

Cultivating Global Citizens through Study Abroad and the Use of Technology with Undergraduate Social Work Students

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This article examines factors of successful use of faculty-led short-term study abroad programs as a teaching strategy in promoting cultural humility among undergraduate social work students. Key attributes that influence improved cultural awareness in social work students are detailed, including the use of social media prior to, during and after travel abroad. Undergraduate social work students (n=8) participated in a summer course including travel to Costa Rica. Description of the teaching techniques and strategies are described pre-travel, in-country and post-travel. Two measures are described given to students pre-travel and post-

travel to assess cultural flexibility, adaptability, openness and personal autonomy. These include the Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI) and the Short Term Study Abroad Survey. Results included all of the students reporting a change in their world view, attitude changes as a result of in-home stays, and agency visits. There was a significant difference on the CCAI on the Personal Autonomy subscale.

Keywords: technology, social media, study abroad, undergraduate students, cultural adaptability

The purpose of this article is to examine factors of successful use of faculty led short term study abroad programs as a teaching strategy in promoting global citizens. One of the basic competencies social work educators seek to develop in Bachelor of Social Work (BSW) students is the application, and increasingly with the use of social media, of knowledge of diversity in practice settings. The skills and attitudes necessary to attain this competency are highlighted by the Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (EPAS) of the Council on Social Work Education (CSWE) (2015) and the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) Standards for Cultural Competence in Social Work Practice (2018). Both guidelines require evaluations and systematic monitoring of the competency of students. NASW changed the terminology from Cultural Competence and Social Diversity to Cultural

Awareness and Social Diversity. “Cultural awareness refers to being mindful or conscious of similarities and differences between people from different groups” (Barsky, 2018, p.4) The effect of media is considered in the willingness of U.S. students to participate in a trip abroad. Once the decision was made to overcome fears by students and their families, the effectiveness of classroom preparation about cultural considerations was a key component in preparing students for the overseas experience. Additionally, the impact of social media and other communication pre and post trip between social work students and host families will be described.

Social work practice behaviors include self-awareness to prevent personal biases from interfering with practice with diverse populations. In addition to professional imperatives, university administrators acknowledge study abroad programs as viable methods to produce graduates who are responsible global citizens. Most research has focused on semester long or academic year long individual courses. Limited studies have included the advantage of the experience in faculty-led short-term courses toward achieving objectives.

This article contributes knowledge about additional key attributes that influence improved cultural awareness in social work students. Eight undergraduate social work students participated in a summer course including travel to Costa Rica. Academic requirements included reflective journals during the trip and analysis of social issues completed after the trip as key elements of the experience. In addition to reflecting on the profound effects of staying with Tico (Costa Rican) families, this article examines other processes which produced successful outcomes, including the increased usage of social media prior to travel, during the in-country experience and in communication post-travel.

THEORIES AND LITERATURE REVIEW

There is extensive research about how technology is playing a key role in all areas of education. Issoff and Scanlon (2002), in review of 30 years of literature about technology and software development, examined influences on learning technologies, linking the related fields of Artificial Intelligence in education (ANED) and Human-Computer Interaction (HCI). While most of the research has focused on online instruction, there has

been scant discussions of the effects of technology on the educational outcomes and study abroad.

Theories such as constructivism are linked to educational technology (see Kalina & Powell, 2009). Social Constructivism as it relates to learning posits that individuals need a context to apply their interest and use of technology. This concept could be applied to the application of technology in the context of a study abroad experience. Technology was used to enhance learning in the context of pre travel communication and in-country where students did not know the language.

Cognitive Flexibility Theory, derived in part by the writings of Jean Piaget (1898-1980), considers that learning takes place in complex domains and that learning must have a specific environment. According to Ouyang and Stanley (2014) cognitive flexibility theory was one of the many theories they evaluated related to technology and learning. They concluded that this theory proposes that students must be given a variety of learning scenarios and they must have space to construct their knowledge. While this theory has been used in medical and public health fields, it is consistent with one of the domains about flexibility in the Cultural Adaptability Inventory used in this research about study abroad.

Students participating were of different ages and experience level with technology. Their acceptance of new technologies varied and this was consistent with the Theory of Diffusion of Innovations, which was one of the theories highlighted by Ouyang and Stanley in 2014. This theory describes the characteristics of accepting new technologies. Understanding a study abroad learners' capacities of new technologies can assist faculty leaders to design and deliver training and experiences.

