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Defining the Field School Within Study Abroad

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Abstract

Globalization has created a need for culturally aware globally minded students across North America. Study abroad has increasingly become a normalized part of a young person's education however financial and temporal commitments attached to longer study abroad experiences hinder participation for many. In response, the field school model, which generally involves shorter stays and less financial commitment, has increased in popularity. The field school is a particular model of study abroad that shares characteristics with short-term study abroad, fieldwork, service learning and other models but requires definition. The purpose of this paper is to define the field school model of study abroad within the contest of study to assist administrators when presented the option, faculty when determining experiential learning opportunities and students in determining their educational path. The paper provides a working definition and nine defining features of the field school that distinguish it from other study abroad models.

Keywords:

Field school, Definition, Study abroad

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Introduction

Globalization has created a need for culturally-aware and globally-minded students across North America and around the world (Tiessen & Epprecht, 2012; Wood & St. Peters, 2014). Likewise, the rapid growth of youth travel in the past decade is demonstrative of a globalized and increasing mobile youth (Richards, 2011). Travel is no longer an act of dropping out or rebellion, but rather a normalized part of a young person's education (Simpson, 2005) often involving periods of volunteer work or professional training. The 'professionalization' of youth travel extends into the increased demand for study abroad: more young people want to go abroad, but they want to use their travel as a way to enhance their academics or career (Simpson, 2005). Study abroad is a natural option for students wishing to combine travel with professional and educational advancement. However, the traditional model of a semester or a year abroad does not adequately meet the needs of most North American students (Tiessen & Epprecht, 2012).

Many students seek a study abroad opportunity but not all feel they have enough time and/or financial resources to take a full semester abroad and therefore seek an alternative. Increasingly alternative to a full semester abroad is the field school model, and sometimes referred to as faculty-led study abroad. The field school model is not new; a simple online search reveals a plethora of field schools offered by universities throughout North America and across many disciplines. It is the proliferation of field school due to reasons expressed herein that makes it worthy of further attention.

The purpose of this paper is to offer a definition of the field school model within the broader context of study abroad. A field school definition is valuable to administrators in decision-making when presented with the field school option; to faculty in determining the most appropriate program option suited to particular educational aims; and to students in deciding their own program options. The definition is based on previous literature and over two decades of experience in designing, operating and consulting on field schools in North America. The field school definition is presented below, in the introduction in order to be clear as to the focus. The proposed definition is as follows:

> *The field school model of study abroad is characterized as a two to six-week, faculty-led, small group education experience inclusive of a variety of disciplines. In the context of study abroad, it involves international travel to a destination in keeping with education objectives that are understood to be better met abroad than in the classroom. The program and curricular focus stresses integration with the broader environment (human and/or physical) and intra-group experience, and learning is based upon experiential transformative principles.*

Engle and Engle (2003) provide a classification of study abroad models but limited to language and culture exchange programs. Some of their classification criteria are useful in defining the field school, such as their definition of the Level One Study Tour and Level Two Short-Term Study classifications which bear resemblance to the field school definition but fall short in a variety of dimensions and keeping in mind their aim was not to provide a field school definition. For instance, the Level One Study Tour is several days to a few weeks in duration and course material is received in English. Cultural interaction is not a goal therefore reflection on such is not an emphasis. The Level Two Short-Term Study features a longer duration of 3 to 8 weeks, with more focus on cultural integration and target-language learning. They indicate an orientation program to address cultural do's and don'ts is necessary as students will be integrated with local populations with a Level Two Short-Term Study (Engle & Engle 2003). As useful as their classifications are in providing a basic frame the reality is that today most all field schools include a cultural 'do's and don'ts' pre-departure training and program content and duration varies greatly depending on faculty and administration aims and constraints. However, that does not negate the need for a definition of the field school model because there are fundamental variations within the general label of study abroad and a need for clear distinctions among different types (Engel and Engel, 2003). For example, study abroad may encompass long-term course intensive study abroad up to a year in duration; short term class intensive study abroad; international work terms or internships; independent undergraduate research abroad; and credit and non-credit short-term service learning. All such models provide breadth of opportunity for the student and institution but represent distinctly different opportunities and implications for both.

