After Abroad
How studying abroad changes views on education

An Honors Thesis (HONR 499)

by

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Abstract

Students returning from study abroad programs often have a difficult time transitioning back into their everyday lives. There are certain enhanced educational features built into study abroad programs, such as hands-on learning through field trips or excursions, closer relationships with other students and professors, and the fact that the environment itself can be utilized as a learning tool. This project seeks to question how these educational experiences abroad affect students’ upon their return, specifically in terms of attitudes towards the educational experience at Ball State University and what Ball State University can do in order to alleviate some of the struggles that returning students face.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my thesis advisor, Dr. Nicholas Kawa, for all of the help and encouragement he has provided over the course of this project. I would like to thank my parents for allowing me to have the opportunity to study abroad in Italy—without that incredible experience, this project would not exist. I would also like to thank the participants who shared their stories, my friends and family for supporting me, and everyone I met while abroad who encouraged me to think more deeply.
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Introduction

In an increasingly globalized world, many university students are taking advantage of study abroad opportunities during the course of their collegiate education. While educational experiences vary widely in different study abroad programs due to location, language, and length of program, such programs undoubtedly affect the ways that returning students view their previous and future education at their home institutions.

At Ball State University, students have a variety of options to choose from when they decide to undertake a study abroad experience. Ball State students have the option of choosing from an exchange program, a study abroad consortia program (a program headed by another university or study abroad institution), a Ball State Center Program, or internship abroad programs.

This project intends to identify the different consequences that these study abroad programs have on how students view their educational experiences at their home institution upon their return. Certainly, there are major individual effects that manifest as a result of study abroad experiences, but this study aims to look at how these effects create an overarching attitude towards the educational system currently in place at Ball State University upon return. The study abroad experience, as well as the process of returning back to the home campus, has a variety of effects on the attitudes towards classes, coursework and professor-student relationships. Some of these effects include feeling negatively towards classes, realizing that the student-teacher relationship is vastly different than during a study abroad program, and having a difficult time transitioning back to everyday life at the university.
The primary research questions that this project seeks to answer are:

1. In what ways are educational experiences while studying abroad different than educational experiences at Ball State University?

2. What effects does the transition period of returning to Ball State University have on students' attitudes towards their education?

3. How does studying abroad alter students' perception of their education at Ball State University?

Literature Review

Previous research indicates that study abroad "has a positive impact on learning outcomes when measured at the conclusion of the study abroad experience" (Rexelsen 2013: 168). What this research intends to question is how this positive impact in the learning experience abroad affects the educational experience at home institutions and students' perception of such institutions. Although there is pressure on study abroad programs to assess the ways studying abroad impacts students and their learning, there are very few programs that have quantitative or qualitative pre-departure and post-return assessments to evaluate the particular changes in students (Anderson and Lawton 2011: 86). In general, there is a lack of consistent, systematic testing, which means that there is research about the way students feel when they return, but very little in terms of comparative data.

Much research in this field has examined the expense of study abroad programs - both for the institutions as well as the students - and what the return is on the investment. The return is often evaluated through the grades students earn in courses or an assessment of how well the coursework helps students with their majors (Anderson,
Lawton 2011: 87). These forms of assessment do not evaluate the shift in attitudes towards students' educational experiences, but rather discuss whether or not certain academic or personal goals were met. Researchers and educators in the study abroad field feel that students must begin to be educated about the country where they will be studying before they leave, and then that material is “intensified when they are abroad, and it continues and matures after they have returned home” (Colin 2010: 41). In this way, students educational experiences at home and abroad are not separated from each other—the education at the home institution interrelates with the education received when students are abroad in more ways than just matching credits with required classes.

Some research has even indicated that when students return from study abroad, they are more academically inclined and more willing to focus on their studies, but for a different reason than before. It is claimed that students who have studied abroad are interested in “studying more for the pleasure of knowing than to get a good grade” when they return to campus from their experiences abroad (Hadis 2005: 63). However, the principle of using the academic setting for the gaining of knowledge without necessarily worrying about meeting grade benchmarks is not one that directly coincides with the American education system.

One of the largest impacts on students and their attitudes upon return is the process of “reverse culture shock.” Reverse culture shock is the phenomenon that occurs when people readjust to their home culture “after living in a different culture for a significant period of time” (Gaw: 1995, 2). This experience is common in students when they return from spending any length of time abroad during a study program. Interestingly, there is a correlation between the intensity of reverse culture shock and the value that students place on learning. A study done on students who had studied abroad from 1997-
2002 indicated that there is a cyclical nature to the effects of studying abroad. It is widely accepted that students become more independent and globally minded as a result of the study abroad experience. When evaluating why studying abroad makes participants better students upon their return, it was found that “The higher the [reported] independence, the higher the likelihood of experiencing reverse culture shock; the stronger the culture shock, the higher the intrinsic valuing of education; and the higher the intrinsic valuing of education, the higher the academic focusing” (Hadis 2005: 67). In short, the more students perceived independence as a quality that they improved on throughout their study abroad, they more likely they were to return with other positive qualities that led to academic success.

Study abroad is widely viewed as beneficial for “increased global awareness,” which is a key to increased success in the global job market, but students do not often choose to study abroad for this particular reason. For this reason, this research intends to uncover what students feel about their educational experience as a whole upon returning from a study abroad program (Naffziger et al. 2008: 51). Studies of U.S. students who have studied abroad in Europe in particular have noted the ways the student broadens their understanding of American culture through their European experiences—“In the search for Europe…the expatriate (traveler, student or writer) paradoxically discovers America more clearly” (Woolf 2011: 302). This study investigates what students “discover” in their particular American education system after they go abroad.

