

Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad

© Sarah E. Spencer, Alexandra Wood

The work is licensed under the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

Volume 35, Issue 3, pp. 274-302

DOI: 10.36366/frontiers.v35i3.830

www.frontiersjournal.org



The Curriculum is the Culprit: Debunking Deficit Myths and Improving Access to Study Abroad for Community College/Technical and Vocational Students

Sarah E. Spencer¹, Alexandra Wood²

Abstract

While community college and technical and vocational educational and training (TVET) students' ability to afford a study abroad experience as well as the "culture" that shapes their attitudes towards education abroad are frequently framed as barriers to participation, this article posits that curriculum is one of the primary gatekeepers. Qualitative interviews with global education leaders at 20 U.S. institutions indicate that the availability of flexible program models and student interest in international experiences are creating favorable conditions for their students to go abroad, yet finding courses outside of faculty-led programs that meet these students' curricular needs is an enduring challenge. This article argues that shifting away from a deficit perspective in education abroad research and looking beyond assumptions that community college/TVET institutional characteristics and their students' socioeconomic identities are necessary steps towards addressing low enrollment in study abroad. Rather, leaders at higher education institutions and study abroad organizations can open doors by adding courses that align with general education curriculum and associate degree requirements for direct-enrollment options.

¹ ONPOINT GLOBAL STRATEGIES & COACHING, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

² COUNCIL ON INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXCHANGE, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Corresponding author: Sarah E. Spencer, sarah@onpointglobalstrategies.com

Accepted date: August 25th, 2023

Keywords:

Community college, curriculum, degree requirements, first-year, general education, technical/vocational education, transfer credit

Introduction

Socioeconomic deficits (Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad, 2005; Raby & Rhodes, 2005; Raby & Sawadogo, 2005; Raby, 2019; Sweeney, 2013) and institutional ones (Kumari, 2017; Loberg, 2012; Opp & Gosetti, 2014; Raby & Valeau, 2016) that hinder participation in education abroad by students enrolled at U.S. community colleges and at technical and vocational education and training (TVET) colleges pervade much of our collective thinking on this topic. To nuance if not upend deficit-informed assumptions about low rates of study abroad engagement by community college and TVET students, this article posits that a pervasive structural factor deserves more robust study about a different option for students to study abroad other than faculty-led programs. Education abroad providers are U.S. or international organizations that directly enroll students in pre-designed study abroad programs. This study examines the availability of general education or introductory-level courses offered by education abroad providers and the potential partnerships they can create with community colleges. The direct enrollment option can broaden coursework possibilities, including in the STEM, Business, technical or vocational fields (Carley et al., 2011; Leggert, 2011).

The literature review situates this article in the (limited) body of research that considers the roles and benefits of directly enrolling students with providers, including the benefits of having a diversity of locations, significant student support, and update-to-date risk management protocols (Kurtzman, 2017). Yet, the research also shows various concerns about direct-enrollment including credit transferability of courses when taken abroad that may not meet state-by-state transfer requirements (Sova Solutions, 2023; Raby, 2008). Another concern is program cost (De Wit, 2019; Raby, 2019; Sutton, 2019). This article examines additional factors that influence study abroad participation and how the deficit lens characterizes many of these analyses. It also engages with the (even smaller) set of empirical studies that look at the role of aligning the general education curriculum and transfer credit with direct enrollment options for community college and TVET students. This is also an opportunity to examine the U.S. education abroad sector, how deficit narratives inform

assumptions about one of the largest populations of over 12 million students (AACC, 2023) and the importance of examining what curriculum is consistently offered and how it matches with that offered by study abroad organizations.

The methods section details the impetus for the data collection that informs this article: a consulting project that involved outreach to U.S. institutions about a prospective partnership with a study abroad organization to create an innovative first-year abroad program. The project involved identifying 80 target colleges for outreach from more than 900 public community colleges; conducting a descriptive analysis of mission statements published by 40 community colleges and TVET institutions; and conducting semi-structured qualitative interviews with global education professionals at 20 target schools. Given that course availability and credit transferability emerged as significant themes in discussions with the respondents, the authors also engaged in a review of curriculum offered by five leading study abroad organizations to indicate where there are gaps in courses suitable for community college and TVET students.

This article's primary contribution is to center the voices of global education leaders and to share their first-hand perspectives on improving access to education abroad by expanding curricular options offered by provider organizations and reducing barriers to transferring credits that facilitate degree completion for community colleges. Respondents also acknowledged that increasing study abroad participation requires moving beyond reliance upon the faculty-led model by expanding access to longer-term and cultural immersion options requiring a wider variety of course offerings at the 100 and 200 level.

The discussion invites education abroad researchers to pursue a line of inquiry that disrupts assumptions informed by the deficit narrative; encourages decision makers to enact policy changes that create equitable access to high-impact practices (Kuh, 2008; Kuh et al., 2017) like study abroad; and points to trends that may enable study abroad provider organizations to expand their curricular offerings in such a way that benefits community college and TVET students. While acknowledging that more systematic empirical research is needed, this article concludes that curriculum should not be overlooked as a potentially powerful factor in improving access to education abroad for students enrolled at associate degree-granting institutions.

Literature Review

Research published over the last decade examines education abroad engagement by community college/technical and vocational training and education (TVET) institutions, with a majority of the research focused on the traditional community college and minimally on TVET programs. Studies focus on the challenges, successes, and academic offerings associated with education abroad programs in dialogue with these institutions' commitment to academic open access, defined as non-selective in admission standards, or that the doors of these institutions are open to anyone (Raby, 2008, 2019; Smith & Hubbard, 2019; Whatley & Raby, 2020). This literature also addresses the unique aspects of these institutions, which is important as most of education abroad research focuses on the four-year degree student experience.