While there has been increasing focus on exposing students to cultural diversity, one outcome the authors considered is student awareness of their own attitudes and the effect of those attitudes on practice. While seasoned practitioners recognize the tension that can result from personal values and that of clients, educators must help students explore their values and biases "Differentiated instruction begins with effective teaching that recognizes, values and fosters individuality" (Tarbuton, 2018, p.5)

Cultural Awareness and Short-term Study Abroad

Many scales and questionnaires have been developed during the last two decades to measure cultural competency and self-awareness. Krentzman and Townsend (2008, p.8) evaluate these measures and clarify the importance of such measures in social work education: “Scales that measure cultural competence are of great use to social work educators to track the progress of students’ evolving competency in working with clients different from themselves.” While many measures use responses to practice vignettes or content analysis of professional publications, few have focused on the impact on cultural competence of short-term study abroad. Researchers have studied the impact of study abroad programs on cultural competency on a limited basis about yearlong and semester long programs (Kelly, 2002). Applying research results to a short-term study abroad for undergraduate social work students fills a gap in the current literature. Given that there is a trend in short-term study, it is important to know whether the goal of improving cultural competency is met in a less than eight-week course, even in a two-week summer course.

Short-term courses have only become available in the past 20 years. Prior to that, study abroad was only available to those who could afford the time and money to spend a semester or a year abroad. According to Spencer and Tuma (2002) many students were unlikely to take advantage of long-term study. Those included students who were nontraditional students, first generation students and those without the financial means to afford the programs. In the past 20 years, beyond social work, universities have committed to educating students about cultures and economies beyond their borders. McMurtrie (2007) explains that American universities have embraced the challenge of preparing learners to function with cultural sensitivity and humility in a global society. According to Emert and Pearson (2007), international education efforts are an important way in which these institutions can promote this intercultural competence in students.

According to the *Open Doors Report 2016*, the number of U.S. students studying abroad for academic credit during the study year was 304,467, more than six times the number of students studying abroad 20 years ago. Of those students, 62 percent participated in programs of eight weeks or less demonstrating the continued growth in short-term programs and the necessity for institutions to develop and deliver high quality,

short-term experiences. Students majoring in the social sciences have dropped to the third most common academic field studying abroad, comprising 19% of the total number traveling abroad, following STEM and Business majors (IEI, 2015).

According to the *Open Door Report*, the number of U.S. students studying abroad in nontraditional destinations outside Western Europe has increased during the last two decades. Increasing interest in Latin American and Caribbean countries is a result of a variety of factors including the increasing importance of learning about cultures that are critical to U.S. strategic interests. The NAFSA: Association of International Educators (2006) identified the following rationale for pursuing study abroad in a nontraditional destination:

- “Study abroad in non-traditional destinations offers unparalleled opportunities for students to pursue a variety of personal, academic, linguistic, cultural, and professional goals that will serve them for a lifetime.
- Non-traditional destinations provide unique opportunities for meaningful cultural integration and intercultural learning.
- Students engage within the local community, meet local leaders, visit culturally important institutions, and develop meaningful relationships.
- Having studied in non-traditional destinations helps distance students from the average study abroad program participant.
- Potential employers recognize that a different set of skills is developed when living in non-traditional locations.
- Living in many non-western areas of the world requires changes in attitude, flexibility and the development of complex problem solving skills.”

Despite the growing interest and increasing number of study abroad programs to nontraditional destinations offered by U.S. institutions, the majority of students continue to choose to study in Western Europe and China. Less than 3% of students studying abroad during 2013-2014 studied in Costa Rica (Institute for International Education, 2015).

One university developed an approach that promotes the acquisition of cultural knowledge and the development of cultural understanding through a multifaceted

academic delivery system with an emphasis on diversification of destination. The university seeks to increase the number of students gaining global awareness through international programs. Less than 2% of undergraduates nationwide participate in study abroad (IEI,2015).

The university connects graduate and undergraduate course content with the development of cultural knowledge and cross-cultural understanding, service leadership, academic research and writing, and the development of critical thinking and problem solving skills through experiential learning in international settings. The experience provides students the opportunity to apply new knowledge, skills, and cultural understanding to their professional roles in order to positively impact the local and global community. Additionally, participating faculty members and students engage in meaningful scholarly activity associated with the initiative.

