas more available.”

“Provide more arrangements with international organizations to ease the burden of finding a job internationally.”

privileged students already able to go abroad will get helped up the ladder yet again."

Many students framed their comments as either/or rather than both/and propositions in terms of investment in and access to post-secondary education and investment in and access to study abroad programs. This polarized thinking was also apparent in framing comments about domestic versus international priorities. It is possible that this competitive approach to the "problem" of study abroad participation in and of itself acts as a barrier. That said, a few students did demonstrate strategic thinking in questioning where study abroad programs and their benefits fit in the context of an array of internationalization efforts in higher education and broader institutional and society social and educational goals.

"Ultimately, interacting in a Canadian classroom in which international students are present and participating in the learning environment is equally important in forming a global perspective and understanding cultures."

These observations suggest that the government should pay attention not only to clearly articulating the benefits of study abroad but to develop strategies that demonstrate synergies with other social and educational policies and priorities.

4.2.2 Research Question Two: Why aren't more diverse students engaged in study abroad?

o The Face of Study Abroad

In order to discuss the issue of diversity among study abroad participants, questions must be raised about accessibility, of equity in and inclusivity of programs at home and abroad. In exploring who does and who does not participate in study abroad, practitioners in the field have written about the need to change the face of study abroad by engaging more non-traditional students such as mature students, racialized students, students who are parents, students who identify as LGBTQ and students with disabilities for instance.

In her article "Beyond Stereotypes in Education Abroad," in the March-April 2009 issue of *International Educator* (NAFSA: Association of International Educators), Susan Ladika reminds us that "a lot of students deselect themselves" due to real and perceived barriers. For instance, she writes that, as a result of systemic barriers, racialized students have resigned themselves to thinking that study abroad is not meant for them but rather for "rich, White kids". She goes on to provide several examples to demonstrate that the barriers and enablers to study abroad can differ dramatically for students of varying social identities.

Ladika draws attention to short-term cost effective programs which have proven to be more accessible to mature students who have family commitments including children and added financial burdens. With respect to racialized students, she points to strategies such as intentional outreach by racialized faculty or staff, citing Michigan State University as one example of an institution using this model. She brings to light the fear of racism abroad and the role of supportive parents as critical issues for racialized students. For LGBTQ students, she underscores the issue of safety, as discrimination and violence toward LGBTQ are still prominent globally. LGBTQ students may wonder how "out" they can be while in the host country. An essential starting point for LGBTQ students to have a positive experience abroad is to be housed in a safe and accepting environment. Similarly, Ladika identifies accessible home environments as well as planned pairings with teachers and guides as tactics that can make the difference between a student with a disability being able to go abroad or not.

Whether and how to change the face of study abroad participants are two questions that merit further investigation. Our study solicited ethnicity, gender and (dis)ability information and attempted to detect any notable demographic differences. While our data was preliminary, inviting further investigation of issues of diversity, we found great diversity among student respondents who indicated an interest in study abroad. This in and of itself suggests an obligation on the part of the institution to understand how barriers and enablers play out differently among students of varying social identities.

o Ethnic Identity

Students were asked if they identified with a particular ethnic group and then to specify how they identify. The responses to this question were clustered into categories of ethnicities used by Statistics Canada and then assigned to either a "White" or a "Non-white/Racialized" group based on those ethnicities that Statistics Canada deems as "visible minorities" which we are referring to as racialized in this report (Table 17). We acknowledge that this is a crude way of associating reported ethnicity with racialization and that more specific questions about both ethnic and racial identity as well as forced responses using a drop down menu would elicit a more accurate picture.

With regard to ethnic diversity, 15% of survey respondents identified with a particular ethnic group that falls under one of the racialized ethnicity categories according to Statistics Canada. This percentage approaches both the 2006 national distribution of racialized groups in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2006) and the 2005 ratio of Canadian

Table 17: Categorization of ethnic identities: white and non-white/racialized

White/non-racialized/ non-Aboriginal	Non-White/Racialized/ Aboriginal
British Isles (British)	Aboriginal
Eastern European	African
French	Arab
North American	Caribbean
Southern European	East Asian
	Latin, Central &
	South American
	South Asian
	South East Asian
	West Asian
Source: Statistics Canada (2006)	

first year undergraduate students who self-identified as being racialized, respectively 16.2% (Statistics Canada, 2006) and 16% (AUCC, 2005). However it appears from the self-reported data, that Aboriginal students may be underrepresented among survey respondents (only 1.1%) as compared with 2006 national Aboriginal population statistics which indicate a 3.75% national distribution (Statistics Canada, 2006) and 3.68% post-secondary distribution (AUCC, 2006).

o Language Proficiency

The survey uncovered 64 different languages (including English and French) represented among students who responded to the relevant question about language proficiency (Table 18).

A total of 421 students (34% of the survey respondents) reported possessing language skills in one or more languages other than English or French. One student reported knowledge of five different languages, eight students had a command of four different languages, 13 possessed skills in three different languages, 53 in two additional languages, and 346 reported competence in one language other than English or French.

While it may be assumed that a large proportion of the 85% of students who did not answer the question about ethnic identity is White, because they will not have associated White/European identity as an ethnicity, there is reason to believe that there are, among this group of non-responders, a number of racialized students who chose not to self-identify. We cannot know for certain how large this number is, but cross-referencing responses to the question about language with responses to the question that asked if students identified with any particular ethnicity yielded some interesting findings that invite further investigation.

Of the 421 students who responded to the question about language proficiency by providing a list of languages other than English or French, 160 were students who identified as ethnically racialized. However, among the 299 who did not respond to the ethnic identity question, were languages listed that are not typically second or third languages learned in secondary or post-secondary Canadian schools. For instance, Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Farsi, Hindi, Kiswahili, Punjabi, Shona, Tamil and Urdu were among the languages represented by a good number of students in the pool of non-responders to the ethnicity question.

o Distribution of Racialized Students

From responses to the question about ethnic identification and the question about language proficiency, it is safe to conclude that the percentage of racialized students who responded to the survey is greater than 15%. Tables 19 and 20 show the percentage distribution of racialized and Aboriginal identities reported in the study as compared with national and self-reported post-secondary freshman statistics.

o Differences between White and Racialized Respondents

When comparing responses of racialized and Aboriginal students to those who are not racialized (inasmuch as we could determine from self-reporting), only two variables were found to produce significant differences. Racialized and Aboriginal student responses differed from non-racialized, non-Aboriginal student responses on questions regarding the likelihood they would participate in a study abroad experience during their post-secondary studies and the question of their interest in participating in a study abroad program/experience if they could do so. Racialized and Aboriginal students, taken together, are slightly more likely to participate in a study abroad experience during their post-secondary studies ($p < .05$) and they were more interested in participating in a study abroad program/experience if they could do so ($p < .05$) than their non-racialized peers. It was not possible to disaggregate the ethnicities that made up the racialized and Aboriginal student pool, which may or may not have uncovered important differences between the various ethnic groups. Further investigation might uncover whether there are differences in access to and participation in study abroad between Aboriginal, Black, Caribbean and various racialized ethnicities associated with recent immigration trends and equity challenges in Canada. Faculty and staff did note that Aboriginal students seem less represented among the groups of students who participate in study abroad.