Since their founding in the early 20th century, community colleges and TVET institutions have played a critical role in the rapid expansion of U.S. higher education. Representing the diversity found in all 50 states in the United States, students who enroll at these institutions include those who come from underrepresented, traditional, and non-traditional backgrounds (Amani & Kim, 2017). While many four-year post-secondary institutions have implemented campus internationalization strategies and introduced global learning outcomes into their curricula, community colleges initially met their local district's educational and workforce development needs by recruiting and matriculating international students (Raby & Valeau, 2016). As education abroad (also referred to as study abroad and learning abroad) expanded in terms of student participation and programs, its designation as a high-impact educational activity by the American Association of Colleges and Universities positioned study abroad as a valuable component of the U.S. undergraduate academic experience (Kuh, 2008). Furthermore, research points to education abroad participation having a positive impact on academic and postgraduate outcomes at these institutions (Bell & Glass, 2019; Brennan et al., 2005; Hubbard et al., 2018; Raby, 2019; Raby et al., 2014).

Studies demonstrate that global learning opportunities are not equally available to all students across different sectors of U.S. higher education, however; this is especially true of community colleges (Amani & Kim 2017). During the 2018-19 academic year, only 2% of undergraduate study abroad students were enrolled at associate degree-granting institutions, compared to 70% at doctoral degree-granting universities, although study abroad

participation among community college students has increased by 60% over a decade. (IIE, 2020; Whatley & González Canché, 2021). To support access to study abroad, some community colleges have adopted faculty-led program models, including year-long or semester programs, as well as short-term programs offered during winter, summer, or semester breaks (Raby 2019; Leeman Bartzis et al., 2016). At the same time, community colleges are guided by a core principle to allow all students entry to take classes regardless of prior academic history, socioeconomic status, age, gender, racial or ethnic identity, or enrollment status (Whatley & Raby, 2020). Applying the principle of open access to the education abroad context requires these institutions to ensure that courses offered abroad are also available on campus (Smith & Hubbard, 2019) or conversely, that education abroad classes must meet the same requirements as classes offered on-campus (Raby, 2008).

The Deficit Narrative and Counternarrative

A common theme is that of socioeconomic and institutional barriers that stymie participation in education abroad by students enrolled at community colleges and TVET institutions. This is a drumbeat that pervades much of the literature about this topic until recently. For community college students, the literature pointed to barriers which include financial resources (Amani, 2011), curricular conflicts that limit free time (McKee, 2019), and inability to take time away from family and/or work (Raby & Rhodes, 2005). At the institutional level, budget constraints, lack of staff, and graduation requirements that limit choices were frequently cited as barriers to education abroad participation (Loberg, 2012). Studies that focused on these barriers often reflected a deficit narrative, leading some practitioners to assume that it is simply too difficult to make study abroad a viable opportunity for community college or TVET students. Furthermore, this deficit narrative and its accompanying assumption that study abroad was not a suitable activity for students at community colleges and TVET institutions threatens to further entrench a differential educational experience and counters the open access mission of these schools (Raby 2019). Recent research also provides counter-narratives that non-traditional students are not interested in studying abroad. They bring cultural capital (Modood, 2004; Raby, 2019) and consideration for all durations of programs, including semester (Raby et al., 2014). This research also points to a continued lack of institutional support, centered in deficit-based policies and an adverse cycle of doubt (Raby, 2019). The responsibility of the institution can be expanded to include the systemic and

structural challenges within higher education and specifically within the education abroad sector. As Gozik and Barclay Hamir (2022) write, ‘to simply amend a policy or add a program may only offer a limited solution and not get at the root of the problem (pp. 2-3).

The cost associated with studying abroad was the most cited challenge for these students and institutions, according to education abroad literature (Amani, 2011; Gephart 2019; Salisbury et al., 2009; Armani & Kim, 2018). In a 2008 study, affordability was identified as a primary obstacle in expanding community college learning abroad. 83% of respondents to an IIE/CCIE survey cited costs and fees as a leading challenge to expanding education abroad (Raby, 2008). ‘Many community college students are personally financially challenged, and the expense of study abroad is a real or perceived barrier,’ notes Leeman Bartzis et al. (2016, p. 248), pointing to earlier studies such as Ruffer (2010) and Hulstrand (2016) that similarly found correlation between low study abroad participation rates and financial constraints among community college students.

Emerging research calls into question the extent to which cost is the driving factor for low study abroad participation among community college and TVET students. Adult community college students have an increased sense of purpose and view study abroad as the opportunity of a lifetime (Whatley & Raby, 2020). These students are better able to weigh the costs against the benefits of studying abroad when they are given access to program cost information, financial aid information, and planning time (Amani & Kim, 2017), especially when they are mentored to apply for scholarships, such as the Gilman (Ali & Thompson 2020).

Program Models

U.S. undergraduate education abroad opportunities are designed, managed, and delivered via different program models, including faculty-led, consortia, exchange and direct enrollment (Butler, 2017). A significant percentage of study abroad opportunities available to community college students are ‘faculty-led and a short-term duration (Raby, 2009; Smith & Hubbard, 2019). Students travel together as a group, with instruction from a faculty member from the home institution. Faculty may work collaboratively with campus global education staff to design, market and lead programs (Gephart, 2019; Smith & Hubbard, 2019). While individual programs may flex in duration and curriculum (Raby, 2019), faculty are heavily involved, as a home

campus course or within the consortium mode. For the community college student cohort, group affinity is reinforced by similar and safe backgrounds with other students and known faculty (Amani, 2011; Brenner, 2016; CCIE, 2018; Zhang et al., 2013).