The purpose of this paper is to illustrate the process of investigating the following:

- 1) In what ways will the use of social media impact the change in cultural awareness of students participating in a short-term study abroad experience?
- 2) What impact does the study abroad experience have on student attitudes about another culture?
- 3) How will the study abroad experience effect students' qualities necessary to interact effectively with people of other cultures?

METHODS

Two surveys were distributed to each of the participants in the airport before boarding the plane on the way to San Jose, due to delay in getting IRB approval until the day of departure. The post-tests were given in the San Jose airport on the return trip. The first of the two surveys, the Short Term Study Abroad Survey is qualitative, with questions about demographics and seven open-ended questions regarding student attitudes and intercultural sensitivity. It measures attitudes about study abroad and expectations of the host country. The second survey, The Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory (CCAI), has been validated in a variety of settings (Kelley & Meyers, 1995). This is a two-page 50-question Likert scale inventory, aimed at assessing the participant's ability to adapt to living in another culture and to interact effectively with people of other

cultures. Outcomes were analyzed to adapt future courses and to confirm the impact of the experiences on student transformational learning.

The CCAI evaluates four characteristics related to cross cultural effectiveness: Emotional Resilience, Flexibility/Openness, Perceptual Acuity and Personal Autonomy. One of the eight students was an Undergraduate Research Assistant and part of the IRB approved research team, and did not participate in the surveys. Emotional Resistance (ER) is the ability to maintain a positive attitude during the stress of being among other cultures. Personal Autonomy (PA) is the ability to maintain a strong sense of identity. Flexibility/Openness (F/O) is the ability to be open to ideas other than our own. Perceptual Acuity (PAC) is attentiveness to verbal and non-verbal language in the face of an unfamiliar language.

Course Elements

Assignments were divided into three categories: Pre-travel, during travel, and post-travel.

Pre-Travel

- Communication of each student with Institute for Central American Development (ICADS) staff with documentation about demographics and a letter to host families
- Attendance at mandatory orientation meetings as scheduled by zoom with three locations
- Presentation of journal articles as assigned in class
- Readings as assigned
- Discussion forums, focusing on pre-departure issues, questions, readings, and the required orientation meetings
- Group presentation to students in three different locations via ITV system

During Travel

- Daily journal entries
- Each student prepared Newsletter to be sent to family about daily group activity
- Photo Voice pictures (within the established guidelines of picture-taking)
- Daily process meetings
- Active participation in all activities

Post-Travel

- Final process paper
- Photo Voice project

Expectations of students were as follows: During the spring semester, all students participated in four sessions which were three hours each. Times were arranged on Saturdays and technology afforded students the opportunity to stay on their home campuses. The two faculty members moved to different campuses so that all students would meet each of the faculty. There were several readings required during this spring semester, including several articles about social issues in Costa Rica, to suggest to students ideas for comparative analysis.

During the first session, students were given an overview of the study abroad process with academic expectations and introduction of cultural issues relevant to Costa Rican society. Students choosing to participate were more open than many of their peers. The history of Costa Rica was covered during one three-hour session. Cultural issues related to customs about food, work, leisure, family life, gender roles, and religion were examined during another session. One session reviewed packing and cultural issues regarding appropriate clothing and any other issues regarding travel. Of the eight participants, seven were female. Only one of the seven had traveled extensively, while two had been to Mexico and the remainder had not traveled outside the United States. One session included an introduction through Zoom technology (videoconferencing software) with the Director of the Institute for Central American Development.

Recruitment

One of the faculty leaders had participated in several prior faculty-led courses, all to other non-traditional destinations. Research about Costa Rica as a destination resulted in the decision to use this country as an excellent venue for comparative analysis related specifically to issues related to immigration, women and children. Once the study abroad office advertised the position, then the faculty leading the program sent out fliers to other social work faculty to share with their classes. The travel portion of the course occurred during a summer session, with advertising beginning the previous fall. Once classes began in January, fliers were circulated and leading faculty presented the opportunity to several classes. This was a social work elective available to undergraduate students on three campuses of the university.

Screening Process

Faculty communicated early and often with undergraduate social work students from the moment of recruitment and throughout the weeks leading up to planned departure. Formal group information sessions were presented for students seriously considering the course. Each interested student was subsequently interviewed by one or more of the faculty with a series of questions designed by faculty, based on concerns from and about students on previous study abroad courses. This gave students the opportunity to talk about individual medical or other concerns and for the faculty to assess the motivation and possibility of challenges on the study abroad experience. Eight students submitted their deposit in February and subsequently all of their applications and remainder of their fees by April, coinciding with the deadline for payment to the airlines. All three of the campuses with social work programs were represented. Two of the three campuses have non-traditional learners and the study abroad group reflected that. Five of the eight students (62%) were Latina or African American, compared to 19% of students of color nationwide participating in study abroad (IEI 2015).