Afrikaans	Gishu	Polish
Albanian	Gujrati	Portuguese
American Sign Language	Hebrew	Punjabi
Amharic	Hindi	Romanian
Arabic	Italian	Russian
Armenian	Japanese	Serbian
Bengali	Kiswahili	Shona
Bosnian	Korean	Sindhi
Bulgarian	Kurdish	Slovenian
Catalan	Luganda	Spanish
Chichewa	Lugosa	Swedish
Chinese (Cantonese)	Luhyan	Swiss
Chinese (Mandarin)	Macedonian	Tagalog (Filipino)
Creole	Marithi	Tamil
Croatian	Mohawk	Turkish
Danish	Montenegrin	Ukrainian
Dutch	Nepalese	Urdu
English	Norwegian	Vietnamese
Farsi	Papiamentu	Yoruba
French	Patois	Yugoslavian
German	Persian	Zulu

Racialized Ethnicity	National (Stats Can, 2006)	Post-Secondary (AUCC, 2006)	Survey (Bond, 2009) n=1237
Total Racialized	16.2%	16%	13%
Latin, Central & South American	1.00%		1.37%
Black	2.50%		2.43%
Caribbean	0.04%		1.29%
East Asian (Chinese)	3.90%		3.8%
East Asian (Korean)	0.47%		
East Asian (Japanese)	0.27%		
South East Asian	0.08%		1.05%
South Asian	4.0%		2.43%
West Asian	0.55%		0.24%
Arab	2.76%		0.57%
Pacific Island	-		0.08%
Total			13%

Source: Statistics Canada (2006), Association of Universities & Colleges of Canada (2006), World of Learning (2009)

Identity	National (Stats Can, 2006)	Post-Secondary (AUCC, 2006)	Survey (Bond, 2009) n=1237
Aboriginal	3.75%	3.68%	1.10%

Source: Statistics Canada (2006), Association of Universities & Colleges of Canada (2006), World of Learning (2009)

o Gender, Disability, Socioeconomic Status and LGBTQ

Data from the 1,237 student survey responses may demonstrate a greater gender gap than previously reported by Knight (2000), with 72% of respondents identifying as female and 28% as male. Further research may shed some light on whether there is indeed a trend towards greater numbers of females participating in study abroad and, if so, why this is the case.

Of the respondents to our survey, 6.8% reported having a disability. Further investigation would be required to determine what, if any, role (dis)ability plays in study abroad access and participation. Our data indicated that a greater number of college students than university students reported having a disability.

The study did not elicit any information from interviewees regarding the participation of first generation Canadian, lower socioeconomic status or LGBTQ students; these “invisible” identities were not explicitly sought out.

While the self-reported data on ethnicity, gender, disability, socioeconomic status and LGBTQ could not be sufficiently analyzed to provide any conclusive information regarding differences between varying social identities, the study does raise a number of interesting questions for further investigation. Whether and how social inequities influence barriers and enablers to participation in study abroad is a question that remains unanswered. As well, we should ask whether and how social identities influence motivations, experiences and success (including perceived or real differences in the benefits and learning outcomes) related to study abroad participation.

Our study illuminates the need for individual institutions to engage in intentional and systematic approaches in order to identify barriers and enablers for varying student demographics, establish strategies to achieve their desired participation goals, and tailor programs to meet the needs of their faculty, students and institutional culture. The government has an important role to play in developing policies and strategies that provide sufficient resources and flexibility for institutions to contribute in their own unique way and to maximize accessibility and equity when promoting opportunities.

4.2.3 Research Question Three: *What do students learn from studying abroad that they likely would not have learned had they remained on campus for the same period of time?*

This section of the survey was to be completed by those students who self-reported having participated in a study abroad program during their post-secondary studies. The

number of students in this category (113) was sufficient to produce a rich set of data drawn from a combination of structured and open-ended facilitating questions on the student survey.

o Demographic characteristics of students who have studied abroad

The experience with study abroad as reported by students in the study presents a more complicated snapshot of the experience than was anticipated. First, over 30% of the students reported their study abroad experience was not taken at the college or university in which they are currently registered. The implications of this finding include: (1) at least some study abroad experience is transferred into the current program, and there are system implications as students transfer institutions and programs for documenting the numbers of students who have this experience by the time they graduate, (2) some students may have interpreted having been born and grown up in another country and culture as one way to experience study abroad, and (3) students may have studied abroad with programs offered by a non-governmental organization or by the private sector.

o College and university differences

When it came to understanding if and how college and university student experience with study abroad might differ, three inter-related findings emerged. First, university students are significantly ($p < .001$) more likely than their college peers to participate in study abroad programs organized by their institution. This finding should not be surprising given that colleges have only within the last decade begun consistently offering study abroad and the sheer number of institution-sponsored study abroad programs remains substantially less than at the university. Therefore, college students who are almost as likely as university students to be globally interested and aware have to turn to other international study opportunities.

College students are significantly more ($p < .001$) likely to have had international learning experience organized outside of the college sector. University students are significantly more likely to report that they took courses and received official credit for their international learning than the college students. It is unclear from the data who organized a large share of the international study taken by college students; all we know is that the college sector itself had much less involvement with the international study of their students than originally anticipated.

Prior Learning Experiences Abroad by Level: (n=1205)

I have never studied abroad 71%

I have gone abroad for education after high school but not on a study abroad program 15%

I have participated in a study abroad program during K-12 5%

I have participated in study abroad during post-secondary program 9%

definition depends on perspective

The working definition of study abroad specifically focused on students' participation in any internationally based program or experience including exchange, clinical placement, field study, international internship, co-op placement, practicum or voluntary service/work offered by a post-secondary institution, for which academic credit may or may not be awarded. As the completed surveys were reviewed, some of the open-ended questions contained information that suggested the author might have used a different interpretation of "study abroad" than did the study's authors. The original definition limited what counted as study abroad to those programs offered by post-secondary institutions. It appeared, however, that at least a few participants may have had a range of learning experiences in different contexts all of which they included in their own sense of study abroad. These other scenarios included: (1) the student had studied in another country before immigrating to Canada, or (2) the student had participated in an international education (or service) program offered by private business or public sector NGOs that may or may not have been profit-making. A hand check by two researchers turned up less than 10 in the 1200+ completed surveys that might have referenced a different set of circumstances but with global mobility increasing, who offers study abroad programs where may warrant its own independent study.

The learning potential of studying abroad

In this section, the findings related to what do students

learn by studying abroad is presented by on three sources of data: (1) what students had to say about their most memorable learning experience, (2) what students report having learned abroad that they do not think they would have learned at home during the same period, and (3) how the responses of study abroad students differ in their survey responses to those who have not studied abroad.

o Most memorable experiences of studying abroad

Up until this point, all discussion about the learning potential of study abroad has been reported from the perspective of those faculty and professional staff who participated in the focus group interviews. What do the students with this experience have to say and how can their reporting be understood within a conceptual model of learning?

Students frequently identified their most memorable experiences in terms of events or experiences which challenged them on some level. Students' personal and academic experiences were revealed in terms of challenges to their ways of seeing, being and doing. These challenges can be identified in terms of four levels:

1. Observation of difference (passive)
2. Difficulties with difference (observational or actual)
3. Positives of difference (saw challenges as opportunities to learn, about themselves or their studies/work)
4. Experience of difference (experiences with difference were catalysts for change, incorporation of experience into self-identity, transformational learning)

Very few responses indicated Levels 1 or 2. The majority of responses exhibited the critically reflective characteristics of Levels 3 and 4.

My most memorable experience was being forced to speak in a foreign language I was studying since nobody I encountered spoke English. I often had to speak in fragmented sentences since I was not fluent but it helped develop my understanding of the language and overcome some of my shyness.

Academic experiences and travel or sightseeing were identified as memorable, but seemed secondary to students' experiences of learning through the relationships they formed with others.

It [the most memorable experience] was outside the classroom. The host university grouped all international exchange students together in one living residence. We traveled together, ate together and went to classes together. You learn a lot from the people you live with. The host university also set up trips around our host

country and through Europe. While traveling together we experienced and learned a lot. It was an amazing experience.