A second important consideration is the definition and role of the 'program provider in support of different program models listed above. The Forum on Education Abroad's Glossary (2023b) defines a provider as an institution or organization that offers education abroad program services to students from a variety of institutions and may be a college or university, a non-profit organization, a for-profit business, or a consortium (Forum, 2023). Provider services are extensive, including curricular delivery, intercultural facilitation, student life support, housing, travel logistics, and advice on health, safety and risk management, to name a few (Kurtzman, 2017). For faculty-led programs, benefits include cultural and academic expertise, on-site logistics, budget management, on-site emergency management in addition to negotiating travel discounts. The literature also points out contracting with a program provider may increase the total program costs (De Wit, 2019, Raby, 2019, Sutton, 2019). The cost-benefit needs to be carefully considered, such as increasing direct costs to students versus expertise on the ground, student support and details to mitigate risk management (Kurtzman, 2017).

For the sake of this article, education abroad providers are U.S. or international organizations that directly enroll students in their programs. These entities are diverse in size, scope, and locations, and may offer programs in limited locations, or globally. They may have offices and staff based in the U.S. and may also be part of a degree-granting educational institution (Kurtzman, 2017). Partnering with these organizations can be beneficial for institutions and students alike, in that they require minimal resources from the home campus, no enrollment targets, diverse offers in coursework, language of instruction, diversity of locations and significant student support. Challenges include potential academic qualifications, such as GPA minimum and prerequisites (which may not be as supportive to community college students), availability of financial aid and overall student program cost (Butler, 2017). While many provider organizations offer substantial scholarships (Brandão, 2022), tuition and program costs are often significantly more expensive than courses offered at a community college (Sutton, 2019).

Courses and Credit

Few studies, however, examine the extent to which academic credit and curriculum may determine access to education abroad among community college and TVET students, potentially countering the deficit narrative or at least tempering assumptions about the primacy of cost-related barriers. While the intent to transfer to earn a four-year degree is high, only 13% of those will earn a baccalaureate degree within six years (Shapiro et al., 2017). Student access to study abroad depends on obtaining credits that fulfil associate degree requirements or position students to successfully transfer credits to a four-year institution. Community college and TVET schools are successful when they offer their own faculty-led programs with home institution credit. The ability to obtain credit from direct enrollment programs facilitated by education abroad providers is substantially limited, especially since these offerings are aimed at fulfilling upper-level curricular requirements for students seeking a Bachelor of Arts degree. Community colleges only offer lower-division curricular requirements. In recent years, universities and study abroad providers have also endeavored to make study abroad more accessible for STEM or Business majors by offering courses abroad that fulfil Bachelor of Science requirements as well. Yet even with these changes, the preponderance of upper-level course offerings offered by education abroad organizations is misaligned with the curricular needs of community college and TVET students, who are often engaged in degree programs that are brief in length; sequentially organized with regard to curriculum; and structured with little room for courses that may not satisfy (or appear to satisfy) specific degree requirements (Leeman Bartzis et al., 2016, p. 238).

These institutions also offer a broad portfolio of credit-granting opportunities beyond general education courses for an associate degree. Students enrolled at these schools may study diverse curricular areas including technical, vocational, occupational, and career education, such as nursing, culinary arts, oenology, and cosmetology' (Raby 2019, p. 3). Cultural experience and immersion, earning academic credit, and the opportunity to acquire technical on-the-job experience and enhanced work skills are motivators for TVET students who study abroad (McKee, 2016).

Transfer, equivalent, substitution, or exchange credit associated with study abroad programs can be limiting for community colleges and TVET institutions (Sova Solutions, 2023), especially when the credit is only considered

elective or does not meet degree requirements (Whatley & Raby, 2020). Even when courses most commonly designed for first- and second-year students are offered on education abroad programs available to community college or TVET students, credit transfer remains a concern. Recent publications have shown that transfer students may be denied recognition and credit for high-quality, accredited learning opportunities without substantial evidence (for example, a syllabus that aligns point-by-point to an on-campus course), if at all, leading to increased equity gaps for students of color and low-income students (Sova Solutions, 2023). Few studies, though, have addressed if community college or TVET students are deterred from participating on third party provider programs of any length due to the risk that those courses will not be counted towards degree requirements at the institution they transfer to, thus potentially putting them behind on the path to degree completion.

Community college students who focus on STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and math) are of particular interest given growing student enrollments in these programs of study versus their underrepresentation in study abroad participation (Baer 2019). Curricular restrictions imposed by their majors are likely at play (Amani & Kim, 2018). In 2005/06, only 16% of community college students in STEM fields studied abroad; by 2019/00, the percentage of students in STEM fields who studied abroad increased to 26.3% (IIE, 2023). However, 41% of community college students in 2015/16 (last year available) majored in STEM areas, particularly within the health professions (Baer, 2019). Consequently, although STEM students at community colleges are accessing study abroad opportunities at a greater rate, they continue to be underrepresented in comparison with overall STEM enrollment at community colleges (Baer, 2019).