Methods

Participants were interviewed in person for the purposes of this research project. The interviews took place on the Ball State University campus in a room reserved in
Bracken Library. Interviews lasted between 30 minutes to one hour, and if a follow-up interview was necessary, it took place in the same room, one week later (if the interviewee was available). Interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. When participants were unable to meet in the designated location, they were met in a location that was convenient and comfortable for them - either on campus or at their houses.

The researcher initially recruited participants through prior connections with other students who had studied abroad. After an initial round of interviews with established contacts, snowball sampling was utilized in order to further expand the opportunity for a wide range of results. Original participants were provided with the researcher's contact information and a description of the research project. Participants were able to pass on this information to other students that have studied abroad and then those students contacted the researcher.

Interviews were semi-structured, based on a standard question set, previously submitted and approved through Ball State University's Institutional Review Board. Participants were asked to sign an informed consent document, which allowed their responses to be utilized anonymously in this research and provided consent to the recording of interviews.

Demographics

Seventeen participants, ranging in age from 19-21 years old, were interviewed for this project, and all of them are currently enrolled as undergraduate students at Ball State University. All of the students interviewed had studied abroad within the last two calendar years, and provided an array of perspectives, coming from different locations and types of study abroad programs. Included in those interviewed were participants in consortia
programs, exchange programs, and Ball State Center Programs. Programs of research participants also varied in length of term, from semester-long programs to six weeklong summer programs. Locations of the programs where participants studied abroad include: Paris, France; Lennox Head, Australia; Segovia, Spain; Hong Kong; Macerata, Italy; Florence, Italy; and Rome, Italy. This variety in study abroad program location and length provided a wide range of perspectives that confirmed that the results of this research would not be skewed by having only one location or program type examined.

Results

Class vs. Experience

Throughout the interview process, one of the most talked-about features of studying abroad was the concept of hands-on learning through field trips, excursions, or simply stumbling across different things in the location that related to the coursework. All of the participants' programs included some sort of planned "excursion" that related directly to their coursework and allowed them to see or experience something firsthand that they learned about in the classroom. When asked what were the different educational features of studying abroad, every participant mentioned taking field trips or coming across themes or items they were learning about in class in their everyday life, simply because of the location that they were studying and living in. This seems like a clear connection for classes that were focusing on language acquisition and comprehension, however, participants in locations that did not require the learning of a second language or that did not have that as the primary program focus still found excursions extremely relevant to their learning experience. One participant explained, "When studying abroad in Paris, I soon realized that the language and the culture were one in the same, and I saw signs of
what I was learning everywhere around me - in the cafes, shops, on my numerous trips to famous museums and churches. This awareness meant that I was learning so much more than I had ever realized in my classes and that I was learning even more from my surroundings.”

Students described learning about a concept in the classroom, and then going out into the field and actually interacting with that concept. For example, one student that studied abroad in Lennox Head, Australia took a wildlife biology course and then took a camping trip with the other members of the class. The assignment for the trip was to spot and document fifty different birds. The student described this particular style of learning as more like “exploring” a concept rather than memorizing or even discussing it. Another student who was abroad in Australia had the opportunity to meet an aboriginal woman for the purposes of an “Australian Life and Culture” class, and she spoke to the students about being an aboriginal woman in contemporary Australian society. S(he) explained “it was cool to hear stories from her perspective, listening to her as she wore modern clothes and described what it was like to be an aboriginal woman in modern day Australia.” The student explained that this interaction was one that could have never been replicated in the classroom setting, even if the entire interview was recorded or if they read the transcript of the interview. There is a certain power of real, interpersonal engagement that makes experiences like that one more memorable than most in-classroom activities.

Another student who studied abroad in Spain and who received all instruction in Spanish explained that even being able to simply have class in a local coffee shop at times rather than a classroom allowed for a more “relevant” learning experience. (S)he explained further, “I like the way they [classes] are taught there because you get to go out and see what you’re learning about instead of reading it in a textbook or watching a video.”
This was a common theme throughout the interviews—students would much rather see and experience concepts firsthand rather than sit in the classroom and learn about them. However, without a control group of students that did not study abroad, it is difficult to decipher whether or not this theme is simply due to the fact that the population interviewed all had previously studied abroad and therefore were the type of students that prefer interactive, exploratory learning experiences. No matter what the learning style of the 17 participants interviewed, each of them mentioned that the study abroad experience gave them an enhanced educational experience. Being able to engage with the material in entirely new and different ways added a dimension to their education that was not previously present and provided a new way for students to understand what exactly they were learning. This type of interactive, exploratory learning is not beneficial for just one type of student or learner, but rather creates an educational experience that, when properly executed, can provide students with deeper insight.

**Relationships**

Relationships between students and professors as well as students with each other also had a large effect on the students when comparing their educational experiences. Every student interviewed mentioned their abroad professors and the ways that they were different from professors that they have had at Ball State University, both before and after the abroad experience. Students who stayed with host families also cited those relationships as a major factor in their learning with abroad. Students felt a different level of enthusiasm from abroad professors and a willingness to work with students in order to better tailor the classes and experiences for them, something that does not always happen at Ball State because of large class sizes and constraints.
Many of the programs involved professors taking on a more complex role than simply teaching a class—in programs like the Ball State Australia Center, the professor from Ball State often organizes many of the outside activities and acts as a "parent" to students. One student described this relationship by explaining, "Everything was done for us; our advisor and her husband were like our parents the entire time. She would coordinate stuff for us to do and did a lot for us. I would have had to be a lot more independent if they weren't there." This allowed students to feel as though they had a "home away from home" and people that they knew they could count on if they needed anything.