Students' assumptions and self-perceptions were challenged through their relationships with others.

When I first went to Spain I did not know a smidgen of Spanish. I, foolishly, thought I would be alright without knowing the language. It was the scariest, most frustrating experience of my life. It opened my eyes to what people who struggle with the language in Canada must face and I have become much more patient and understanding.

Notions of self-awareness emerged, and for students who not only grappled with previously unexamined beliefs, but formed new notions, transformation was apparent.

It [the most memorable experience] was learning how different circumstances and cultures truly do form different perspectives. We are told about that in class, and while we do have international students at my university, our classes are still predominantly Canadian. Being the "other" really shows you something, and it makes you analyze what you've been taught and how you perceive everything. I would say learning about Canada, and how others view our country and customs and people, and having to incorporate that into my world view would be the most memorable learning experience I had while abroad.

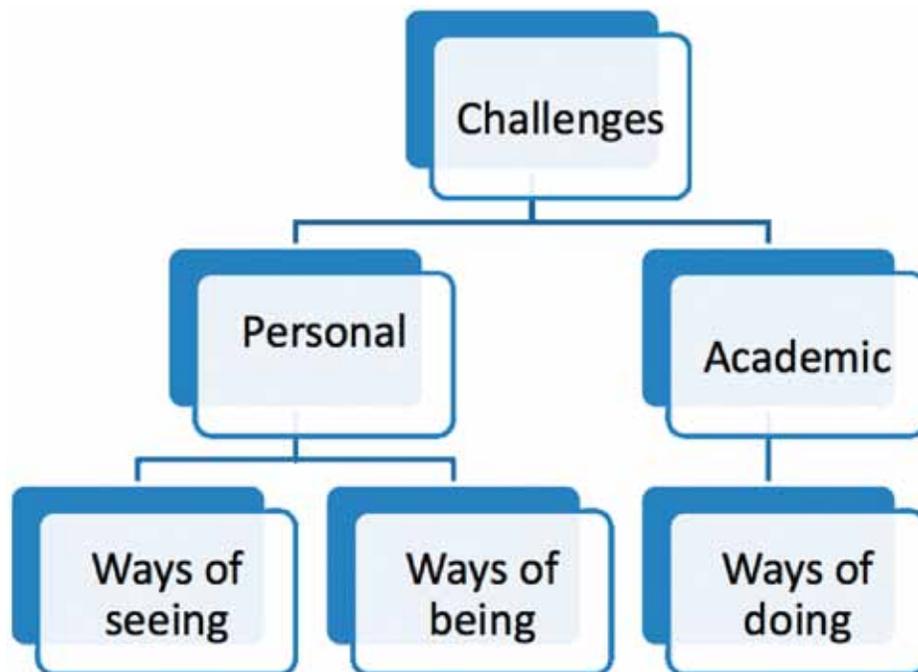
Students were invited to add anything they had not discussed in response to earlier questions and most continued on for quite some time to detail their experience with learning in an international context and in contexts of immersion where everyday life was focused on learning about yourself, others, and the fields of interest and study. Students who responded to this question were eager to share how overwhelmingly positive their experiences abroad were, and to suggest that everyone should have the opportunity to do so. One respondent stated that study abroad "100% affected the way I see my nursing career. The most memorable part of my nursing degree program."

Other views:

Studying abroad is by far one of the best experiences I have had in my post-secondary studies. I learned so much about myself, Canada, and about a variety of different cultures and ways of life. This is not something that can be learned from a book, and I urge everyone to go international and experience the world firsthand. It is worth every minute!!

Everyone should do and have the ability to study abroad, because the learning experience and knowledge you gain can help and may be valuable to improve our country. If we don't embrace other techniques we will fall behind and end up paying for it in the long run.

Figure 22: What was your most memorable learning experience while abroad?



Financial constraints were mentioned as an obstacle to being able to repeat the study abroad experience. Even students who mentioned the financial difficulties they had while abroad, or as the result of their decision to go abroad, noted that the benefit of the experience outweighed the financial burden incurred.

I consider this experience one of my biggest accomplishments in life. It was not easy to make this decision or to actually go through with it. It was difficult to be away from home and parents (especially because I have never lived away from home) and it also brought back memories about moving away from my home country. It was difficult and worrisome financially and I am still paying off debts I made while travelling. I also did very poorly academically as I found the expectations are very different in Australia than they are in Canada and I did not have enough time to adjust to them. However, this experience was worth all the trouble and I would strongly recommend it to any young adult. I believe studying abroad can benefit in one way or another any post-secondary student.

Students who have had studied abroad have felt provoked to encourage others to do the same.

Encouragement of study abroad has been one of my major priorities since coming home. I feel very strongly that it should be a requirement of universities to encourage more openly the study abroad experience. Most people I talk to say that not going abroad was the only regret they had about their university education.

o It's not all about fun, sunshine, and travel: Learning as focus of study

A series of questions, adapted from the 1990 research by Carlson et. al, were included in the student survey. Directed only to the sub-group of students who self-

identified as having studied abroad, seven key areas of student growth are reported on the basis of (1) having learned less or a lot less abroad than at home, (2) having learned about the same abroad as at home, and (3) having learned more or a lot more abroad than at home. The areas and level of growth attainment reported is expressed in percentages Table 21.

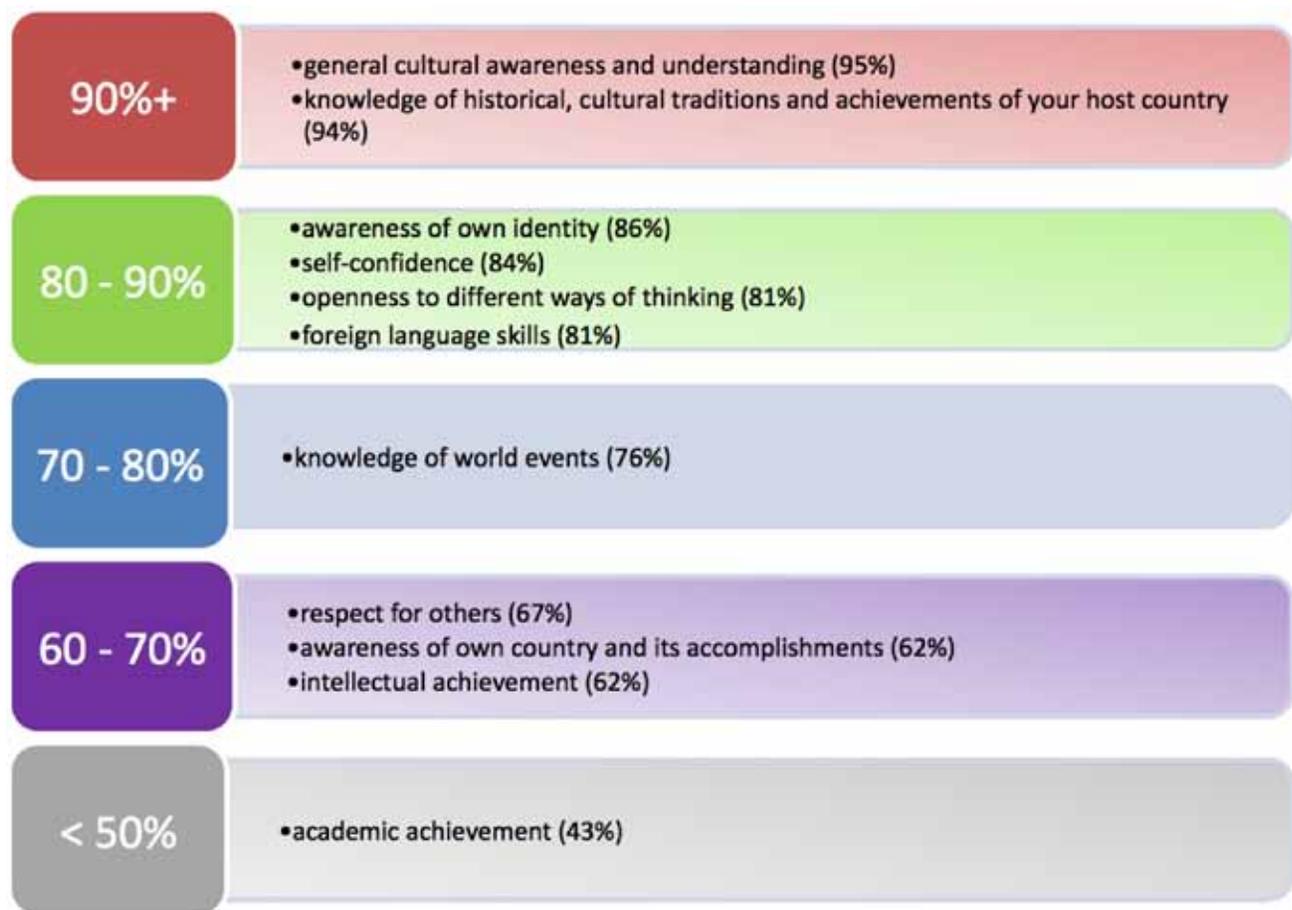
As can be seen from the data reported in the table, the growth that students report achieving during their study abroad period is at least as high as or a lot higher than what they think they would have learned during the exact same period of time had they remained on campus. When looking at the same data set but organized in rank order (see Figure 23), the areas in which the most learning and the least learning takes place abroad becomes quite clear.