General Education Curriculum

Research indicates that specific changes may ameliorate curriculum and credit changes related to education abroad. First, identifying highly transferable courses that appeal to a large audience of students from different fields of study and which do not carry enrollment limitations creates a curriculum that is attractive to the broadest pool of study abroad applicants possible (Smith & Hubbard, 2019). Second, managing credit transfer regulations, some states and schools encourage faculty not to create new programs but to build upon existing classes for study abroad programs. Other studies suggest adding an existing section course, in order that faculty members would not need a separate course

approval from their college's curriculum committee. Also, it was suggested that designating study abroad courses in this way should not violate open access regulations (Sutton, 2019).

Research indicates support among community college faculty for improving the availability of courses taken abroad that fulfil general education courses, particularly for students enrolled in an associate or technical degree program (De Wit & Furst, 2019; Smith, 2019; Gephart, 2019). De Wit and Furst (2019) describe how faculty at the Community College of Baltimore County and Howard Community College worked with the Institutional Research Office to identify highly-enrolled courses across a range of disciplines. The result was Global Distinction, a comprehensive academic enrichment program, which was designed to fulfil several criteria: incorporating internationalized curriculum, experiential learning (local cross-cultural or study abroad), and engagement with intercultural activities. This was intended to reach as many students as possible and fit within existing degree requirements. The project also identified several areas as most helpful additions to study abroad course offerings: English, mathematics, psychology, sociology, and biology (De Wit & Furst, 2019). This article similarly invites us to consider how introducing courses that align with general education curriculum offered by provider organizations may be a viable pathway for improving access and expanded opportunities to study abroad among community college and TVET students.

Methods

This article draws upon descriptive and qualitative research conducted in 2022 to inform the design of a new study abroad program for first-year college students, specifically those seeking to complete a bachelor's degree. The co-author, Sarah E. Spencer, was retained by the Council on International Educational Exchange (CIEE) as a consultant to identify a community college amenable to partnering on a credit-bearing study abroad experience for recent high school graduates. Established in 1947, CIEE facilitates international exchange for visiting participants coming to the United States on work or study programs; offers study abroad programs for U.S. high school and college students; and provides internship, teach abroad, TEFL and other global professional development opportunities. With the launch of its First Year Abroad program, CIEE becomes one of the first non-profit provider organizations to offer a study abroad opportunity for first-year cohorts that is not designed as a custom or faculty-led model. However, given the potential that

some students enrolled in this type of study abroad program might opt to transfer away following their first or second semester of college, the consulting project prioritized community colleges since they are highly adept at articulating courses and assisting students with transferring credit to another institution for completion of a bachelor's degree. While the initial project scope did not focus on producing a research study, the data nevertheless provided insight into barriers that thwart participation in study abroad among community college and TVET students -- as well as potential solutions.

Although not designed as a research study, grounded theory informs the analytical frame of this article. Grounded theory is an inductive method that involves simultaneous data collection and analysis; coding from data rather than pre-existing concepts or hypotheses; ongoing development of theories to explain behavior and processes that emerge from the data coding; and theoretical sampling rather than surveying a general population (Charmaz, 2006). In this article, we position the 20 participants who took part in interviews as a theoretical sample, allowing us to "check and refine" our emerging conceptual categories for barriers to study abroad among community college and TVET students.

Identifying Institutions for Outreach

The first co-author engaged in purposive sampling by identifying criteria for target institutions to contact about the prospect of partnering with CIEE to establish a new first-year abroad program. Prioritized selection criteria included evidence of consistent study abroad participation, designated professionals responsible for global education, and institutional balance, such as regional accreditation agency and large state student enrollments. Identifying a group of 80 community colleges for initial outreach from more than 900 public institutions in the United States required quantitative data compilation from multiple sources. First, using the Open Doors report by the Institute of International Education (IIE, 2020), the first co-author isolated those schools that appear among the top-sending study abroad institutions that offer associate degrees, as a measure of the institution's prior engagement or interest in education abroad. 40 community college members of the Forum on Education Abroad (Forum, 2023a) and recipients of the NAFSA Paul Simon internationalization award (listed as annual recipients since 2003) (NAFSA, n.d.) were included in the sample, as well as institutions that had previously partnered with CIEE or contracted with iNext (a CIEE-affiliated insurance

agency). Community colleges that had previously sent students on study abroad programs with CIEE, Forum members, and/or Paul Simon recipients were most likely to agree to be interviewed for the project and to express interest in partnering on a first-year abroad program. In a later phase of data collection, the co-author engaged in snowballing sampling when interviewees provided additional names of community colleges and referrals to professional contacts at these institutions.

In-person professional events also provided a forum for identifying target schools to reach out to for qualitative interviews. At NAFSA's annual conference held in Denver, Colorado, in May 2022, the co-author attended two sessions focused on community colleges, including an Internationalization session and a Special Interest Group meeting. Discussing the CIEE first-year abroad program with attendees at these events yielded additional institutions to include in the outreach group. The authors acknowledge that the context of seeking an institutional partner for the CIEE first-year abroad program, and identifying community colleges via their attendance at international education events, created a sample bias in that the target group did not include these schools that are not actively engaged in study abroad, whether faculty-led programming and/or with a provider organization.