While this type of mentorship or level or organization appears that it would not foster the independence that many students feel they have gained while studying abroad, other students that went on the same program stated that they did feel more independent. Another student described her experience, saying, "I was taken out of real life and had to look at how I operated and I was challenged." The students that participated in the more structured programs were able to find their own ways of exploring their environment, and developing a deeper understanding of themselves as students and people (and many of these students cited the fact that they were without phones for the entirety of the program, which forced them to simply "figure it out" rather than having everything handed to them). In these ways, students asserted their independence and felt as though they were challenged by the experience and therefore grew from it.

In the other more independently minded programs, such as exchange programs or consortia programs, professors can act as resources especially when there is a language barrier. In programs where students were housed with a host family, they felt as though the host family were more of mentors than the professors, even though the professors
were the ones that were organizing excursions and teaching the courses. Since students who live with host families typically have more one-on-one interaction with those families than they would normally have with a professor, they felt that those families were more beneficial to their education (especially with language acquisition, if that was a goal of the program). Participants in consortia programs, who stayed with other foreign or American students during their time abroad, revealed that their relationships with their professors abroad were much more fulfilling and helpful than relationships with professors at Ball State. Many attributed this difference to the smaller number of students present in a study abroad program as opposed to how many students a professor at Ball State typically interacts with on a daily basis, as well as to the fact that the students were more reliant on the professor. Many students found out about events or participated in activities that were either put on by the professor or that the professor found out about in different ways, meaning that the professor was also a part of their social life outside of school, which would clearly foster a different relationship than what is typical at a home institution. Given that the study abroad academic setting is more intimate, with most students explaining that their group included anywhere from 10-30 other students with them, it was easier for the students interviewed to work together with professors to create an experience that everyone wanted to be a part of. One student explained that the students were a part of the entire creation of a course, and “created the syllabus and the course objectives collectively as a class. We told the teacher ‘We are ready to learn. Here is what we want to learn, can you teach it to us?’” This is an experience that could not occur on the main campus of Ball State, where the course objectives and syllabi are handed out to students on the first day of class and they do not have much control over what information they
would like to learn. It would be impossible to accommodate for all of the interests and needs of each student that professors have in on campus courses.

**Process of Returning**

"It was terrible to come back." This sentiment was expressed by many of the participants in this study. For many of the students, the transition period back into life on campus and in classes was difficult. Every student had a different experience with how they coped with that transition, but they each conveyed that it was very difficult to feel completely comfortable with spending each day on campus. They felt that they were inherently different and Ball State was exactly how they left it and therefore it was difficult to adjust to their "old life." One student explained that she "went from leisure, growth, and personal reflection to business, everything being for my major and being on track for graduation" upon her return to school and that it was especially difficult to adjust to the workload. It was a common consensus that while the courses were "easier" abroad, they also were more time-consuming and fulfilling because of the educational features mentioned in the previous sections. To put it simply, students enjoyed their classes more and were more willing to spend time working on them because they had direct connection (and benefit) to their experiences outside the classroom.

Students also explained that when studying abroad, classes seem less difficult because of the amount of free time they had. On campus there are always other obligations, but while studying abroad the obligations revolve around "taking every opportunity" to immerse in the culture and the experience. Students explained that it was a lot easier to do homework when it meant going to look at art in a local church and then writing about it rather than studying for an art history midterm. The workload may be different but it was not always easier for some students interviewed. The difficulty in
returning to classes at Ball State was in “getting into work mode, staying up late and doing homework for hours. I just remember feeling so discontent all the time.” One student explained that his biggest challenge was the fact that he knew from his study abroad experience that there were ways that he could learn that would be more effective than the memorization and reading he had to do for his classes at Ball State. “It was frustrating to know that I have realized that I have a different set of skills that require a different set of teaching and hands-on experience to be totally utilized, and that it could not happen because I was in Muncie”, he described. Sitting in the classroom everyday was particularly hard for returning students who were used to getting to experience new things and places to assist their learning. Most students cited “bored” as their most prominent feeling when sitting in their classes upon return—one student justifies, “I was so bored and didn’t care. The professors showed no excitement and it was just like we had to get down to business.” Another student explained her semester back from study abroad as “monotonous” because when she was abroad “every day was something different and every week was a new experience in a new place.” Especially for the students interviewed who studied abroad in the second half of their collegiate experience, it was difficult to come back to campus and feel that there is a certain element of adventure and excitement present, especially considering all of the experiences that they had in their semester abroad. Students that studied abroad in the spring semesters rather than the fall seemed to suffer less from this “educational culture shock”, with many explaining that they utilized the summer as a revitalization period to readjust to life at home while also giving them some time to reflect before jumping back into their coursework.

The negative attitudes that students felt during the time after abroad were not limited to simply schoolwork or classes. Many of the participants expressed feeling that
since they already knew their routine of the day, there were no options and many felt that there was not much left for them to explore in their home environment. One student explained, “I felt apathetic to things in my schedule that were normal, like going to my job or hanging out with friends. I felt bad that I felt this way but nothing seemed the same as it did when I was abroad. Everything was new and exciting and now I always know what will happen.” The transitional period is difficult in all aspects of a student’s life, and without the proper support it can be easy for students to fall into this apathetic, discontent mindset.

**New Perspectives**

After the initial transition period (ranging from the first month to the whole first semester, depending on the student), students still felt slightly discontent with the monotonous routine of classes on campus. However, they began to better assimilate into their old life. For students that studied abroad with other Ball State students that were still on campus, this meant including reunions and special occasions to get together into their normal schedule. Many students explained that they still reminisce on their abroad experiences and miss the different ways that they learned when they were abroad.