Technology

According to the NASW Technology Standards (2008) the use of technology in social worker practice and education are increasing. Therefore, faculty members were intentional about having various aspects of technology incorporated into the study abroad course. The use of technology-based tools continues to increase in undergraduate social work education. However, there is limited research on the use of technology in undergraduate social work study abroad courses. During this study abroad undergraduate social work course, digital tools were used to assist with efficiency and conveyance both pre and post travel. Technology was used through several aspects of the study abroad course. The tools that were used consisted of Zoom videoconferencing, social media sites and to communicate with family members through newsletters.

According to Strom-Gottfried, Thomas, and Anderson (2014), social media are a method to communicate using the internet. It allows the opportunity to reach large audiences in small amounts of time using various platforms such as: Facebook, Blogs, Instagram, Twitter, podcasts, Google and more. Another platform used to obtain and share information is Zoom Conferencing. According to Schubarth (2017), Zoom is an

application used as a conference room. It is an audio and video conferencing system that allows scheduling through desktops and mobile devices. Also, during the study abroad course, newsletters were used to communicate with family members who were in the states. Newsletters are usually created for marketing purposes and serve as an opportunity to share information related to a specific topic to group of individuals with the same interest. In this case, the families and friends of the traveling students were pleased to hear of the course's progress.

During the recruitment process, professors held Zoom sessions to speak with all undergraduate social work students about the culture and plans for the study abroad course. According to Hitchcock and Sage (2017), the use of technology is here to stay and should be used to embrace and implement the Grand Challenges for Social Work, which represent a dynamic social agenda with 12 challenges. One of those challenges is to harness technology for the social good. This study abroad course implemented technology through several methods including the application process.

Pre-travel classes were held over several times in three campuses which were located in separate cities, one urban and two rural. These classes were held through Zoom on Saturdays with professors facilitating. Students were emailed a Zoom link and urged to sign in prior to the start time to work out any technical issues. During meetings various topics were discussed such as: The importance of deactivating social media accounts for safety, to embrace the culture and for engagement with classmates through courageous conversations pertaining to feelings and experiences.

Communication

All students provided emails of one to two family members that they wanted to receive communication about their daily schedule. While out of the country, newsletters were written by students and sent to families in the United States. The newsletters were created through an application called Mad Mimi, which is a marketing company with free features to develop various communication tools. Over the 14 days, a different student was selected to capture service and cultural experiences for the day through text and photos to share with family members.

Internet connectivity was scarce while abroad therefore students were urged to use Google products. The Google applications that were used mostly consisted of: Google

Communities, Google Hangouts and Gmail. Students and faculty members spoke to their family members during the evenings using Google Hangouts, which provides a real-time opportunity of communicating.

One planned communication with the Costa Rican families where the in-home stays occurred was a letter sent by our students by way of introduction, describing each of their backgrounds and interests. These were used by the home stay coordinators to match students with families. With home-stays came the ability to bond and to further become acclimated within the culture. However, there were language barriers at times which created confusion. Therefore, students and faculty used applications such as Google Translate to close gaps with basic conversations that surrounded food, traveling and showing gratitude.

The sharing of Facebook between university students and the families in Costa Rica extended the opportunities for communication beyond the travel time. Anecdotally, several university students stated that they continued to be in touch with their Tico “families” post-travel.

Each learner created a Photovoice Project, which incorporated 6-8 photos taken with their smartphones and a few words or sentences to summarize their experience. The second part of this assignment was to select one photo that focused on their personal growth or changing of world view and create a six-word “essay” that summed up the photo.

Final process paper

Students wrote a 3-5-page essay summarizing what they learned from course readings, pre-travel discussions, and our in-country experience going to agencies and settings to compare social work in the U.S. and in Costa Rica. They incorporated how they would use this knowledge in current or future social work practice. On return to the U.S. the faculty created an award for each student using software for the certificates. These were presented at a debriefing session two weeks post-travel.