In addition to international education related criteria, the first co-author's purposive sampling included the following institutional criteria to identify a target group of community colleges: a representative sample based upon regional accreditation agency; a sample based upon those US states with the largest proportion of community college students, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics' Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System; and a sample of schools classified as minority-serving institutions. Of the 80 schools identified for outreach, 25 institutions are accredited by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges; Western Association of Schools and Colleges represented 25 schools in the sample, followed by the Higher Learning Commission (19 schools), Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (17 schools), Middle States Commission on Higher Education (11 schools), Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities (5), and New England Commission on Higher Education (3 schools). The highest proportion of community colleges in the outreach group are located in California (25 schools), New York (5 schools), North Carolina (4 schools), as well as Arizona, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, and

Wisconsin (3 schools each). Colleges designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) represented 16 schools in the target group; those designated as both HSI and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISI) account for 11 schools; AANAPISI account for six schools; and Predominantly Black Institutions and Historically Black Colleges and Universities account for three schools identified for outreach.

The first co-author's initial outreach via phone and email, which requested a reply if the recipient was interested in discussing the CIEE first-year abroad partnership, responded in a positive response from roughly 50% of those 80 community colleges identified via the process outlined above. Reasons for non-response from these institutions typically included global education office closures during the summer months; study abroad programs on continued pause due to the COVID-19 pandemic; staff changes; and out-of-date websites that no longer included accurate contact information for the global education office.

Interview Analysis

From the outreach responses received from 40 community colleges in 25 US states, the first co-author then conducted a descriptive analysis of each institution, looking specifically for evidence of commitment to global education via mission statements, financial aid availability for study abroad programs, and education abroad program portfolios based upon the institution's college's general website pages or its education abroad pages, where available. Additionally, for each institution, the first co-author identified curricular requirements for first-year students; world language courses offered, as an indicator that the institution would be able to transcript one or more of the seven world languages that CIEE may offer on the first-year abroad program; online or remote learning policies; and internationalization initiatives.

In requests for interviews, the first co-author asked for information on best practices and special considerations for community colleges, including state pathway programs, philosophy on the accessibility of credit transfer, and reputable and innovative community colleges at the state level or region (see Appendix). Although the interviews were intended to inform a project about developing a first-year abroad educational partnership between a community college and a study abroad provider organization, the qualitative data that emerged from these conversations serves as a needs assessment proxy for

globally-engaged institutions seeking to expand access to education abroad for their students. To state differently, while these interview questions were not designed as part of a research study to probe for respondents' views on the deficit narrative, their responses nevertheless push back against deficit-informed assumptions in order to address real rather than perceived barriers to study abroad.

A total of 20 interviews were conducted over the phone or Zoom and were recorded in writing by the first co-author. All participants minimally held responsibility for student education abroad participation and programming, and some oversee all aspects of international education and may include community engagement. While years of experience was not part of the study, most participants indicated at least five years in their current position and many attend professional conferences such as Forum, NAFSA and CCID. Participants' institutional type experiences were varied, including working at four-year schools. The semi-structured interview protocol posed questions about the state of global education at these community college and TVET institutions in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic; support from campus leadership for global education; financial aid policies related to study abroad; academic pathways for transfer students; and circumstances influencing global education within the school's community, state, or regional setting. While the interview protocol was designed to gauge each school's interest in partnering on a first-year abroad program, questions such as "How does access to federal or state financial aid impact study abroad at your institution?" and "What is the curriculum at your institution for first-year students?" allowed respondents to offer first-hand perspective from their institutions on factors that impact access to education abroad.

Upon completion of the interviews, the first co-author coded the qualitative responses in Excel, organized by the interview protocol questions (without use of a qualitative analysis software tool). Responses were then categorized according to key themes in order to compile a report provided to CIEE at the conclusion of the consulting project. Key themes or phrases included expanding study abroad portfolios to include more semester opportunities, the role and working with third party providers, curriculum availability, program costs and institutional support for study abroad. For purposes of developing this article, the authors synthesized the key themes from the consulting project report, identified patterns in the data, and explored how these patterns relate

to existing literature about education abroad participation by community college and TVET students. In early 2023, the first co-author contacted respondents who are quoted in the Findings section to request permission to use their comments for this publication. All respondents are referred to using pseudonyms.

Study Abroad Provider Curriculum Analysis

When curriculum emerged as a primary theme in the qualitative data, the first co-author subsequently conducted a quantitative analysis of courses offered by five study abroad providers serving U.S. undergraduate students -- including CIEE, USAC, AIFS, CEA CAPA and IFSA-Butler. These organizations all offer coursework in multiple global sites and were mentioned in the interviews as programs available to current students or partnering for custom programs delivery. Apart from beginning level world language classes, the first co-author found that few of these providers' academic catalogs include courses at the introductory level (100-200) that align with general education curriculum and are thus suitable for a wider range of community college students; fewer still offer technical courses suitable for TVET students. The first co-author found that prerequisites, a preponderance of intermediate or advanced level (300-400) courses, and direct enrollment into host institution courses typically characterize most of the courses currently offered by providers.

Qualitative Findings

Coding the qualitative data from interviews with 20 international education professionals yielded three key themes that support counter deficient narratives discussed in the literature review. One central theme among interviewees is the role of general education offerings by program providers. Respondents reported that the provider standard 100 and 200 level courses were limited to a few courses, and as importantly, limited to just a few locations compared to the diverse sites available the traditional curriculum for junior or senior level undergraduates. Many students find consistent support from faculty in faculty-led programs to pursue studying abroad and working within a master syllabus by state framework can provide a syllabus that meets open access standards.

A second theme is the desire to expand their study abroad offerings to include more semester and year opportunities. The international education professionals recognize that their students have the interest and resources to

study abroad during their associate's degree. Students also see a study abroad program experience as strengthening their transfer record to a four-year institution, as well as provide a potential community of peers who share their experiences.