The first and second ranked growth areas, as reported by the students, fall clearly within the domain of intercultural awareness and sensitivity and broad-based knowledge acquisition. The fact that academic achievement is ranked the lowest of the growth areas included in the survey question is not surprising as this is the type of knowledge students' associate with course content, remembering knowledge that is fundamental to a particular subject or discipline. The knowledge areas that are shown in Figure 23 are both broader and more diverse than represented to students as subject level knowledge. Knowledge will be learned by attending courses abroad but is just as likely to be absorbed and sought by the very fact that the student is open to different ways of knowing and learning, quick to absorb an enriched body of knowledge about world events, history of the host and home country, and learning new language(s). The power of such learning experiences remains with students long after they have returned to campus, graduated, and taken up careers. The passion to engage learning that was ignited while studying abroad was found to have influenced many of the faculty, staff, Canadian public and employers who participated in the

Table 21: All areas of learning/growth reported by area of growth, expressed as percentages

	Learned more abroad	Learned about the same	Learned less abroad
General Cultural Awareness and Understanding	95%	4%	2%
Knowledge of historical, cultural traditions and achievement of host country	94	4	5
Awareness of Own Identity	86	11	3
Self-confidence	84	11	5
Openness to Different Ways of Thinking	81	17	3
Foreign Language Skills & Competencies	81	12	8
Knowledge of World Events	76	16	7
Respect for Others	67	31	2
Awareness of Canada & Its Accomplishments	63	24	14
Intellectual Development	62	24	15
Academic Achievement	43	28	31

Figure 23: Growth/Learning reported to take place on study abroad, as compared with growth/learning on campus, presented in rank order



study. In fact, a review of the entire data set shows that people who have studied abroad reported the highest levels of support for access to and the public funding of study abroad today. Having once studied abroad, people are likely to go again over the course of a life-time, some quite often. Well over half of the focus and individual interview participants reported it was their own study abroad experience that changed their lives and careers and could account for why they are so engaged in helping today's generation of students to participate.

o The difference having studied abroad makes

Not only do students report growth/learning related to a more complex worldview as shown in the memorable experiences, statistical differences (at the $p < .001$ level) between those students who reported having studied abroad and those who did not were also found, in five out of the 34 survey questions open to all students.

1. Looking ahead, how likely is it that you will participate in a study abroad experience during your post-secondary studies?

Students who had already participated in study abroad while in a college/university were more likely to participate in [another] study abroad experience during their post-secondary studies than their counterparts who never studied abroad and were not certain it would be possible to do so.

2. Does your college/university offer opportunities for students to study abroad?

Students who have participated in study abroad are more aware of the study abroad opportunities offered by their college/university than are students who have not studied abroad. The lack of study abroad awareness among the student participants was discouragingly large. Students having studied abroad suggested their college or university use them to create communication strategies both on-campus and on-line as the home institutions are not perceived to be making the most out of returning students or the technologies so familiar to today's students.

3. How interested are you in participating in study abroad if you could do so?

Those who have studied abroad are more likely to study abroad again during their post-secondary studies than are students who have never studied abroad. There is some additional evidence that suggests nearly 10% of students who have studied abroad will in fact go a second time; some go for a third although these students are the exception and report having access to resources and encouragement from their family.

4. Will participation in a study abroad program sometime during your post-secondary studies be possible?

Those students having studied abroad were much more optimistic they could put together the financial support necessary than were their peers who had not even studied abroad. In fact, the majority of students participating in the study simply gave up trying to study abroad without trying to raise the funds. Students who make this choice reflect the values of the dominant culture which assign to study abroad "nice if you can do it but nothing important is lost if you cannot."

5. How important is it for you to study abroad in a country where English or French is widely spoken?

The importance of knowing that English or French will be the language spoken in the host country to which a student goes to study is statistically more important to men than women, although the data did not suggest the reasons for this difference. Students who had previously studied abroad were much more interested in studying in non-English or non-French speaking countries than were those who have never participated in study abroad.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The study's purpose was to develop a "snapshot" of the experience of Canadian post-secondary students' access to and success with study abroad programs. Post-secondary students, faculty, and professional staff of Canadian colleges and universities, as well as members of the Canadian public and employers, contributed their experiences related to one or more of the three original research questions. The findings, supported in the body of the paper by the inclusion of representative raw data, have been presented first by the contributing group (Canadian public, employers, faculty/staff, and students) and then by theme.

Overall, four major themes were identified in the course of the data analysis. The three themes that emerged that are firmly supported by the raw data and the approach to data analysis will be the basis for recommendations that will be introduced shortly. Theme four, the lack of preparedness on the part of many students, especially those in the colleges, to move outside their established comfort zones (intellectually and personally) is an important contribution made by this study. However, the research team agreed that the data was insufficient to make recommendations at this time.

- o Challenging the status quo

In putting forward recommendations that contest the status quo, it is not the intention of the research team to appear to undervalue the dedication and achievement of faculty champions and professional staff (especially study abroad advisors) whose expertise and gutsiness have built and enriched study abroad programs for over 30 years. That said, Canada's participation rate remains less than 3%, so the efforts to date have not been sufficient to create any substantial movement towards the achievements that are possible. Moving incrementally and under conditions of marginality and lack of resources can understandably take its toll and it is not reasonable to continue to expect such small numbers of faculty and staff to carry the entire burden of producing educational transformation. Therefore, the conclusions and recommendations are being put forth on the premise that large-scale change is needed or Canada will continue to find itself coming in last in competition among its trading partners.

There is considerable evidence from the higher education and educational change literature to suggest that the university, in particular, is not often moved to take risks or leaps of faith. According to historical scholars, the university has been able to maintain its core identity and strength while absorbing new roles and identities that are demanded by the context in which the institution is situated. Rather than to stop doing what it has always

done, the university is known to continue to add new roles and structures that keep it relevant and important to the society which supports it. Large-scale changes do occur and have done so recently. There is no reason to expect that the large-scale change being recommended in this report cannot take place once students and faculty become seized with its possibilities. The Canadian public already knows the direction in which post-secondary education needs to go.