When asked if students would appreciate things like excursions and hands-on learning being incorporated into the curriculum at Ball State, answers were mixed. Some students were incredibly enthusiastic about the possibility of an opportunity to do learning outside of the classroom while others were not sure how that would exactly fit in with the content of their classes, especially when the location of Ball State was considered. One of the major difficulties that students saw with incorporating hands-on learning in classrooms at Ball State because it is difficult for every major to have those opportunities. Another student remarked that “there is nothing here that I haven’t seen before,” which reflects the attitude of many students when thinking about Muncie after having lived in exotic or
interesting places. While Ball State provides “immersive learning” opportunities, many times these are projects that take up the whole semester and not supplements to particular classes, so in that way the immersive projects are different from the excursion and learning done in study abroad programs.

Conclusions

Students that have returned from study abroad clearly value their experiences abroad, and value education in general. They struggle with the redundancy of on-campus life and understanding their place in both their classrooms and social lives.

Studying abroad has clear effects on the ways students view Ball State upon return—and as evidenced by this research, especially during the first time spent back on campus. It is difficult for students to adjust, especially for students who studied abroad in the fall and have a short transition time both back into American life as well as the typical collegiate setting without the summer break buffer.

While a larger sample size would need to be interviewed or surveyed to determine what could best alleviate this tough transition period, it is clear that there are some things that can be done to make students feel more positively about Ball State upon return, although these things might not be entirely feasible. Most students agreed that at the very least there could be a push for more enthusiasm in the classroom. Many of the students felt that they were more invested in by professors and by the classes themselves when they were abroad because the “classes were catered to your needs, they wanted to help you and they wanted you to pass.” While this is a problem that is sometimes solved when students move on to upper division classes that are smaller and more major-based, the tradeoff is that there is typically more work in those upper division classes, and a heavy
workload is another thing that students have struggled with and cited as a reason why they have negative feelings towards Ball State upon return. Ensuring proper planning and emphasizing the need to plan ahead for study abroad programs in terms of class scheduling is something that would be important and could help students to have an easier transition back to on campus classes.

The findings of this study suggest that returning students would benefit greatly from opportunities to share their experiences during their transitional period back on Ball State campus. Workshops or events could possibly be organized through the Rinker Center for International Programs to help students reflect on their experiences and also cope with reverse culture shock. Currently, students are asked to read a document provided by Ball State describing reverse culture shock, which cites three main experiences that students have reported when they return home:

1. They feel like no one wants to hear about their experiences or stories.
2. They cannot figure out how to effectively explain what they saw or how they felt during these experiences.
3. People misunderstand new habits or behaviors that were picked up during time spent abroad.

The students interviewed in this study mentioned these problems, and it is clear that they feel a need for more opportunities to share and discuss their experiences. Students explained, while being interviewed for this research, that it was “so great to talk to someone who actually understood” what they were talking about and their experiences and that they wished that “it would be as easy to tell friends and family about their experiences in the same way.” If students who were returning from a variety of programs got to discuss their experiences in an easily accessible setting, a sense of camaraderie
could be formed where there was a common understanding of experience and a willingness to listen. Outlets for venting could alleviate some of the distress that students feel during the transitional period and perhaps help them contend with the burdens of their strenuous workload. Opportunities to share their experiences may even inspire returning students to take more active roles on Ball State campus either to promote cultural exchange, language learning, or even reach out to international students who are new to the community. In this manner, the valuable experiences that students gained abroad could translate into more meaningful engagement and learning at home.
Appendices

Appendix A: Works Cited

Anderson, Phillip, and Leigh Lawton
N.d.

Bott, Jennifer, Carolyn Mueller, and Douglas Naffziger
2008
2010

Gaw, Kevin
1995

Hadis, Benjamin
N.d.

Ireland, Colin
N.d.
Learning to Identify the Foreign in Developed Countries: The Example of Ireland. Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad Fall 2010: 27–45.

Kehl, Kevin, and Jason Morris
2007

Rexeisen, Richard
N.d.

Woolf, Michael
2011
Appendix B: IRB Forms

Office of Research Integrity
Institutional Review Board (IRB)
2000 University Avenue
Muncie, IN 47306-0155
Phone: 765-285-5070

DATE: February 11, 2014
TO: Amber Horton
FROM: Ball State University IRB

RE: IRB protocol # 570875-1
TITLE: After Abroad: How Studying Abroad Changes Views on Education
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
DECISION DATE: February 11, 2014
REVIEW TYPE: EXEMPT

The Institutional Review Board reviewed your protocol on February 11, 2014 and has determined the procedures you have proposed are appropriate for exemption under the federal regulations. As such, there will be no further review of your protocol, and you are cleared to proceed with the procedures outlined in your protocol. As an exempt study, there is no requirement for continuing review. Your protocol will remain on file with the IRB as a matter of record.

Exempt Categories:
| Category 1: Research conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal education practices, such as (i) research on regular and special education instructional strategies, or (ii) research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods. |
| X Category 2: Research involving the use of educational test (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior |
| Category 3: Research involving the use of educational test (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior that is not exempt under category 2, if: (i) the human subjects are elected or appointed officials or candidates for public office; or (ii) Federal statute(s) require(s) without exception that the confidentiality of the personally identifiable information will be maintained throughout the research and thereafter. |
| Category 5: Research and demonstration projects which are conducted by or subject to the approval of Department or agency heads, and which are designed to study, evaluate or otherwise examine: (i) public benefit or service programs; (ii) procedures for obtaining benefits or services under those programs; (iii) possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under these programs. |
| Category 6: Taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies, (i) if wholesome foods without additives are consumed or (ii) if a food is consumed which contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. |

**Editorial Notes:**

1. Approved- Exempt

While your project does not require continuing review, it is the responsibility of the P.I. (and, if applicable, faculty supervisor) to inform the IRB if the procedures presented in this protocol are to be modified or if problems related to human research participants arise in connection with this project. **Any procedural modifications must be evaluated by the IRB before being implemented, as some modifications may change the review status of this project.** Please contact (ORI Staff) if you are unsure whether your proposed modification requires review or have any questions. Proposed modifications should be addressed in writing and submitted electronically to the IRB (http://www.bsu.edu/irb) for review. Please reference the above IRB protocol number in any communication to the IRB regarding this project.