In-country activities

Social service agency visitation. Early social work development in the United States can be traced to Hull House, with focus on working with immigrant communities and promoting social reform. While there has been a move toward micro skills in the United States, as evidenced by the proliferation of direct practice concentrations in social work

schools, social work in Costa Rica focuses on a macro approach to social issues. In 1948 President Ferrer abolished the military in Costa Rica. Funding was diverted to education, medical and social programs (Booth, Wade, & Walker, 2015). The result is one of the highest rates of literacy and an emphasis on social issues. The visits to social agencies included a visit to a hospital, where the emphasis on macro engagement was evident. While hospital social workers in the U.S. focus on the needs of the individual patient and family, social workers in Costa Rica hospitals actively facilitate a variety of educational and therapy groups for the community. Women's rights have not been advanced in Costa Rica, though, to the extent that they have in the United States. One of the visits was made to a micro lending organization that assists women starting business enterprises, as traditional banking loans are not usually available to women. There were issues regarding immigration at the Nicaragua/ Costa Rica border, allowing students to make comparisons to the movement across the Mexico/ U.S. border. The focus on women, children and immigration continued with a visit to an elementary school in the mountains. University learners had gathered and brought school supplies to donate. The children put on a demonstration of reading and music skills.

Importance of home stays. While the cultural and agency visits were instructive, home stays also had a tremendous impact on the students. Families were well vetted by the Institute for Central American Development Studies (ICADS), the in-country provider. They arranged for a match with homes and families. Most of the homes were within a mile's distance from the ICADS headquarters. Because of the timing of the stay in July, each student was able to stay alone in a Tico home. The most popular time for universities to visit Costa Rica is in May or June, when doubling up in homes is necessary. Home stay families cooked breakfast and supper for students and included them in family events, such as birthday parties or family gatherings. One of our learners, who enjoyed music, was matched with a family of musicians. Many of the students from other universities placed in the homes were there for Spanish immersion, so families were accustomed to speaking only English. A few Tico family members spoke English.

Listening Service project. The study abroad group had selected a service project to work with a center for education and support of teen mothers. They had decided on a self-care experience for the young mothers and had brought supplies for manicures and

pedicures. They also shared in relaxation and deep breathing exercises. Listening to the experiences of these young women was powerful, as the university students compared the lack of acceptance in Costa Rica of unmarried mothers to the relative acceptance of single motherhood in the United States. Two of the learners had been teen mothers and all were empathetic.

Processing and Debriefing. One of the requirements of the course was that students write daily processing notes in a journal about their reactions to their experiences. This is consistent with the theory that self-awareness is a key to cultural competence. Feedback after the trip from students included comments that they needed more time to think for their processing assignments. They stated that days were so full that they were tired by the evening. Formal debriefing and processing were facilitated by each of the faculty on a daily basis, about the events of the day, and they later commented that those sessions were appreciated.

RESULTS

The Short Term Study Abroad Survey was a questionnaire developed by the international office of the university. It has seven open-ended questions related to student expectations and attitudes about differences and similarities in culture and values of the student and people encountered in the destination country. Qualitative coding resulted in the following results.

Motivation

One of the themes that was identified in the qualitative responses included that the students were motivated by a desire to learn about another culture.

World View

All of the students anticipated that the experience would change their world view pre-test and confirmed that it did change their worldview in unexpected ways post-test. Learners were surprised at the effectiveness of the community focus in Costa Rica and the positive outcomes of socialized medicine.

Difficulties

When asked about anticipated difficulties pre-test and experienced difficulties post-test, students indicated that they anticipated language barriers and home stay discomfort.

Only one of the eight students was bilingual. Post-test the students did experience language barriers, but did not have discomfort in the home stays.

Positive experiences

In terms of what the students looked forward to, the common theme was the food and visiting social agencies in Costa Rica. Post-travel they continued to see the agency visits as one of the most positive experiences and added the home stays and getting to live with native Ticos. Most of them added that they gained great confidence during the canoe trip up the river to the indigenous community. Several had a fear of water and insects that they did not reveal in the interviews, and felt they overcame those fears during the weekend at the eco-farm.

Attitudes toward North Americans

The students anticipated negative attitudes about North Americans but found the Costa Ricans they encountered open and friendly. Most of the families and agencies encountered had prior experience with North Americans through ICADS, the organization that brings in people from the U.S., not as tourists but as students there to learn from Costa Rica.