The term short-term study abroad is ambiguous where it may still accurately describe a brief international experience in the vernacular of some disciplines other terms such as fieldwork describe conceptually similar experiences in Geography (Kent, Gilbertson, & Hunt, 1997) and the term field school is applied to 'short term' study abroad experiences inclusive of many disciplines from the sciences to humanities (Tarrant, 2010). Anderson, Lorenz, and White (2016) present a strong case for the influence of the instructor in short term instructor-led abroad programs. They refer to their program as 'instructor-led study abroad programs' while their basic characteristics of shorter duration courses of up to three and a half weeks, instructor-led, and conducted internationally are similar to most field school model. The similarities of the program detailed by Anderson, Lorenz, and White (2016), and the field school model, further stresses the need for a clear definition of the field school model within the context of study abroad programs.

The field school is inclusive of a variety of disciplines and a synthesis of five dominant structures and pedagogies: 1) short-term study abroad, 2) faculty led, 3) experiential learning, 4) transformative learning, and 5) international service learning. The five pillars, in addition to other structural considerations, make the field school unique in the context of the broader label of study abroad. The paper precedes with background literature situating the short-term study abroad, followed by a detailed description of the field school, and concludes by highlighting specific features of the model that distinguish it from other study abroad models.

Background Literature

Since the 21st century, student enrollment in study abroad programs have increased dramatically. UNESCO estimated that almost 2 million students worldwide studied abroad in 2000 (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002). While 97% of Canadian universities offer education abroad programs, only 3.1% of full-time Canadian undergraduate students participate in these programs each year (as cited in Canadian Bureau for International Education, 2016). Comparatively, 10% of American students, 13% of Australians, and 30% of Germans study abroad (as cited in CBIE, 2016).

The average duration of study abroad is decreasing for both Canadian and American students (Brooking, 2010; Castañeda & Zirger, 2011; Dwyer, 2004; Engle & Engle, 2003; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005; Paris, Nyaupane, & Teye, 2014; Sjoberg, 2010; Tiessen & Epprecht, 2012). The increased popularity of short-term study options permits students to integrate a study abroad experience into already intensive academic coursework (Paris et al., 2014). This means that students from a variety of disciplines, not just foreign language and arts, can incorporate a study abroad program without fear of delaying graduation. Consequently, study abroad has opened to more rigorously structured disciplines such as engineering, nursing, and physical sciences (Brooking, 2010; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005).

North American students are also seeking non-traditional destinations as part of their study abroad experience (Castañeda & Zirger, 2011; Sjoberg, 2010). According to Brooking (2010), while the majority of American students (57%) continue to choose Europe as their study abroad destination, Latin America is the second most popular choice (15%), and Asia has experienced the greatest growth in popularity. Sjoberg (2010) describes increasing interest in non-Western countries, especially the world's fastest-growing economies of Brazil, Russia, India, and China. Tiessen & Epprecht (2012) see the expansion of study abroad to less-developed countries as a way for universities to go beyond their Eurocentric roots and promote true global citizenship.

Still, as Lewis & Niesenbaum (2005) assert and the Canadian Bureau of International Education (2016) numbers confirm, most students do not study abroad. Barriers such as financial constraint, a lack of fit with a student's academic program, social inertia, or no sense of the benefits of study abroad prevent students from leaving their home campuses (Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005). Short-term study abroad programming is a way to subvert some of those barriers (Brooking, 2010; Castañeda & Zirger, 2011; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005). Because of their shorter duration, short-term study abroad programs have fewer associated costs and require less time commitment from students. Short-term programs are often faculty-led and therefore perceived as more relevant to a student's course work (Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005).

There are a number of widely cited benefits to study abroad, including increased foreign language proficiency (Brooking, 2010; Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Hadis, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011), academic growth (Eckert, Luqmani, Newell, Quraeshi, & Wagner, 2013; Hadis, 2005; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004), and personal growth (Brooking, 2010; Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Eckert et al., 2013; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). In regards to career factors, students are more likely to change or expand their field of study (Brooking, 2010; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005) and have greater clarity in career plans after going abroad (Brooking, 2010; Hadis, 2005).