A third theme points to the role - and subsequent challenges - of support from the institution. Many leaders reported being worried about declining enrollments, especially in the context of pandemic. While there are community colleges that are interested in supporting education abroad, there are other institutions whose priorities do not include international education, or do not allow federal or state financial aid to apply these experiences. By centering the voices of global education leaders at these institutions, our findings indicate that these stakeholders believe that increasing the availability of provider programs can meet their students' curricular needs and will increase study abroad participation among community college and TVET students.

Funding and Program Length

Respondents acknowledge that while cost remains a factor for many students, it is not the insurmountable barrier that some may assume it is. Globally-engaged community colleges are helping Pell-eligible students to successfully pursue Gilman scholarships. Elaine L., a senior global leader at a community college in North Carolina, pointed out that:

[We are] one of the many colleges who invests additional support for students to apply for the Gilman Scholarship. Many community college students are eligible for the Gilman, and at [our community college], three out of four students were awarded Gilmans last year to support their study abroad experiences.

Blaise F., a senior global education leader at a community college in Alabama similarly notes that:

The Gilman International Scholarship has benefited our students and community in countless ways. The most obvious is providing critical funding to make study abroad a reality, and we are proud that our students received the first Gilman awards in Alabama. We also found that promoting the Gilman demonstrated that a collaborative, intergenerational strengths-based approach for outreach and mentoring of students can provide significant success.

Although community college students are typically older vs traditionally-aged university study abroad cohorts, respondents report seeing interest in short-term and semester study abroad opportunities alike. Elaine L. in North Carolina offered that:

Most study abroad programs are designed for a traditional undergraduate student cohort, 18-22 years old, and offer two semesters and summer programming. At [our community college], the average student age is 27 years old, many work full time and have family responsibilities. Equally important to consider is the term length and how students can participate with ease to keep them on track for degree completion. [Our school] has an 8-week term, and most semester study abroad programs, especially those at direct-enrollment at a university, are 15 weeks.

Acknowledging that community colleges and TVET institutions have a student population that is older versus the typical four-year university undergraduate population, demographic factors do not limit their interest in study abroad generally or semester-length programs specifically. As Devon A., a senior international education professional at a community college in Iowa pointed out:

There are many non-traditional students, working students, students with families/children [...] There is also a wider diversity in income levels, racial identity, and the list goes on. The population is diverse and so are their interests, which often includes the desire to participate in education abroad as part of their higher education experience. Each student is unique in their motivations and circumstances resulting in interests that are also diverse including both short-term programming and semester-long programming. Community colleges who offer semester-long programming do see interest and enrollment in semester-long programs.

Clay D., a senior international education professional at a community college in Maryland, echoed that they have seen a steady increase in study abroad programs that exceed two weeks in duration. They report that 2+2 pathways with universities abroad also provided opportunities for their students to study abroad for longer periods. Devon A. in Iowa similarly shared that their community college is expanding its portfolio of longer-term study

abroad programs. Studying abroad during the second year of community college is advantageous, they argue, in that it gives students who are often working adults more time to make arrangements that allow for longer time away from work, and to engage in the requisite academic planning to identify the courses needed for program completion or suitable for transfer to a four-year institution.

Partnering with Providers

Respondents frequently commented upon the benefits of working with provider organizations to support study abroad programming offered by their community college or TVET institution. Risk management, travel logistics, and knowledge about the cultural context of the destination country emerged as key benefits of these partnerships. As James F. in Oregon shared:

Working with a provider is not only about logistical operations support. They are truly partners in creating a meaningful academic experience with faculty with additional local content and context. Faculty can also propose programs in locations where they do not have deep on-site expertise. While program cost may increase, it is not as much as expected and worth all the benefits.

Although respondents articulated the benefits of partnering with providers to offer short-term, faculty-led programming, many pointed to the lack of suitable curricular offerings -- 100 and 200 level courses -- on longer-term or immersion programs. Florence C., a senior global education leader at a community college shared with the first co-author that:

We know that for study abroad to be attractive to community college students, they must make progress in their degree, moving them closer to graduation or program completion. Most education abroad organizations [providers] do not offer lower-level general education courses, which is a barrier for our students. Beyond the traditional associate degree, workforce development programs are rapidly expanding to meet multiple needs, for example water quality or sustainability initiatives. There is a large untapped market if the education abroad community created more opportunities for these students to study abroad. With a solid general education curriculum, longer study abroad programs -- such as semester or full semester -- would be more attractive to a larger pool of community college students.

Gale T., a senior international education professional at a community college in New Jersey echoed that the absence of general education and lower-level courses is a hindrance to supporting community college students, given the likeliness that they will transfer to another institution to complete their undergraduate degree:

With 60% of [our students] transferring to the four-year institution, general education courses that are [portable] is critical. Many providers only offer 300 or 400 level courses, and it would be easy to develop general education courses for the study abroad environment. For example, World Civilization offered in Italy, Public Speaking offered in England, the History of Art, or Introduction to Psychology offered in Buenos Aires. STEM courses would also be welcomed, such an Introduction to Biology and Chemistry. Robust language offerings are also important to align with our extensive language offerings.