Theme One: An overwhelming lack of awareness about the potential of study abroad to create important learning outcomes creates the conditions in which study abroad programs are marginalized and treated as a disposable option by students and faculty.

- o Communication occurs in silos and is ad hoc, permitting the status quo to remain unchanged.
- o The majority of students have a fictionalized notion of study abroad. Many students who do decide to participate in programs do so for one set of reasons (travel, fun, and friends) but return to campus passionate about the important ways in which what they learned had transformed their lives.
- o Posters were found to attract student attention but not to lead to actual engagement or participation. In fact, the iconic images of many posters were identified as (1) contributing to inaccurate ideas of what study abroad is about, and (2) perpetuating the thinking of many students that study abroad is for "elites" and not for them.

Recommendation 1: An institution-wide policy on internationalizing learning within the post-secondary context is needed to replace the conventional, ad hoc approach that has characterized much of what colleges and universities have offered within the ambit of internationalization-at-home, and global mobility-based programs such as study abroad.

- o A university wide policy supported by the systems of the institution should clearly lay out the role internationalizing learning plays in the provision of a high quality education.
- o While the policy and its principles should be widely acclaimed, the success of the policy will in some measure depend on its flexibility. There should be room for academic and administrative units to implement the policy in different ways such that innovative alternative approaches can be designed appropriate to the discipline/department/programs

of study. Appreciative inquiry as a conceptual framework and methodology was reported by faculty and staff participants to be effective at producing engagement of diverse communities such as those found in colleges and universities.

- o The findings strongly suggest that study abroad participation represents a diversity of social identities across race/ethnicity. The numbers and range of varying ethnic and racial identities who responded to the survey, in comparison with demographic statistics in Canadian higher education institutions and nationally, suggest there may be uniquely Canadian trends when examining the issue of equity and access to study abroad.
- o The findings point to the need for institutions to engage in intentional and systematic approaches that will identify key barriers and enablers for varying student demographics, establish relevant strategies to achieve desired participation goals, and tailor study abroad programs to meet the needs of underrepresented groups.

Recommendation 2: Research is needed.

As the internationalization of post-secondary education (including study abroad as one of the mobility-based approaches) continues to rapidly spread, both institutional and pan-Canadian research programs need to be launched. Institutional access to the emerging interdisciplinary research on various aspects of internationalizing learning will need to be easily accessible to those people participating in institutional decision making and leadership.

Broadly speaking, organizations representing colleges and universities should be advancing the cause of research in this area on the basis of the contribution such research could make to (1) training young scholars, (2) developing a Canadian locus of expertise, and (3) providing grants to faculty to hire undergraduate as well as graduate research assistants. Special research initiatives targeting social issues of particular importance are currently offered and a compelling argument for research support should be put forward.

Recommendation 3: In funding future research and investigating the question of whether and how to augment study abroad participation, the government, as well as colleges/universities should broaden the concept of accessibility to include ways to assess and address any racial/ethnic differences in barriers/enablers to participation.

Recommendation 4. Future research should specifically look at the question of racial/ethnic differences (and its intersectionality with other social identities) in relation

to both perceptions of and participation in study abroad among diverse student populations.

Recommendation 5. Particular attention must be paid to funding and access for student populations underrepresented in study abroad programs.

- o *In this study, the underrepresented student groups include: (1) men, (2) students in science disciplines, (3) single parent families, (4) students who are caring for their elderly or disabled parent(s), (5) aboriginal students, and (6) students who rely on part-time income to allow them to continue in their post-secondary program of study, and cannot afford to not work or take time off from work.*

Recommendation 6: Research funding should be made available to support undergraduate research assistant awards.

Research funding should be made available to support undergraduate research assistantship awards. These research assistants could be supervised by graduate students and/or faculty members who are prepared to investigate emerging issues such as access, equity, and the various new program formats and partnerships that are beginning to capture the imagination of Canadian post-secondary institutions. Benefits of having a nationwide cadre of undergraduate research assistants could include: (1) increasing institutional self-knowledge and awareness, (2) training young scholars, (3) offering students who have returned from abroad relevant employment opportunities and funds to help defray the cost of their post-secondary degree, (4) strengthening the Canadian-based literature on internationalizing learning that will enable colleges and universities to move away from relying on the US for research in this area, and (5) generating institution-specific research that examines the local/provincial/national link(s) between study abroad participation and employability post graduation.

Recommendation 7: Returning students should be used effectively and in ways that benefit both student and college/university.

Personalized communication with students, in particular, but also communication with their parents, faculty members, and employers has been found to be particularly effective at raising awareness of study abroad opportunities and realities and in doing so increase the overall participation rate. Using a personal, interactive approach to creating student-study abroad engagement was widely suggested by the 100+ students in the study who self-identified as having participated in study abroad. Their recommendations on how to use returning students effectively, and to the benefit of both the students and the college/university, included: (1) mentoring students who have expressed a strong interest in participating but

who have not yet done so, (2) meeting personally with faculty members, departments and individual classes to present what s/he learned and how s/he benefitted from participating in study abroad, (3) using new technologies that enable returning students to interact online with students considering study abroad, and (4) joining with interested faculty and study abroad advisors who as a small group are available to meet with parents who may be on campus during orientation or special events. Study respondents expressed surprise that more digital outreach was not being done to promote study abroad in realistic and interesting ways.

Recommendation 8. Student learning should be documented and shared.

- o Students who had studied abroad pointed out that it took them awhile to understand that what they were learning was leading them towards important changes in their worldview, self-confidence, and dedication to their studies.
- o Pre-departure programs should include a focus on the kinds of learning that can be achieved and offer these students training to develop their digital skills, such as Digital Story software, to document their learning. Such digital documentation in the students' own words and using the students' photography can, if permission is granted by the student, be used by the college/university to show parents, employers, faculty and others how study abroad has actually changed how students understand themselves and the world.

Recommendation 9. On-line software can help students plan.

Students who have never put together a detailed plan for something as substantial as leaving the country are often overwhelmed by how much information they need to gather and how to find it. Negotiating the unknown (such as which university/college in the world has the best academic program, or the leading scholars, or which accept study abroad students) can deter students. According to many study abroad advisors, male students, in particular, struggle with planning more than females. The reason for this is not known or discussed by the advisors, faculty, or the professional staff. Given that fewer men than women participate in many study abroad programs, a new software program needs to be designed to help students with the important planning process. Such a product, designed by returning students, faculty/staff champions, and study abroad advisors could not only be made available to students but marketed for profit. Any profits could be invested in a bursary to help students studying abroad to defray at least some of the costs.

Recommendation 10. Student-centered outreach can make a difference.

Given how influential parents are to a student's decision to study abroad or not, they should not be overlooked by those interested in encouraging study abroad. Parental outreach should address parental concerns such as those identified in the study, (1) student safety, and (2) funding shortfalls. Digital communication, which includes the use of digital stories produced by students who have returned from study abroad, should lead an outreach initiative, with posters, flyers, and letters providing supplemental support. Outreach should be extended to Canadian employers who, based on their response to survey questions, remain largely unaware of the benefits of study abroad to employers. Given the small number of employers participating, any findings generated by these participants must be interpreted with caution and can at best only be suggestive. Career services offered on some of the participating campuses were identified by faculty and professional staff as playing an important role in educating employers and should be involved in such outreach initiatives.

Theme Two: "Institutions fund what they value" and Canada does not fund the cost of student participation in study abroad.