The literature on study abroad suggests numerous important outcomes relating to global citizenship. Study abroad participants show increased intercultural competency and awareness (Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Eckert et al., 2013), increased civic engagement locally (Brooking, 2010; DeGraff, Slagter, Larsen, & Ditta, 2013), increased cross-cultural adaptability (Black & Duhon, 2006; Eckert et al., 2013; Kitsantas, 2004; Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011), and increased global-mindedness (Hadis, 2005; Kitsantas, 2004; Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005; Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011).

As Tiessen and Epprecht observe, the benefits of study abroad are "typically more assumed than studied" (2013). Short-term study abroad – and study abroad in general – has not been rigorously studied. The existing literature is limited to mostly case studies with extremely small sample sizes (Degraff et al., 2013; Hadis, 2005; Hopkins, 1999; Rubin & Matthews, 2013; Tiessen & Epprecht, 2012). Small sample sizes and lack of control groups will continue to reduce credibility of study abroad programming. In the words of Engle and Engle, "The widespread image of study abroad as a dressed-up vacation will persist as long as we allow it" (2003). There are a few exceptions to the case study standard, most notably the Study Abroad for Global Engagement project (Paige, Fry, Stallman, Josić, & Jon, 2009), and the GLOSSARI project (as cited in Rubin & Matthews, 2013). Rubin and Matthews (2013) emphasize the importance to continue these large-scale projects.

Issues surrounding efficacy and ethics plague study abroad programs. Because of the lack of generalizable research, it is unclear how effective study abroad really is. Is student growth in study abroad programs the result of the program itself or just part of natural student maturation? (Hadis, 2005). Are changes the result of studying abroad, or are students who study abroad already predisposed to such change because studying abroad attracts a certain type of student? (DeGraff et al., 2013).

As study abroad spreads to less-developed destinations, ethical concerns become more pronounced, particularly in the short-term. Instead of promoting global-mindedness and global citizenship, short-term study abroad risks reinforcing the very stereotypes it seeks to dismantle (Smith-Paríolá & Gòkè-Paríolá, 2006; Tiessen & Epprecht, 2012). Perpetuating neo-Colonialist and Imperialist attitudes is a very real fear among study abroad facilitators (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002; Simpson, 2005; Tarc, Mishra-Tarc, Ng-A-fook, & Trilokekar, 2013; Tiessen & Epprecht, 2012).

Another consideration is how the international location in study abroad is being used: is the foreign country little more than a scenic backdrop or a flashy way to attract more students, or is there value in the location itself? This has been described as the dichotomy of scenery versus environment: scenery provides a backdrop but remains separate from the individual, whereas the environment changes with the dynamics of interaction. Using the foreign destination as an environment for study rather than merely scenery is essential (Engle & Engle, 2003) in order to ensure ethical relations with the host country.

Ethical concerns are more pronounced in short-term study abroad programs, as facilitators have less time to break down any existing stereotypes (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002; Smith-Paríolá & Gòkè-Paríolá, 2006). Likewise, short term programming is argued to be not as effective as a semester or year abroad for all intellectual, personal, intercultural and professional outcomes (Brooking, 2010; Dwyer, 2004; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). As Dwyer (2004) observes, more is better when it comes to study abroad. However, most students are simply not able to take a semester or year abroad due to various financial, temporal, and academic constraints (Lewis & Niesenbaum, 2005). Short term study abroad is worthwhile and demonstrably produces growth in students, but not to the extent of longer programs (Brooking, 2010; Chieffo & Griffiths, 2004; Dwyer, 2004; Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011). The question faced by study abroad facilitators is how to maximize the benefits of short-term study abroad to approach or match the benefits of longer programs. The literature suggests three possible solutions: 1) experiential learning, 2) transformational learning, and 3) international service learning. By adding these elements to a short-term study abroad program, it is possible to enhance

student outcomes and provide a foundation for students to build upon with future international travel.

Experiential learning

The act of taking learning out of classroom strongly suggests that the learning will be experiential but not all study abroad is experiential education (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002). To suggest that all study abroad is a form of experiential learning, as Hopkins (1999) does, is a dangerous misunderstanding. Simpson (2005) observes that in gap year programming, "Experience… is not treated as part of an educational process, but as education in and of itself," and unfortunately the same is often true for study abroad programming. The experience of studying abroad in and of itself does not constitute a complete education. Rather, the experience is part of a larger, more complex cycle.