Harper S., a global education leader in Arizona, noted that while their community college district offers only faculty-led short-term programs at present, their college is interested in partnering with study abroad providers to expand and diversify the locations in their education abroad portfolio. Yet, they stated, general education courses are not typically available. Ingrid G., a senior international education professional at a TVET institution in Wisconsin points to how limited curricular offerings similarly thwart TVET students from studying abroad:

As these colleges serve technical degrees, general education requirements are not required by some programs. At [my TVET institution], 50% of approximately 35,000 students seek a tech degree, the other remaining 50% seek the associates or liberal arts degree.

Creating access for more community college and TVET students to study abroad by expanding 100 and 200 level course offerings will pay dividends, respondents indicate. Blaise F. in Alabama explained the campus-wide impact at stake:

The community service of students after returning from study abroad served as a light of hope to other interested students from similar backgrounds... Working together for the mutual benefit of the student and the institution is necessary for success and the potential for increasing social capital and resilience while reducing feelings of doubt and disenfranchisement.

Staff burnout and leadership changes are compounded by enrollment declines and revenue shortfalls at many community colleges; yet global education professionals at these institutions see post-pandemic rebuilding as an opportunity to position education abroad as a solution to some of these challenges. However, they point to the myriad diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts within the study abroad field and express dismay at why community colleges are not centered in these initiatives. One respondent, who asked to remain anonymous, put it plainly, “If study abroad wants to diversify the student population and increase students of color, they need to look at the community colleges. That’s where they are enrolled.”

Discussion

For more than 60 years, faculty-led programs have created opportunities for community college and TVET students to study abroad. While the interview protocol did not explicitly ask respondents their thoughts on the deficit narrative and how it shapes access to study abroad, themes from the data nevertheless echo its enduring presence. Qualitative responses from interview participants in this article echo existing literature that underscores the historical and ongoing role of faculty-led programs in providing affordable, short-term experiences that offer coursework aligned with associate degree requirements and transfer-friendly credits. Multiple respondents, however, acknowledged that increasing participation by community college and TVET students requires moving beyond reliance upon the faculty-led model; they point out that expanding access to longer-term and cultural immersion options requires a wider variety of course offerings at the 100 and 200 level than the typical short-term faculty-led program can provide.

Additionally, respondents indicated that partnering with provider organizations is a largely untapped avenue for community colleges and TVET institutions to expand their study abroad portfolio. By offering a diversity of locations, price points, scholarships, risk management, and student support, providers enable the colleges that they work with to increase the number of students they send abroad. Yet providers are largely dependent upon student demand when determining those classes on offer -- the quantitative study abroad provider curriculum analysis presented in this article indicates a preponderance of 300 to 400 level courses, which in turn enables thousands of bachelor’s degree-seeking students in the U.S. to study abroad each year. Thus this article points to a quandary: global education leaders at community colleges and TVET institutions would like to see more classes at the 100 and 200 level

offered by providers in order to generate interest among and improve accessibility to longer-term programs for their students; at the same time, providers must see a tangible evidence of an increase in demand among community college and TVET in order to offer 100 and 200 courses.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives abound within the field of international education. Nevertheless, the qualitative findings in this article suggest that the curricular gaps hindering participation in study abroad by community college and TVET students -- the most diverse population in post-secondary education in terms of student ethnicity and socioeconomic background -- have received insufficient attention as a scholarly topic among researchers, as discussed in the Literature Review. This article also indicates there is a lack of attention to curricular options as a policy priority among campus leaders at these institutions, or as a partnership opportunity between study abroad providers and community colleges and TVET institutions.

Future Research

Debunking the deficit myth and substantiating that curriculum is perhaps the culprit in preventing access to study abroad among community college and TVET students requires research beyond the scope of this article. However, the qualitative data presented herein suggests that further study is a worthwhile endeavor. What areas of inquiry open when we question the assumption that demographic characteristics and financial factors make it insurmountable for community college and TVET students to pursue education abroad? What policy changes become achievable and what academic innovations become scalable when we think critically about lessons learned by global education leaders at community colleges who are succeeding at making education abroad accessible? And what immediate and long-term impact could study abroad organizations have on diversity, equity, and inclusion in U.S. higher education by introducing courses that fit the curricular and transfer credit needs of community college and TVET students?

Future research should investigate the extent to which cumbersome state or district requirements for approving course equivalencies or laborious processes for individual course transfer may be a significant drag on study abroad enrollments for community colleges and TVET institutions in particular U.S. states. Study abroad students at four-year institutions generally assume a level of risk that credits may not transfer or count towards specific degree

requirements when they study abroad, although study abroad offices endeavor to smooth the academic advising and course articulation process in partnership with faculty and academic departments to avoid students taking classes for which they will not receive suitable credit. The risk that credits taken abroad will not count towards general education or other degree requirements is heightened for community college or TVET students when they transfer to a different (typically four-year) school; if courses taken abroad do not meet their new institution's curricular requirements, they may need to repeat the course. A comparative study of courses taken abroad by community college and TVET students enrolled in schools in multiple U.S. states, which also systematically analyzes how those courses are articulated on transcripts and how those credits may (or may not) transfer to four-year institutions via state pathway programs, could close a fundamental gap in our collective knowledge about post-secondary education abroad.

At the institutional level, a comparative study of the circumstances whereby community colleges will opt to incorporate a global focus into their mission statements, versus those that adhere to a strictly state or local orientation, may illuminate specific policymakers who adhere to a deficit narrative-informed perspective that education abroad is not a suitable nor attainable activity for community college or TVET students. Research into financial aid policies and student-facing communication may indicate that an underlying concern by financial aid staff about burdensome student loan debt – which they may view as unavoidable to afford the high cost of studying abroad – is at odds with global education offices' attempts to inform students about the availability of grants and scholarships to support enrollment in education abroad programs. Research should also probe the extent to which perceptions by academic gatekeepers – including but not limited to faculty, administrators, or accreditation associations – about the localized focus of technical degrees may circumvent opportunity for TVET students to engage in global education experiences where they explore broader applications of their expertise.