- o The lack of funding is the top ranked barrier to student participation in study abroad as reflected in the data submitted by the faculty, professional staff, students, and many members of the Canadian public.
- o Over 90% of students in this study report not being able to participate in study abroad, even though they are interested or very interested in doing so, without outside funding to cover the direct and indirect costs. In this context, students who are exceptional fundraisers or who have access to savings, family resources, or family connections globally are thought to be eligible to apply for study abroad. Students from families of average means do not think they have any chance of ever participating, nor do single parents, students caring for elderly parents, or students who are carrying a large student debt. With so few students in a financial position to participate it is no surprise that Canada's participation rate is very low.
- o The Canadian public, employers, faculty members, professional staff, and about half of the student participants strongly to very strongly agree that access to study abroad opportunities should be available to all post-secondary students who wish to participate.

- o The findings of the public opinion poll show that the Canadian public – based on the belief that study abroad experience strengthens Canadian values and benefits the Canadian labour force – strongly or very strongly support making public funds available to post-secondary students to offset the cost of participation in study abroad
- o Faculty and professional staff unanimously agree that government funding must be made available if Canadian students are not to be disadvantaged by living in a country that does not support study abroad, especially when graduates will likely be in competition with graduates from other countries over the course of their careers.

Recommendation 11: A national funding scheme, designed specifically to support post-secondary student participation in study abroad, needs to be launched.

Recommendation 12: Alternative approaches to providing financial support for students who want to study abroad should be identified and augment the national funding scheme.

Students in the study, particularly those who have studied abroad, made several interesting suggestions for alternative ways of supporting student participation, including: (1) Air Canada could offer free or half price airfare for students traveling abroad to study, (2) research assistantships could be funded that would employ returning students, help students cover their costs, and produce research findings that would help strengthen study abroad, (3) work-study arrangements could be agreed to among a number of countries so Canadian students studying abroad could work part-time on the campus abroad, (4) returning students who participate in a service program to develop awareness of the benefits of study abroad could have part of their debt forgiven, and (5) small groups of post-secondary students from among institutions could compete with other students at other institutions for funding.

Theme Three: Institutional policies, program structures and norms, originally developed to ensure the effective and efficient delivery of education on campus, are barriers to students participating and faculty creating alternative study abroad programs.

- o System-wide policies and program requirements are not sufficiently flexible and no alternative system-wide policies and program requirements exist to support the diverse ways in which post-secondary institutions are engaging international

opportunities. In this situation students and faculty report that having to struggle with the established norms requires so much time and energy that members of both groups consider not participating in study abroad.

Recommendation 13: Create an alternative system of policies and standards that facilitate off campus study such that it is as easy to study abroad as it is to study on campus.

- o Students in the study reported they do not have enough self-confidence to argue with the established system for exceptions or exemptions from the norms guiding on campus study. Students who had not previously studied abroad reported higher levels of concern or fear about the possible penalties for participating in some forms of study abroad. Penalties identified by students include: (1) a postponed graduation date, (2) additional tuition costs if graduation is postponed, (3) only being able to earn Pass/Fail on courses taken abroad which then can be ignored by admissions committees for graduate study.
- o Many participants from the post-secondary sector pointed out that their institution did not have an identifiable leader of all international initiatives; rather, responsibilities for the advancement of such programs are scattered among different administrative sectors (research, academic programs, students). Questions were raised about the impact of such an administrative arrangement on the coherence of institutional policy and practice.

Recommendation 14: The leadership structures should promote student engagement in various sites of learning (e.g. studies at home, abroad, on-line, co-op education) and those in positions of academic leadership should ensure the administrative structures do not themselves become barriers to the achievement of institutional goals.

- o Faculty and administrative champions often negotiate certain aspects of study abroad on behalf of individuals or groups of students. Not having a parallel structure to support off campus international programs necessitates champions be present and recognized for their impact on students' lives.

Recommendation 13: Faculty and staff champions should be recognized for their service to teaching and learning at post-secondary institutions. Such recognition might include setting up student study abroad bursaries in her/his name.

A final word

This study is intended to contribute to the ongoing dialogue within the Canadian post-secondary community over how best to engage with peers globally. The emergence of branch campuses within Canada and abroad, the slow steady push to deliver higher education courses online, the international cooperation that has produced the University of the Arctic, and the rising expectation of students and the Canadian public that study abroad will become accessible to all students, are indicators of the willingness of post-secondary institutions to engage in global reforms. But, in the national context

where a facilitating policy (with resource allocation) on the internationalization of higher education is notable for its absence, are the old norms that govern relationships turned against the innovation and excellence that Canada expects of its colleges and universities?

Whose interests are being served by leaving the status quo undisturbed? Certainly not the members of the Canadian public, the students, the faculty, or the professional staff who participated in this study.

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ANNEX A

WEB-BASED SURVEY

Definition of Study Abroad: For the purposes of this survey, study abroad includes participation in any internationally-based study program/experience, such as exchanges, clinical placements, internships, co-op placements, international practicum, or volunteer placements, offered by a postsecondary institution in Canada, and for which academic credit may or may not be granted.

Please begin the survey by providing the name of the college/university/institute in which you are currently registered.

Name of your Current Postsecondary Institution

PART ONE: YOUR STUDENT STATUS

1.1 Name of your program of study? (for example: computer studies, business)

1.2 Check off each category that accurately reflects your current student status:

Full-time student? _____ Part-time student? _____

Undergraduate student? _____ Graduate Student _____

Diploma student? _____ Advanced Diploma student _____

Post Graduate Certificate student? _____

Other student status? Please specify. _____

1.3 At what stage of your program of study are you currently registered?

First Half _____

Second Half _____

Graduate Studies (at any stage) _____

1.4 Gender: Female _____ Male _____

1.5 Which language(s) other than English or French do you speak/read well enough to carry on a basic conversation or read a newspaper?

1.6 How many dependents (e.g. children, parents, spouse/partner) do you have relying on you to provide for them? Number of dependents? _____

1.7 Do you have a disability which has or might interfere with your ability to participate in all aspects of a study abroad program/experience? No _ Yes _

1.8 Do you identify with a particular ethnic group? No ___ Yes ___ If yes, which one? ___

1.9 Have either of your parents ever studied abroad? Yes ___ No ___

PART TWO: IS STUDYING ABROAD A POSSIBILITY FOR YOU?

Everyone should complete this part of the survey in which we are looking to understand why some students study abroad and others do not.

2.0 Looking into your past, please tell us about your early learning experiences abroad. (check those that apply)

I have never studied abroad before ____

I have gone abroad and participated in an educational program but it was not a study abroad experience. ____

I have already participated in a study abroad program during K-12 ____

I have already participated in a study abroad program during my postsecondary studies

2.1 If you wanted to participate in a study abroad program, would you require financial assistance to pay for the costs? No ____ Yes ____ Don't Know ____

2.2 Looking ahead, how likely is it that you will participate in a study abroad experience during your postsecondary studies?

_____ 1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
Quite likely Likely Don't Know Not Likely Definitely Not Likely

2.3 Does your current college/university/institute offer opportunities for students to study abroad?

No ____ Don't Know ____ Yes ____ If yes, how did you hear about these opportunities?

- a. During Orientation activities
- b. Through Admissions materials
- c. Through an Academic Advisor
- d. In Classes
- e. Through International Advisor
- f. Posted Flyers
- g. Residence Hall Staff
- h. Student Government Members
- i. Social networks like Facebook
- j. My Faculty/school/department
- k. I had to search for that information as it was not easily available
- l. Friend(s)
- m. Other sources? Please describe. _____

2.4 Who, if anyone, has ever encouraged you to study abroad? (Check all that apply)

- a. No one has encouraged me ____
- b. Parent ____
- c. Family ____
- d. Friend ____
- e. High School Teacher ____
- f. Faculty member ____
- g. Counselor/ Advisor ____
- h. Coach ____
- i. Religious Leader/Advisor ____
- j. Person in a Volunteer Agency ____
- k. Student Government ____
- l. Student Organization ____
- m. Dean/Director/President of College/University/Institute ____
- n. Department Head/Chair ____
- o. International/Academic Advisor ____
- p. Other sources of encouragement? Please describe.