Kolb defines experiential learning as, "The process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (1984). Kolb's experiential learning cycle has four stages: 1) concrete experience, 2) reflective observation, 3) abstract conceptualization, and 4) active experimentation (Brooking, 2010; Kolb, 1984; Passarelli & Kolb, 2012). Kolb's cycle is built on two primary dimensions: concrete experience and abstract conceptualization are dialectically related modes of *grasping* experience, while reflective observation and active experimentation are dialectic forms of *transforming* experience (Passarelli & Kolb, 2012). Concrete experience is the first stage "upon which the other three stages build" (Brooking, 2010). Reflective observation uses reflection and contemplation to build on the experience. Abstract conceptualization constructs ideas by integrating experience and reflection, and active experimentation puts the newly formed ideas and attitudes to "make decisions and solve problems" (Kolb, 1984). Kolb's theory is best viewed not as a cycle, but as a spiral in which the learner is continually returning to and building on past experiences as new experiences arise (Passarelli & Kolb, 2012). The process of returning to and building upon previous experiences is inherently a part most field schools with a block-intensive program on a particular phenomenon and locale. Experiential learning lends itself especially well to study abroad, as the nature of study abroad provides a series of experiential incidents to reflect upon and conceptualize (Ritz, 2011) and "utilize the international experience as the basis of learning" (Lutterman-Aguilar & Gingerich, 2002). Furthermore, the field school – faculty-led model has a strong chance of incorporating reflective components to experience while there is no guarantee that students engaged in a much longer study abroad experience with no direct guidance will do the same.

Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich (2002) detail nine critical elements of combined study abroad and experiential education: process and personal

integration, problem-based content, critical reflection and analysis, collaboration and dialogue, community, diversity and intercultural communication, action and social transformation, mutuality and reciprocity, facilitation by trained faculty, and evaluation. The most important of these elements are explained in greater detail. For example, study abroad programming uses problem-based content to relate the coursework to real-life problems and thereby increase student engagement. A weeklong field school in Guatemala incorporated experiential learning into its course pedagogy and found that students were more invested in the course and "willing to expend additional effort on the class…because they perceived the class to be 'real-world'" (Elmore, 2006).

Critical reflection and analysis are usually facilitated through course assignments such as discussion or journals. For example, a Costa Rica biodiversity field course used unscripted journals to encourage written reflection (McLaughlin & Johnson, 2006). The local and global communities the learner came from prior to their time abroad, and the communities formed by students during a program are also central to experiential learning abroad. In the Guatemala groundwater studies example, 60% of the group felt like outsiders at the beginning of the class. However by the course's end, 80% felt highly connected to a cohesive group (Elmore, 2006). Diversity and intercultural communication involve exposing students to ideas, people, and experiences that are diverse, and often accomplished through immersion with host nationals and culture.

Action and social transformation are the active experimentation phase of Kolb's cycle: students are empowered to make change and take action following their critical analysis and reflection of the problems they experience. In Elmore's Guatemala case study, two of the ten students returned to Guatemala the following term to continue collecting data, and later initiated a grassroots community project that three additional students from the course have since been involved with (Elmore, 2006). Integrating Lutterman-Aguilar and Gingerich's best practices and Kolb's experiential learning cycle enhances the learning outcomes of study abroad by increasing student investment and interest.

Another commonly used pedagogy in study abroad programming is Mezirow's theory of transformative learning (as cited in Kitchenham, 2008; Taylor, 2007, 2008). Like experiential learning, transformative learning can be integrated into study abroad to enhance student outcomes in a condensed time frame (Hallows, Wolf, & Marks, 2011; Ritz, 2011). Transformative learning is described as "a process of constructing and appropriating new and revised interpretations of the meaning of an experience in the world" (Taylor, 2008). In transformative learning theory, learning occurs in three ways: 1) learning

within existing meaning schemes, 2) learning new meaning schemes, and 3) learning through meaning transformation (Kitchenham, 2008). Meaning schemes refer to specific knowledge or beliefs, while meaning perspectives refer to general frames of reference or worldviews (Black & Bernardes, 2014). When an experience conflicts with existing meaning perspectives and this dissonance cannot be resolved with existing meaning schemes or through learning new schemes, perspective transformation occurs (Kitchenham, 2008). Perspective transformation is the result of two key processes: critical reflection and critical discourse (Rowan-Kenyon & Niehaus, 2011). Perspective transformation occurs either through the accumulation of multiple transformed meaning schemes, or through an acute personal crisis (Taylor, 2008). Study abroad programs can be considered in the latter category due to the intense culture shock and high stress associated with immersion in foreign countries.