**Reminder:** Even though your study is exempt from the relevant federal regulations of the Common Rule (45 CFR 46, subpart A), you and your research team are not exempt from ethical research practices and should therefore employ all protections for your participants and their data which are appropriate to your project.
Bryan Byers, PhD/Chair
Institutional Review Board

Christopher Mangelli, JD, MS, MEd, CIP/Director
Office of Research Integrity
Appendix C: Interview Questions

1. How old are you?
2. Where did you study abroad?
3. During what term did you study abroad?
4. Please describe your educational experience abroad.
5. Did your study abroad program have different educational features than your education at Ball State University provides?
6. If there were such features, did they enhance your educational experience?
7. In what specific ways was your educational experience abroad different than your experiences at Ball State University?
8. Did you feel that your study abroad program was beneficial to your education?
   a. If it was beneficial, in what ways?
9. How do you view your education at Ball State University now that you have returned from your abroad experience?
10. Are there any elements of your educational experience abroad that you wish were part of your educational experience at Ball State University? If so, what are they?
Appendix D: Informed Consent Document

Study Title  After Abroad: How Studying Abroad Changes Views on Education

Study Purpose and Rationale
To understand how spending time studying abroad changes the way students view their educational experience at Ball State University.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria
To be eligible to participate in this study, you must be at least 18 years of age and have studied abroad at some point during your college experience.

Participation Procedures and Duration
For this project, you will be asked to answer a series of questions about how your study abroad experience has affected your views on your educations at Ball State University. It will take approximately 30 to 45 minutes to complete the interview.

Audio or Video Tapes (if applicable)
For purposes of accuracy, with your permission, the interviews will be audio recorded. Any names used on the recordings will be changed to pseudonyms when the interview is transcribed. The audio files will be stored in a password-protected computer for three years and will then be erased.

Data Confidentiality or Anonymity
All data will be maintained as confidential and no identifying information such as names will appear in any publication or presentation of the data.

Storage of Data
The data will be stored on the researcher’s password-protected computer for three years and then deleted. Only the researcher will have access to this data.

Risks or Discomforts
The only anticipated risk from participating in this study is that you may not feel comfortable answering some of the questions. You may choose not to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable and you may quit the study at any time.

Benefits
One benefit you may gain from participating in this study may be a better understanding of the benefits and drawbacks of studying abroad in terms of your educational experience.

Voluntary Participation
Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are free to withdraw your permission at anytime for any reason without penalty or prejudice from the investigator. Please feel free to ask any questions of the investigator before signing this form and at any time during the study.

IRB Contact Information
For one’s rights as a research subject, you may contact the following: For questions about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Director, Office of Research Integrity, Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306, (765) 285-5070 or at irb@bsu.edu

Consent
I, ____________________, agree to participate in this research project entitled, “After Abroad: How Studying Abroad Changes Views on Education.” I have had the study explained to me and my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have read the description of this project and give my consent to participate. I understand that I will receive a copy of this informed consent form to keep for future reference. To the best of my knowledge, I meet the criteria for participation (described on the previous page) in this study.

________________________________________  ________________
Participant’s Signature                      Date

Researcher Contact Information
Principal Investigator:
Amber Horton
Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306
Tel: (815) 530-3628   Email: arhorton@bsu.edu

Faculty Advisor:
Nicholas C. Kawa, Asst. Professor of Anthropology
Ball State University, Muncie, IN 47306
Tel: (765) 285-1170   Email: nckawa@bsu.edu
# Appendix E: IRB Humans Subjects Research Application and Protocol

The Principal Investigator (PI) MUST be a Ball State University Faculty, Staff, Graduate Student or Undergraduate Student.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principal Investigator Name:</th>
<th>Amber Horton</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Degree:</td>
<td>BS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department:</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ahorton@bsu.edu">ahorton@bsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number:</td>
<td>+1 (815) 530-3628</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliation:</td>
<td>BSU Undergraduate Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Principal Investigator Research Experience:

1. Have you ever been a Principal Investigator? 
   - Yes [ ] No [ ]

2. How many years have you been conducting research in any capacity? 
   - [ ] Years

3. Have any of your prior studies been suspended or terminated by BSU or a third party? 
   - Yes [ ] No [ ]

4. Have you or any member of your research staff ever been sanctioned for unethical behavior in research activities? 
   - Yes [ ] No [ ]

## Principal Investigator Agreement:

- I have read and understand the Ball State University's "Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research," as stated in the Faculty and Professional Personnel Handbook, and I agree:
  - to accept responsibility for the scientific and ethical conduct of this research study,
  - to obtain IRB approval prior to revising and altering the research protocol, informed consent, or study documents, and
  - to immediately report any serious adverse events and/or unanticipated problems as a results of this study to the IRB within 24 hours.