2.5 Does your degree/program of study require or strongly suggest that you participate in a study abroad program before you graduate? Yes ___ No ___ Don't Know ___

2.6 How interested are you in participating in a study abroad program/experience if you could do so?

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
Quite Interested Don't Know Not Interested Definitely Not Interested
interested

2.7 This question asks you to indicate whether you think it is possible to participate in a study abroad program/experience sometime during your postsecondary studies or not.

Please check the box which best describes how whether participation in a study abroad program sometime during your postsecondary studies will be possible or not.

BOX 1 ___: It is not possible for me to study abroad during my postsecondary studies. Please explain in some detail what makes it impossible for you to participate.

_____.

BOX 2 ___: It is possible that I will study abroad sometime during my postsecondary studies or I have already studied abroad during my postsecondary program. Please describe in some detail what makes it possible for you to participate in this experience?

BOX 3 ___: I do not yet know if study abroad will be possible or not

2.8 According to student-based research, there are benefits associated with study abroad and there are obstacles as well. Which benefits and obstacles in particular apply to you? (Check all under each column that apply).

CATEGORY ONE: BENEFITS FOR ME
STUDY ABROAD

Benefits my career
Gives me a chance to travel
Will be a lot of fun
Benefits me personally
Helps me learn another language
Makes me more globally aware
Helps me be more critically aware of my own values and identity
Helps me learn to live and work in different cultures/countries
Builds my self-confidence
Develops inter-cultural competence
Other benefits? _____

CATEGORY 2: OBSTACLES I MAY FACE
STUDY ABROAD ...

Takes me away from my friends
Dependents need me to stay at home
Requires money I do not have
Not needed to get a job in my field
May not get credit for courses taken abroad
Courses are too tightly scheduled to miss
Parents would not approve
Makes graduation delayed
Job may not be held for me while gone
Cannot afford not to work during term
What needs to be learned can be learned on campus
Other obstacles? _____

Of the BENEFITS you checked off above, which THREE (3) are most important to you?

(1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____

Of the OBSTACLES you checked off above, which THREE (3) are most likely to keep you from participating in a study abroad experience?

(1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____

2.8 THE PRIME MINISTER ASKS YOUR ADVICE

The Prime Minister of Canada wants half of all students to have a study abroad experience before completing their postsecondary studies. You are invited to speak with the PM for no more than 5 minutes. What advice do you give him about making study abroad opportunities a reality for half of all postsecondary students in Canada?

2.9 If you were considering studying abroad, which countries (limit of 3) would be of the interest to you? Not Applicable ___ they would likely include:

(1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____
Country Country Country

What interests you the most about these countries?

2.10 How important is it for you to study abroad in a country where English or French is widely spoken?

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
Very important Important Neither Important Not Important Not at all important
or Not Important

PART THREE: THE IMPORTANCE OF LEARNING ABOUT OTHER COUNTRIES & CULTURES

Increased attention is being paid by postsecondary institutions to international education. Some initiatives are taking place in the curriculum at home and other initiatives are part of the mobility-based options, such as study abroad. This section asks about what your college/university/institute is doing or is not doing to make it possible for you to learn all you can about living and working in a globally connected world.

3.0 Study abroad and other international learning opportunities are encouraged on campus.
Don't Agree ___ Agree ___ Don't Know ___

3.1 Graduating students who are globally knowledgeable and culturally aware is a priority.
Agree ___ Disagree ___ Don't Know ___

3.2 When it comes to learning about different peoples, cultures or countries while studying on campus, I learn the most while at: (Check all that apply)

- a. the Cafeteria
- b. the Gym
- c. Student Clubs/Organizations
- d. the Residence Halls
- e. classes in my field of study
- f. classes outside my field of study
- g. International Student/Study Offices
- h. discussions with my professors/instructors
- i. Other places? Specify _____

3.3 How interested are you in keeping informed about world issues, international events and cultural issues? (Check the number which best represents your thinking about this question)

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
Very interested Interested Don't Know Not interested Not Interested at all

- 3.4 Of the possibilities listed below, which best describe how you learn about world events and cultural issues? (Check all that apply)
- a. I am interested in having readings/assignments with an international focus.
 - b. I am given a choice between two courses, one with an international focus and one without, I would take the internationally focused course.
 - c. I would take a course with an international focus even if it was not required
 - d. I join clubs or organizations which attract people from different cultures
 - e. I attend the lectures/presentations of visiting international faculty
 - f. I attend cultural events ____
 - g. I carry out research on international issues related to my field of study ____ use the web to keep up with global news
 - h. I work with international students in my classes or on assignments
 - i. I have friends who come from different backgrounds and cultures
 - j. It is not really important to me to learn about other cultures or other peoples knowledge
 - k. Other sources of knowledge and cultural awareness not mentioned above include
-

IF YOU HAVE NOT PARTICIPATED IN A STUDY ABROAD EXPERIENCE WHILE IN A COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY/INSTITUTE ... STOP HERE

Thank you for participating in the study. If you wish to receive a summary of the findings, please email slb2@queensu.ca and enter SUMMARY in the Subject Line.

IF YOU HAVE STUDIED ABROAD ANYTIME DURING YOUR POSTSECONDARY STUDIES, PLEASE CONTINUE ON TO THE FINAL SECTION OF THE SURVEY

PART FOUR: WHAT YOU LEARNED FROM YOUR STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM/EXPERIENCE

Instructions: PART FOUR is about YOUR own study abroad experience(s), focusing on what you learned and how the experience has influenced you and your decisions since you returned.

If you would prefer to participate in an individual interview rather than complete this section of the survey, click on SUBMIT SURVEY above to submit sections 1-3 of the survey and contact slb2@queensu.ca and place the word INTERVIEW in the subject line.

- 4.1 What factors influenced your decision to study abroad?
- 4.2 What was the main purpose of your study abroad program experience?
- 4.3. Was your study abroad experience organized by your current college/university/institute? Yes ____ No ____ If no, which organization/person organized your study abroad experience?
-
- 4.4 How did you finance your study abroad experience? _____
- 4.5 Did you take classes/courses while abroad? No ____ Yes ____ If yes, did you get credit on your Canadian transcript for the courses taken abroad?
- 4.6 Was your study abroad experience a part of a course or program in which you were registered while at a Canadian institution? Yes____ No
- 4.7 Was field-based learning an important part of your study abroad experience? No __ Yes __

4.8 How would you rate what you learned during your study abroad as compared with what you would have expected to have learned if you had stayed at home for the same period of time?

	Learned a lot more abroad than at home 5	4	Learned about as much abroad as at home 3	2	Learned a lot less abroad than at home 1
LEARNING DOMAINS					
Intellectual development	5	4	3	2	1
Academic accomplishment	5	4	3	2	1
Knowledge of world events	5	4	3	2	1
Knowledge of historical, cultural traditions and achievements of your host country	5	4	3	2	1
Foreign Language Skills	5	4	3	2	1
Self-Confidence	5	4	3	2	1
Awareness of your own country and its accomplishments	5	4	3	2	1
Cultural awareness and understanding	5	4	3	2	1
Openness to different ways of thinking	5	4	3	2	1
Respect for others	5	4	3	2	1
Awareness of your own Identity	5	4	3	2	1

4.7 How has the study abroad experience influenced your choice of jobs/career path since returning to Canada?

4.8 What was your most memorable learning experience while abroad? Please describe.

4.9 Please add anything you want us to know or understand about your experience studying abroad that you have not already been asked.