Transformative learning is an important framework in study abroad programming and has been incorporated into field school programming. For example, data from eight short-term study abroad trips for MBA students showed that students could increase their cultural, entrepreneurial, and global business competencies in a time frame of only seven to ten days (Hallows et al., 2011). These trips employed transformative learning techniques, such as activities and speakers that challenged existing perspectives and tested new perspectives with a capstone project. Ritz (2011) used transformative learning in a sustainable tourism field school in Costa Rica deliberately designed to "include activities that would challenge students' held beliefs" (Ritz, 2011). By the end of the field school, all students perceived Costa Rica's sustainability to be more marketing than reality (Ritz, 2011). This change is suggestive of perspective transformation.

Intolubbe-Chmil, Spreen, and Swap (2012) applied transformative pedagogy to their month-long South Africa field school and found that students gained a deeper understanding of complex issues and "deconstructed and re-imagined myths and perceptions about Africa, poverty, basic human rights, and community capacity" (Intolubbe-Chmil et al., 2012). The South Africa field school incorporated daily debriefing sessions to "mediate cognitive dissonance" (Intolubbe-Chmil et al., 2012) and to provide the essential critical reflection and discourse necessary for perspective transformation. Transformative learning builds on the ideas of experiential learning, but goes beyond turning experience into knowledge, and instead involves altering frames of reference and one's way of understanding the world.

Service learning is popular in higher education as universities are called upon to be more accountable to the resources they receive and demonstrate their value to the community (Black & Duhon, 2006; Smith-Paríolá & Gòkè-Paríolá, 2006). Brooking describes service learning as, "A form of experiential

education that links community service with the academic objectives of a course through the incorporation of a reflection component" (2010). It is important to make the distinction between service learning carried out within a classroom, and that pertaining to study abroad. Many international service-learning programs are non-credit, which provide its appeal of being more flexible and able to be implemented outside the bounds of university bureaucracy.

Reciprocity is a key tenet of international service learning (Grusky, 2000; Oldfield, 2008; Rubin & Matthews, 2013). Building reciprocal relationships, even when making use of social capital, is a challenge that many international service learning programs have not yet addressed (Grusky, 2000; Rubin & Matthews, 2013). Tiessen and Epprecht (2012) assert that benefits from international service learning programs are mostly one-directional, "Benefitting those who travel abroad much more than those who are meant to be the beneficiaries of this development assistance" (Tiessen & Epprecht, 2012). Grusky claims international service learning has a "tendency to retreat from the harshest inequities of North-South relations" (2010) and suggests that students are the ones being served in service learning while the community provides the service of exposing students to sociopolitical, environmental, and cultural issues. Other concerns of service learning include a fear of reinforcing Colonialist attitudes of 'saving' less-developed countries (Grusky, 2000; Simpson, 2005; Smith-Paríolá & Gòkè-Paríolá, 2006) or seeing the world through "a missionary lens" (Smith-Paríolá & Gòkè-Paríolá, 2006), especially in programs that take place in the "developing" world. Smith-Paríolá & Gòkè-Paríolá (2006) express concern over students' inclination to see other cultures as needy or backward. Another ethical concern is the qualification of students to serve. Often, students in international service learning programs take on roles they are not qualified to do at home, such as teaching or health professions (Simpson, 2005). Despite the concerns with international service learning Grusky suggests, "Young students' impulse to serve, to help, and to extend a hand in solidarity should not be discouraged or belittled" (2000). Many field schools incorporate elements of service learning within the curriculum and adopt both the benefits and criticisms of service learning.

Discussion: Defining the Field School

This section provides nine defining traits of the field school divided into two categories: approach, which denotes the way the field school is conceived and includes faculty role; context of academic work; provision of structure for cultural interaction; required entry language competency and working language; guided reflection; and group living. The second category is logistics and refers to ways of enacting the field school program abroad. It includes student housing, travel component, and credit allotment. Certain traits that

define the field school may also be known characteristics of other types of study abroad programs, and the inclusion of all traits outlined below are what differentiates the field school model with other study abroad programs. Traits are not presented in a hierarchical order.