## Faculty Advisor Information

If the Principal Investigator (PI) is a GRADUATE STUDENT with Ball State University, a BSU Faculty Member advising or supervising the student must be listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Faculty Advisor Name:</th>
<th>Nicholas Kawa</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Degree:</td>
<td>PhD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Department:</td>
<td>Anthropology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:nckawa@bsu.edu">nckawa@bsu.edu</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phone Number:</td>
<td>+1 (765) 285-1170</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Faculty Advisor Assurance Statement

As the Faculty Advisor for this study, I certify that I have reviewed and support this protocol and approve the merit of this research project and the competency of the investigator(s) to conduct the project. My involvement in this study is as follow (Check Box):

- [ ] I will be involved in this project. My name is listed and my responsibilities (described in the Key Personnel section) include supervision and oversight of this project.
KEY PERSONNEL

List all Key Personnel (including Faculty Advisor), other than the PI, who will have a role in the research project (Thesis and Dissertation Committee Members are not required unless they will work with you on your research project):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel Name</th>
<th>Department/Organization</th>
<th>Role on the Study</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Kawa</td>
<td>Anthropology/BSU</td>
<td>Faculty Advisor</td>
<td>Supervision of project, assurance that guidelines and benchmarks are being met, being a resource for any research questions or concerns, approval of the final project</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

HUMAN SUBJECTS RESEARCH TRAINING

COLLABORATIVE INSTITUTIONAL TRAINING INITIATIVE (CITI)

As of January 1, 2010, Ball State University policy requires that all Principal Investigators, Faculty Advisors, and all Key Personnel complete the CITI Training. To comply with the educational requirement, you and all key personnel (including faculty advisor) must have completed the online training modules on the protection of human subjects. For more information and link to CITI's website, please go to the Office of Research Integrity website.

Have you and all key personnel completed the required online training modules? ✓ Yes ✗ No

NOTE: If this is your first BSU IRB submission, please include a PDF copy of your CITI Training Certificate, along with your Key Personnel.

Responsible Conduct of Research Training Modules (RCR): If your project is federally funded by the National Science Foundation, you and all key personnel (including faculty advisor), must complete the Responsible Conduct of Research Training Modules on CITI, along with the Basic/Refresher Course or Biomedical Course.

OTHER TRAINING

Are there any specialized training(s) required for your project (i.e., certification for medical procedure, training in crisis response, etc.)? ✓ Yes ✗ No

EXPORT AND DEEMED EXPORT CONTROL

The information below is required to be answered as part of the Federal Export and Deemed Export Control Regulations and as part of Ball State University's Export/Deemed Export Control Program. These regulations apply to any transfer of, release of, or access to, controlled technologies/organisms either to a foreign country or by a non-permanent resident foreign national in the United States.
KEY DEFINITIONS

**Foreign National**: An individual who is not a natural-born US citizen or;
(1) is granted permanent residence, as demonstrated by the issuance of a permanent resident visa (i.e., "Green Card");
(2) is granted US citizenship; or
(3) is granted status as a "protected person" under 8 U.S.C. 1124b(a)(3).

**Dual-Use**: The technology/organism has both civilian and military uses.

**Fundamental Research**: "...basic and applied research in science and engineering where the resulting information is ordinarily published and shared broadly within the scientific community." (15 CFR §734.5) In general, for research to be considered "fundamental," it needs to have unrestricted access and/or dissemination (such as through publications, public presentations, available on the internet, etc.). Proprietary results/products (or where these will not be publicly available) are generally not considered fundamental research.

**Released**: When technology or organisms are available to foreign nationals for visual inspection (such as reading technical specifications, plans, blueprints, etc.); when technology is exchanged orally; or when technology is made available by practice or application under the guidance of persons with knowledge of the technology.

**Technology**: Specific information necessary for the "development," "production," or "use" of a product.

**Use**: Specific information necessary for the operation, installation (including on-site installation), maintenance (checking), repair, overhaul and refurbishing of a product.

1. Does the research involve any of the situations below?
   a. US Federally funded and the funder will control/restrict the release of research results/products.
   b. Research is funded by and/or will flow through a foreign government
   c. Involves proprietary technologies and/or computer/communications source codes.
   d. Uses technologies/organisms that are classified as "dual-use."
   e. The research/data/product has (or will have) release and/or access restrictions (beyond reasonable/customary review period).
   f. Research involves classified information/technology.
   g. Technology/software/data being used is under the exclusive control of the US Government.
   h. Involves controlled/restricted weapons, law enforcement, security/surveillance, and/or non-publicly available encryption technologies and/or information.
   i. Uses GPS technologies in a foreign country.
   j. Technology/software/information will be transferred to, released to and/or left in a foreign country.
   k. Involves items known to be on the *Commerce Control List by the Government Printing Office (GPO)*. The file is updated every 48 hours.
   l. A member of the research team is a non-permanent resident foreign national.

C Yes (Complete this section)  ❌ No

If the research/data/product is classified as "fundamental research" or determined to be exempt from Federal Export Control or Deemed Export Control regulations then no special license(s) will be required. If controlled Exports/Deemed Exports are (or will be) involved, then specific Federal Licenses may be required.

**RESEARCH PROJECT INFORMATION**

Project Title: After Abroad: How Studying Abroad Changes Views on Education

*The Project Title must match all documents and IRBNet.

**SUBJECT INFORMATION**

Total Number of Participants (Estimate or Range): 20-30

Age of Participants: Minimum Age 18 Maximum Age 30

**SUBJECT POPULATION**

Check all that apply:
- Normal Adult Population (18 years or older)

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SUBJECT RECRUITMENT

1. Will the research project be advertised on any media?  
   - Yes [ ]  
   - No [ ]

RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

Describe your recruitment procedures:

Since I have just returned from a study abroad program, I am in contact with a number of other students who have studied abroad that are willing to participate in interviews. I will rely on snowball sampling to recruit participants for the study at Ball State University. Participants who have been identified will be given the researcher's contact information and if they identify other potential participants, then they will directly contact the researcher with that information.