Values

The major difference in values noted by the students post-test related to attitudes toward the environment. There is little that is disposable in Costa Rica and little litter found anywhere. They conserve water, paper, food, etc. and while students were told about this difference before the travel, experiencing it helped them to understand how pervasive consumerism is in the U.S. in comparison.

The Cross Cultural Adaptability Inventory demonstrated an increase in composite scores in all dimensions: Emotional Resilience, Flexibility/Openness, Perceptual Acuity and Personal Autonomy. The greatest impact appears to be in Personal Autonomy. Participant composite scores were higher (33.5) on the post-test than on the pre-test (30.83). Many of these social work students perceived themselves being flexible and open to those who are different.

Journals reflected many of the same reactions that were evident in the formal responses. Faculty encouraged them to avoid writing a travel log. Students were directed to approach the writings, using a What happened?, What did I think or do? and How will

this affect my future? format. Journal prompts were supplied by faculty daily as well. Most social work students are accustomed to writing process notes as a part of many of their courses, so this was a natural extension for them.

DISCUSSION

It is clear from the process and outcomes of this study abroad course that the global and cultural awareness of students was enhanced. They described transformative experiences, enhanced by the use of technology, that would impact their careers and clients. Their understanding of cultural awareness developed on a visceral as well as intellectual level. These students experienced cultural differences. All of them connected with Costa Rican families and professionals, including communication through social media and technology, in ways they would not have thought possible before this course.

Strengths included many of the elements included in this course. Extensive outreach prior to the course was important to generating enough interest in the course, to have enough students for the travel. An individual interview with each student interested in participating was important in assessing individual expectations and concerns about group dynamics. Multiple hours of education, using technology to connect three campuses, about academic and behavioral expectations as well as historical and language specific to the country helped to prepare the students for the experience and served to prevent complications. The inclusion of a service project, in this case listening to teen mothers and providing self-care activities, to give back to the host country was another strength of this strategy to study abroad. The short-term immersion in host family homes was also critical to the success of the course. Visits to social service agencies for a more global view of social work served to broaden the view of students about international social work.

There is a lack of empirical data about short-term faculty-led study abroad and about the effects of technology. One primary limitation is the small number of participants. Since most study abroad courses have fewer than 20 students on each experience, that will remain a challenge. Another limitation of this project is that the timing of the pre-test was flawed. We gave the pre-test after the nine hours of in class education but before the trip. Some of the cognitive awareness by students of the Costa Rican culture was obtained in those hours of instruction. For future studies, we

determined that giving the pre-test before the in-class instruction would be critical in determining the impact of the course. This change would improve future measurement of outcomes.

Implications

Sharing the methodology with other faculty contemplating study abroad courses was important to the dissemination of what was learned in this process. One of the faculty and the student researcher presented the methodology and results at the Association of Baccalaureate Program Directors national conference with positive feedback, particularly about the value of home stays. With the current U.S. political climate and negative conversations about immigration and about social medicine, seeing another country's experience broadened the world view of these students. Future trips to include the contrast of Costa Rica and Nicaragua was planned to continue the dialogue about the impact of the policies of the United States on other countries. Implications also include correcting the limitations. Subsequent study abroad groups have had a Facebook page for group members to post photos and comment on current events in country. The pre-tests were planned to be given before any education in the classroom. Changes in the IRB rules, which would effectively make this research exempt from full board review, will reduce that risk for future studies. Specific feedback from students about details of the trip were noted for future trips. Adjusting the use of technology as advances are available will enhance the experience. The profound effect on undergraduate social work students from this short-term study abroad experience makes it a teaching strategy that is efficient in meeting objectives in the curriculum of undergraduate as well as graduate programs.

Conclusion

Short-term study abroad faculty-led programs are effective methods of facilitating changes in cultural perceptions of students. In a two-week program, attitudes can change in ways that cannot occur in a classroom. Technology can be used as a learning tool, enhancing communication and can be effective in recording the experience. Students can become global citizens capable of working with clients and coworkers from other cultures. The development of relationships in our university campuses and communities and in the host country are important factors in the success of global programs. The media is a factor, due to the overpowering influence that the media in the U.S. has had on citizenry, as well

as social media use by U.S. students. The similarity or difference in social media used in other countries can enhance ongoing relationships with those met on study abroad courses. Empirical evidence is important to verify these outcomes. Since most programs include student groups of less than 20, there may need to be numerous studies. Considering the economic viability of this type of study abroad, universities and individual faculty would benefit from the inclusion of this type of instruction in their academic course offerings.

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