Part 1: Approach to the Field School

1. Faculty role

The field school is a short-term, faculty-led study abroad program, differentiating it from independent student experiences such as semester abroad and work practicums. Faculty involvement is generally high in setting the program and guiding experiences and reflection. The faculty role is to connect the student to the phenomenon and facilitate experiential learning. From a governance and risk perspective, the lead faculty is the ultimate off-campus authority in the eyes of the institution, which carries its own set of responsibilities. The central role of faculty implies this person has a strong knowledge of the area, phenomenon and relevant theoretical content in order to develop an experiential program and curriculum to maximize student experience. Additionally, faculty on short term study abroad require flexibility to wear many 'hats' to address holistic student needs (Goode, 2008).

2. Context of Academic Work

The context of academic work refers to the general direction from where the academic work emanates – the home or the foreign institution – and designed specifically to the experience abroad, or similar to that of resident students (Engle and Engle, 2003). In long-term immersion programs, students carry out academic work in classes alongside local students. However, field schools tend to focus the academic work to the site and experience, regardless of the discipline (Tarrant, 2010). The aim of the field school is to provide a learning opportunity that faculty believe cannot be found in the home classroom, therefore directing academic work toward the out-bound site is most appropriate.

3. Provision of Structure toward Cultural Interaction

Provision of meaningful cultural interaction within a short duration experience (3 to 8 weeks) has been questioned (Brooking, 2010), but Anderson, Lorenz, and White (2016), as well as McKeon (2009) challenges this idea, and suggest that especially for students traveling abroad for the first time, there is evidence of meaningful cultural impact. The fear of reinforcing existing stereotypes in short duration study abroad is a genuine concern but can be managed with experienced facilitation. More severe symptoms of culture shock, such as reinforcing stereotypes, withdrawal, inability to work well with others, and other behavioral problems can be avoided, or alleviated most effectively

with faculty intervention and support (Egenes, 2012). Cultural immersion is critical to personal growth in study abroad, but it is not the only arena for transformative growth. The reality is that not all field schools possess the aim of cultural interaction. For example, field schools focused on the hard sciences among others may only pursue cultural interaction as a secondary aim to their specific discipline.

4. Group Living

Regardless of the academic discipline and level of cultural contact, the field school brings small groups of students together for 3 to 8 weeks in a way that would not be experienced at home. An obvious intention of study abroad is to expose students to foreign material and culture lacking at home, but an often-overlooked aspect of the field school is the group living component. The field school invariably involves a focused community defined by intense group travel, daily life/maintenance, schoolwork, social interaction, and the aspirations and fears that each member brings. In a study of 115 students on seven different field schools, Pavelka (2018) asked students to discuss aspirations and fears in a pre and post trip context. Student fears of group life and specifically acceptance in the group, were ranked the highest over physical/illness, educational, monetary, social detachment concerns, both pre and post. Anderson, Lorenz, and White (2016) note that the relationships built while studying abroad were important to the students, and when guided by the instructor, provided a useful support network that allowed students to "work through their realizations and discomforts that may accompany culture learning". The intense social setting of the field school whereby students must learn to function within a group, often with little opportunity for individual respite, makes it unique relative to most other semester or year-long experiences that provide the student with more agency over their everyday life.

5. Required Entry Language Competency and Working Language

Language competency is critical for study abroad programs with a language or intensive cultural study focus. Engle and Engle (2003) suggest that for such programs, entry language target proficiency is elementary to intermediate, even for short-term experiences, and rises to advanced for longer duration programs. They suggest a similar progression for use of the target language for study abroad. While this may resonate for language and culture intensive programs, field schools in other disciplines tend to treat foreign language proficiency secondary to discipline-specific aims. Language proficiency always enhances foreign travel. However, language learning is irrelevant if traveling to an English-speaking country, or unrealistic if traveling to several countries with different languages in one field school.