SUBJECT INCLUSION/EXCLUSION CRITERIA

Inclusion Criteria: A set of conditions that must be met in order for subject(s) to participate in the study (including age of the participants)

- Participants must be at least 18 years of age and have studied abroad at some point during college

Exclusion Criteria: A set of conditions that the subject(s) may not be allowed to participate in the study

- Individuals who have not participated in a study abroad program

POTENTIAL RISKS/DISCOMFORTS TO THE SUBJECT(S)

Will there be any anticipated or potential risks or discomforts to the subject(s) during the study?

- Yes [ ]  
- No [ ]

DECEPTION/COERCION OF SUBJECT(S)

Deception - Withholding information for the purpose of the study.
Coercion - Intimidating, threatening, or force to participate.

Will this project involve either Deception or Coercion?  

- Yes [ ]  
- No [ ]

MINIMIZING THE SUBJECT(S) RISK

Will there be any precautions and safeguards required to minimize the risk(s) to the subject?  

- Yes [ ]  
- No [ ]

SUBJECT AND STUDY BENEFITS

Will there be any benefits to the subject and/or to the study?
Yes

If Yes, Explain: Participants will be able to reflect upon their study abroad experience and a potential benefit could be that they realize the true benefits of their experience.

PROJECT SITE LOCATION
Provide the following information where you will conduct your study (location of data collection, interviews, etc.)

Check all that apply:
- Ball State University Campus (including Burris Laboratory School)
- Off-Site Locations or Schools

Locations/Schools:
- If Bracken Library is not an option for the participants, I will meet them in other locations on campus or in their homes, wherever is convenient for them.
- Internet (Be sure to read any policy regarding data ownership and protection)
- Online Survey Sites (Check all that apply)
- IU Ball Memorial Hospital (Contact Alfreda Bright- abright@iuhealth.org. BMH's IRB)
- International Countries
- U.S. Based Field Study
- Other

LETTER OF SUPPORT: Any research that is conducted at a non-BSU Institutions or organizations is required to obtain a Letter of Support. The Letter of Support must be on the institution or organization's letterhead and signed by a person of authority to grant access to the site for the study (i.e., Director, Manager, Principal, Superintendent, etc.). The Letter of Support must be uploaded on IRBNnet as part of your package submission. An email message is NOT sufficient to meet this requirement.

In cases where sites, agencies, etc., have not been identified yet (original submission), please indicate this in the Application and make sure to upload the letter on your IRBNNet project number once the letter is obtained. This is handled as a Modification process once the project has been approved.

COLLABORATIVE/MULTI-SITE RESEARCH PROJECTS
Will the proposed research project be conducted as a collaborative research (i.e., research that involves two or more institutions/organizations that hold Federalwide Assurances* and have duly authorized IRBs)?

*Federalwide Assurance- An institution committing to the Department of Health Human Services that will comply with the requirements in the HHS Protection of Human Subjects regulations at 45 CFR part 46.

FUNDING
Have you applied for funding or have receive funding for your project? Yes

DATA-COLLECTION, STORAGE, AND SECURITY
1. Will any information regarding the participant's identity (e.g., name, DOB, SSN, ID Number, address, phone, etc.) be collected on Informed Consent(s) or Study Documents?
   • Yes     • No
   Participating signatures will be collected for purposes of documenting consent. All data will be maintained as confidential and no identifying information such as names will appear in any publication or presentation of the data.

   If Yes, explain why and what security measures will be taken:

   If you are collecting identifiable information, will the information be stored with the participant's responses?
   • Yes     • No
   After the data is collected, each participant's names will be replaced with an identification number. Only the researcher will have access to the key that associates names with ID numbers, which will be stored on the researcher's password-protected computer for three years and then deleted. Only the researcher will have access to the data.

   If Yes, explain why and what security measures will be taken:

2. Are you planning on using the participant's identifiable information on publications or publications?
   • Yes     • No

3. Will you be using Audio or Video Recording for your project?
   • Yes     • No
   Will the recordings be used for presentations or publications?
   • Yes     • No

4. Where will the data (electronic/paper) be stored during and after the study is complete? (Check all that apply):
   - Locked Cabinet/Office
   - Password Protected Computer/Flash Drive/DVD/CD or other Storage Media
   - Home
   - Other

5. How long will you keep the data (raw and final)?
   Three years.
   If your data (raw and final) is retained indefinitely, please provide an explanation for why and make sure that you have an explanation on the Informed consent:

6. Who will have access to the raw and final data besides yourself? (Check all that apply):
   - Faculty Advisor
   - Research Team (Co-PI, Research Assistant, Graduate Assistant, etc.)
   - Off Campus Collaborator or Consultant
   - Sponsor
   - Federal Agency (NIH, FDA, NSF, etc.)
   - Other

DATA CONFIDENTIALITY/ANONYMITY
**Anonymous Data:** Defined by where the researcher(s) may not identify of the subject with his/her data at any time during the study.

**Confidential Data:** Defined by when coding the identity of the subject and his or her data by using personal identifiers, there exists a means for identifying the subject.