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY. IF YOU WISH A SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, PLEASE SEND AN EMAIL TO slb2@queensu.ca and put SUMMARY in the subject line.

ANNEX B

FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL AND QUESTIONS

Introduction: This study has been funded by the HRDSC Academic Mobility Fund and sponsored by the CBIE in partnership with Dr. Sheryl Bond, Associate Professor, Queen's University as the principal investigator. A total of 8 colleges and universities are participating in this study which involves (1) a web-based survey directed to students, (2) a public opinion poll directed to 1,000 people in the general Canadian population, (3) a web-based survey directed to employers, and (4) a series of focus groups and individual interviews with faculty and professional staff on post-secondary campuses across the country.

Definition of Study Abroad: Let me remind everyone that for the purpose of this research, study abroad is an inclusive concept in which participation in any internationally-based study program/experience such as exchanges, clinical placements, internships, co-op placements, practica, or volunteer placements offered by a post-secondary institution is included and for which academic credit may or may not be granted.

Question 1: (opening question)

Let's begin by going around the table and introducing ourselves. While keeping remarks brief, please remind us with which faculty/school/department you are associated and why you became interested in study abroad.

Question 2:

In this question, the focus shifts from individuals separately speaking to a more open format in which everyone is invited to join the conversation. Please direct your points to your colleagues and not to me. How important (or unimportant) is study abroad to the following:

- 2.1 students?**
- 2.2 faculty?**
- 2.3 this college/university**

Probing questions if needed:

From the perspective of faculty members, has the importance of study abroad programs been increasing over the last few years, decreasing, or staying about the same?

What are the reasons for these changes?

Question 3. **What are the benefits or advantages to students of participating in a study abroad programme?**

Question 4: **Roughly, what percentage of faculties/schools at (name of institution) require study abroad as (1) a program requirement (2) a course requirement?**

Question 5: **Do you think that study abroad should become a required component of academic programs in your field?**

Question 6: **If (name of college/university) decided to significantly increase the number of students who complete a study abroad programs, what would you recommend be done to achieve this goal and by whom?**

Question 7: **What are some of the obstacles students are likely to encounter if they think they want to participate in a study abroad program? What can be done to minimize such obstacles?**

Question 8: **Are there any particular groups of students who are not participating in study abroad programs? What can be done to attract members from these underrepresented groups?**

Question 9: What do students who participate in a study abroad program learn that you believe they are not likely to learn if they remain on campus for the same period of time?

Question 10: In what way(s), if any, do faculty members recognize and explicitly value what students who have completed a study abroad program have learned while away from campus? What could faculty do that they are not likely doing?

Closing Question: What issue or topic has not been discussed during this interview but which should now be added?

THANK YOU.

ANNEX C

PUBLIC OPINION POLL: STUDY ABROAD QUESTIONNAIRE

Now I'd like to ask you some questions about programs that help university or college students to study outside of Canada – this includes informal and formal programs, study and training as part of a post-secondary program, and normally for credit at the home institution.

1. Have you or has anyone in your immediate family ever studied at a post-secondary institution in another country, even for only a few weeks or months? (Prompt: This could include anything from an exchange program lasting a few weeks or months to completing a degree.)

Yes	1
No	0 (GO TO 4)

2. Who in your immediate family, including yourself, studied outside of Canada? (CHECK ALL MENTIONS)

The respondent	1
Child	2
Spouse	3
Sibling	4
Other	6

3. If you or they have studied abroad, what was the most valuable thing about studying abroad? (RECORD VERBATIM)

4. Would you encourage your children to study abroad if they had the opportunity? (PROMPT: If you don't have children, imagine you did.)

Yes	1
No	0
Don't know	8

For the next few questions, I'd like you to think about studying abroad as a program where students enrolled in Canadian colleges or universities can study from a couple of months up to a year in another country.

5. In general, what do you think of giving young men and women who are registered in a Canadian university or college an opportunity to study abroad? Do you think it is a very good, good, poor, or very poor idea?

Very good idea	4
Good idea	3
Poor idea	2
Very poor idea	1

6. Why do you think it is a _____ idea? (RECORD VERBATIM)

7. Do you think opportunities to study abroad should be made available to all college and university students before they graduate? (Remember, by study abroad we mean Canadian students spending up to a year studying, training or doing a co-op at a post-secondary institution outside of Canada.)

Yes	1
No	0

8. How important do you think it is to have programs that provide financial assistance to students to study abroad? Are such programs...?

Very important	4
Somewhat important	3
Not very important	2
Not important at all	1

I'm going to read a list of benefits that some say result from studying abroad. As I read each, please tell me if you agree or disagree. (Would strongly or somewhat agree/disagree?)

9. Studying abroad helps Canadian students better understand the world around them

10. Having students study abroad increases Canada's global competitiveness.

11. Studying abroad increases the job potential of graduates.

12. Studying abroad enhances students' overall education experience.

13. More should be done to make studying abroad accessible to more students.

ANNEX D

EMPLOYER SURVEY

This survey is part of a research project designed to assess the value placed on study abroad by students and employers.

Definition: For the purpose of this study, study abroad is understood to include participation in any internationally-based study program/experience such as exchanges, clinical placements, internships, co-op placements, practica, or volunteer placements offered through a postsecondary institution, and for which academic credit may or may not be awarded.

PART ONE: BACKGROUND INFO

1. Your current role/position?(check those that apply)
Self Employed ____
Own the business/head of the organization ____
Employee ____
Other, please specify _____
2. In your role/position are you directly involved in hiring? Yes ____ No ____
3. In your role/position are you indirectly (say through policy) involved in hiring? No ____ Yes ____
4. Does your business/organization hire Canadian graduates?
No ____
Yes, mainly from universities ____
Yes, mainly from colleges ____
Yes, from both colleges and universities _____
5. What type of business/organization are you the owner/employee:
6. Size of your company/organization: Small ____ Medium ____ Large ____
7. In what sector does your company/organization belong? _____
8. Province in which your company/organization is located/headquartered? _____

PART TWO: STUDY ABROAD

9. Have you or anyone in your immediate family ever participated in a study abroad program?
Yes__ No__ Don't Know ____
10. How useful /needed is having completed a study abroad program as a postsecondary student to a graduate who comes to work for your company/organization?
1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____
Needed Useful Neither Not Useful Not at all
Useful/Not Useful Needed
Comments? _____
11. What percent of postsecondary students participate in a study abroad program prior to graduation as reported by Statistics Canada?

(Check one for each)

University Graduates: 0 – 10% ____ 11 – 25% ____ 26-45% ____ over 45% ____
College Graduates: 0 – 10% ____ 11 – 25% ____ 26-45% ____ over 45% ____

12. Is there that a student can learn while studying abroad that s/he is likely not to have learned had s/he remained on campus for the same period of time? No ___ Don't Know ___ Yes ___ If yes, please describe
-
-
-
13. Is it important for you as an employer that students who do participate in a study abroad program learn a foreign language?
14. What do you think is the most important thing a student can learn from participating in a study abroad program? _____
15. Does it matter to you as the employer which country the graduate studied? No ___ Yes ___ If yes, which country(ies) is preferred and why?
16. What percent of jobs in your company/organization would benefit in some way from new employees with study abroad experience? None ___ About ___% Don't Know ___

PART THREE: We are interested to have more of your views on the value of study abroad. You are invited to add comments below or contact Sheryl Bond at slb2@queensu.ca to arrange a follow up interview at your convenience.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

A copy of the study's highlights will be provided to CACEE for dissemination to its members