6. Guided Reflection

Reflection is central to experiential learning and perhaps the most important dimension of learning within study abroad and for many the reason we travel in the first place. Guided reflection is essential to experiential learning and should be incorporated into any experience, regardless of duration or discipline. Observations of and discussions with faculty over years reveal a range of practice regarding guided reflection from extensive use of daily debriefings, journal writing and reflective papers, through to minimal post-trip debriefing. It would serve the field school model to learn more about how faculty approach and execute facilitated reflection.

Part 2: Field School Logistics

7. Student Housing

Student housing impacts the study abroad experience. For example, students in collective housing are likely to experience their surroundings differently from those housed with other international students or homestays (Engle and Engle, 2003). Field schools, perhaps because of their shorter duration and pedagogical focus tend to subscribe to collective student housing. Exceptions include homestays and hostel residence among other international guests, but the typical situation is for collective residence. The tendency toward collective housing also underscores the live-and-work-together 'group living' component of the field school.

8. Travel Component

International field schools by definition include a travel component but differ in the type or style of travel once abroad. There are basically three approaches to travel with the field school. The first generally stays in one, maybe two, locations for its duration. For example, archeology, physical science, primatology, and similar field schools may choose to take advantage of one especially useful location for the duration of the field school with minor excursions. The second is tour based with the aim of visiting a variety of locations in fairly rapid succession. For example, field schools in human geography, history, art and architecture may require multiple locations within a region to provide the greatest value for the student. The third is the slow travel hybrid field school based on principles of slow tourism. Slow travel refers to travel that is less consumptive of carbon resources, but in doing so also emphasizes longer stays in one place, lived experience integration, and in-country travel that allow for greater experience of place (Lumsden and McGrath, 2011). Field schools determine travel in keeping with academic goals.

9. Credit Allotment

Course credit allotment is a concern for administration, faculty and students. Credit allotment may range from three to twelve credits, or one to four course equivalents. The number of credits attached to a field school generally depends on its duration and amount and intensity of pre and post trip academic requirements. In terms of program length the field school model is a short-term international experience, usually two to four weeks in duration, but anything within the range of one to eight weeks is considered a short-term program (Brooking, 2010). Observation suggests that most field schools range from three to six weeks and from six to nine credits, or two to three course equivalents with variation. Most field schools require some pre-trip and post-trip credit work in terms of readings, assignments, or guided reflection. At times, administration pressures to minimize credit allotments for field schools because they often represent additional teaching for faculty. Conversely, students often seek programs with maximum credit benefit to add value to their financial and temporal investment.

Conclusion

The aim of this paper is to define the field school model of study abroad and nine defining traits of this model are provided. The objective of this section is to close the loop and draw out features of the field school model that make it distinct within the landscape of study abroad programs. The field school model is increasingly popular as an option of study abroad because it is viewed as more feasible for students compared to long-term semester or year abroad programs. Its shorter duration implies less potential for meaningful cultural integration, but field schools can address this concern through careful facilitation, and some possess aims that do not stress a cultural component (for example science-based programs with little local interaction). Field schools present robust logistical flexibility in terms of duration, credit allotment, travel format, student living conditions and course work; features that make it attractive to faculty and administration. Longer-term study abroad programs generally have the student navigating learning and life independent of the home institution, which is appropriate for students with previous international experience. The field school, which is faculty-led, shorter and structured, appears more appropriate for students to gain their initial international travel and study experience (McKeon, 2009). This model also represents opportunity for faculty to extend their classroom to the field in ways that are flexible, meaningful and fit into the academic calendar.

Perhaps the most unique element of the field school relative to other study abroad models is its intense group living component described earlier. It

is also likely one of the most underrated aspects of field school planning by faculty and administrators. When Engle and Engle (2003) describe orientation programs, the focus is on outward facing cultural integration, not intra-group navigation of daily life and learning. Perry (2004) argues that a benefit of the archeology field school is the community of learners that develops, but intra-group functioning may go awry and just as easily result in an untenable learning environment. Goode (2008) claims faculty's role in the field school includes supporting its intense social dynamic. Finally, a stated aim of this paper is to provide greater clarity of the field school model such that continuous improvement may be encouraged. A direction for further investigation and improvement is intra-group dynamic and functioning. The field school model should be encouraged by administrators as a way to extend and internationalize campuses in a purposeful manner.

Author Biographies

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Carmanah Minions is a senior undergraduate researcher at Mount Royal University and a veteran of field school experiential learning.

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