Indicate whether your data is Anonymous or Confidential and explain what provisions will be taken to maintain privacy and security:

| The data will be confidential. The identity of each participant will be coded and only I will maintain possession of the code that links individuals' identity to their data. |

**SPECIAL TYPES OF DATA**

1. **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**
   A. Will educational records or information found in educational records, as defined by FERPA be used?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☑ No

2. **Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)**
   A. Will health, medical, or psychological records or information found in medical/health records, as defined under HIPAA be used?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☑ No

**COMPENSATION**

1. Are subjects being paid or receiving incentives for participating in the study?  
   - ☐ Yes  ☑ No

2. Are subjects being reimbursed for expenses (travel, gas, food, hotel, etc.)?  
   - ☑ Yes  ☐ No

3. Will students receive extra credit for a course if they participate in the study?  
   - ☑ Yes  ☐ No

4. Will students receive class or departmental research credit for their participation?  
   - ☑ Yes  ☐ No

5. Is there a completion bonus?  
   - ☑ Yes  ☐ No

6. Will there be compensation for research-related injury?  
   - ☑ Yes  ☐ No

7. Other (Please Explain): 
   - [ ]

If you are using BSU funds, you will need to contact the BSU Office of University Controller (765-285-8444) or visit their website for procedures and policies regarding tax information to be collected from participants.

**SUBJECT FINANCIAL EXPENSES**

Will subjects have any financial expenses to participate in the study (i.e., travel, gas, food, hotel, etc.)?  
- ☑ Yes  ☐ No

**NOTE:** If a subject has to travel to the location site to participate in the study via car, plane, train, bus, etc., they will incur financial expenses.

If Yes, Please Explain: 
- If students have to travel to Bracken Library, they would incur expenses, however, I am willing to travel to a more convenient location for them in order to avoid these expenses. I am also willing to work around participants' schedules so that we may meet when they will already be on campus, thus not incurring any additional expenses.

**STUDY PROTOCOL**

**STUDY PURPOSE**

State the objectives of the research and, when appropriate, any hypotheses you have developed for the research.

The purpose of this research is to understand the effects that studying abroad has upon a student when they return home, specifically focusing on a shift in attitudes towards education at Ball State University.
RATIONALE
Explain the need for the research. Describe the data that the project is expected to provide and how the data will contribute to existing information in the field. Provide a concise description of the previous work in the field.
NOTE: If you are planning on using students in your class as research participants, please explain why you want to use them in your study.

This research project is important because it addresses the different ways that studying abroad influences the way students perceive their home institutions. Many other research projects regarding study abroad address the ways that students have individually changed or the ways that they have changed notions about cultures as a whole. This study is specific to educational experiences at Ball State University and recording the effects that studying abroad has on students' educational experiences. Previous research indicates students that study abroad "has a positive impact on learning outcomes when measured at the conclusion of the study abroad experience" (Rexelsen 2013: 168). What this research intends to question is how this positive impact in the learning experience abroad affects the educational experience at home institutions. Other research in this field remarks on the expense of study abroad programs both for the institutions as well as the students, and what the return is on these investments. This return is often evaluated through the grades students earn in courses or an assessment of how well the coursework helps students with their majors (Anderson, Lawton 2011: 87). These forms of assessment do not evaluate the shift in attitudes towards students' educational experiences, but rather discuss if certain academic or personal goals were met.

RESEARCH REFERENCES/CITATIONS
List any references/citations that you researched based on your study purpose and rationale for your project. If there are no references or citations used for your project, please explain why.

Anderson, Phillip, and Leigh Lawton

Bott, Jennifer, Carolyn Mueller, and Douglas Naftziger


Kehl, Kevin, and Jason Morris

Rexelsen, Richard

Wooll, Michael
2011 The Baggage They Carry: Study Abroad and the Construction of "Europe" In the American Mind. Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad Fall 2011: 289-309.

METHODS AND PROCEDURES
Describe the study and design in detail and all procedures in which the subject will be asked to participate. If surveys and questionnaires are used for the study, how will they be returned to the researcher? If the research involves more than one visit to the research location, specify the procedures to take place at each session, the amount of time for each session, the amount of time between sessions, and the total duration of the sessions. If multiple researchers will be involved in the project, identify who will conduct which procedure(s).

I will be interviewing participants in person for the purposes of this research project. The interviews will take place on the Ball State University campus in a room reserved in Bracken Library for this purpose. Interviews should last between 30 minutes to one hour, and if a follow-up interview is necessary, it will take place in the same room, one week later (if interviewee is available). These interviews will be audio-recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. If participants are unable to meet in this location, I will meet them in a location that is convenient to them—either on campus or at their houses.

INFORMED CONSENT
Please indicate what type(s) of Informed Consent (IC) will be used for this study? (Check all that apply)

☐ Adult (18 years or older)

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Parental Permission (Minors: 0-17 years old)

Child Assent (Minors: 0-17 years old - This must be written in age appropriate language)

Informed Consent Process/Signature Waiver

Are you applying for an alteration of the Informed Consent process or a waiver of the Informed Consent signature requirement?  

☑ Yes  

☒ No

PLEASE NOTE: If English is NOT the primary language of the participants, then the Informed Consent must be also be translated in the participant’s native language. Include the translated Informed Consent with your package and a statement as to how (or by whom) the Informed Consent was translated.

PROJECT DOCUMENTS

Check the box(es) of ALL the documents you submitted for your project on IRBNet:

☑ Application and Protocol Form
☑ Adult Informed Consent(s)

☐ Parental Permission Consent (for Minors)
☐ Child Assent (for Minors)
☐ Recruitment Letter(s)

☐ Survey/Questionnaire/Interview Questions

☐ Data Collection Forms

☐ HIPAA/FERA Documents

☐ Media Permission Form(s)

☐ Letters of Support

☐ Debriefing Letter(s)

☑ CITI Training Certificates

☐ Other (Explain):

IRBNET ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE:

The new package created for submission for your project must be electronically signed in IRBNet by you, the Principal Investigator (and Faculty Advisor, if you are a student). Your signature indicates your certification that the information provided in this document is accurate and current.