Research must also investigate factors that influence decision-making by study abroad organizations with regard to their curricular offerings. Growing interest in first-year abroad programs by graduating high school seniors, and the coincident adoption of first-year programs as a means to manage on-campus housing constraints at four-year institutions, may signal an emerging

recognition by education abroad offices about the value of students studying abroad earlier in their college career, rather than towards the end of it. Changing attitudes about age minimums or requisite semesters completed for education abroad programs may subsequently enable providers to introduce additional 100 and 200 level courses in STEM, business, and social science disciplines as well as humanities and world languages -- an important trend that should be tracked over time. Custom academic programs developed by providers for specific community college, TVET, or first-year cohorts -- designed to align with state transfer pathways -- provide opportunity to consider how scaling these programs will benefit students at other schools within the same state. A comprehensive research project that produces a catalog of host institution courses that align with U.S. introductory-level courses typically taken by community college and TVET students would also provide enormous benefit to global education leaders at these institutions seeking to advance study abroad.

Conclusion

Qualitative data collected to inform a first-year abroad project offers insight from global education leaders at community colleges and TVET institutions on a structural factor that deserves more attention: the availability of introductory-level courses, those typically taken by students enrolled at associate degree-granting schools, and the transferability of those credits when taken on study abroad programs. A systematic needs assessment of community college and TVET engagement in global education at the institutional, district, state, and national levels to uncover curricular gaps and untangle credit transfer issues will move researchers and practitioners beyond deficit assumptions about education abroad participation by TVET/community colleges and their students. At the same time, expanding access to high-impact practices like study abroad for community college and TVET students is imperative to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion in higher education and education abroad.

References

- AACC. (2023). *About Us*. American Association of Community Colleges. Retrieved July 1, 2023. <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/about-us/>
- Ali, F. & Thompson, S. F. (2020). Mentor and self-efficacy approaches to encourage diverse student participation in Gilman. *The Global Impact Exchange*. Diversity Abroad. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from <https://www.diversityabroad.org/GlobalImpactExchange>

- Amani, M. (2011). Study abroad decision and participation at community colleges: Influential factors and challenges from the voices of students and coordinators (Doctoral dissertation). George Washington University, Washington, DC.
- Amani, M. & Mikyong M. K. (2018). Study abroad participation at community colleges: students' decision and influential factors, *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 42:10, 678-692. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10668926.2017.1352544>
- Baer, J. (2019). Opening the door to study abroad from community colleges. In R.R. Latiner & E.J. Valeau (Eds.), *International education at community colleges: Themes, practices, research, and case studies*. (pp. 22-36). Palgrave. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-6252-8.ch002>
- Bell, S. D., & Glass, C. R. (2019). Taking longer, but finishing just as strong: A comparison of Pell and non-Pell study abroad participants' GPA and time-to-graduation. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 31(2), 180–191. <https://doi.org/10.36366/frontiers.v31i2.461>
- Brandão, C. (2022). 50+ study abroad scholarships & grants to apply for in 2023. Go Overseas. October, 5, 2022. Retrieved from <https://www.gooverseas.com/blog/study-abroad-scholarships-grants>
- Brennan, M., Frost, R., Hagadorn, E., Martin, M., & Natali, J. (2005). Education abroad and the career development of community college students: Four case studies. In M. Tillman (Ed.), *Impact of education abroad on career development: Four community college case studies II* (pp. 7–16). Stamford, CT: American Institute for Foreign Study Publications. Retrieved from https://assets.aifsabroad.com/images/v1659032818/PDF/Impact_of_Education_AbroadII/Impact_of_Education_AbroadII.pdf?_i=AA
- Brenner, A. (2016). Transformative learning through education abroad: A case study of a community college program. In R.R. Latiner & E.J. Valeau (Eds.), *International education at community colleges: Themes, practices, research, and case studies*. (pp. 370–390). Palgrave. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-53336-4_21
- Butler, P. (2017). Program models. In L. Chieffo & C. Spaeth, C. (Eds.). (2017). *Guide to Successful Short-Term Programs Abroad*. (pp. 89-102). NAFSA: Association of International Educators.
- Carley, S., Stuart, R. & Dailey, M. P (2011). Short-term study abroad: An exploratory view of business student outcomes. *Journal of Management Policy and Practice* 12.2 (2011): 44-53.
- CCIE. (2018). *Study abroad*. California Colleges for International Education. Retrieved from <http://ccieworld.org/saprograms.php>
- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. SAGE.
- Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Study Abroad Fellowship Program. (2005). *Global competence and national needs: One million Americans studying abroad*. State Department.
- De Wit, R. & Furst, M.B. (2019). Internationalized courses on campus low-cost initiatives for expanding study abroad opportunities. In G.F. Malveaux & R.L. Raby. (2019). *Study abroad opportunities for community college students and strategies for global learning*. (pp. 213-227). IGI-Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-6252-8.ch015>
- Forum on Education Abroad. (2023a). *Community Colleges*. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from <https://web.forumea.org/Community-Colleges>.
- Forum on Education Abroad. (2023b). *Glossary*. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from <https://forumea.org/resources/glossary/?letter=P>

- Gephart, D. (2019). Low-cost initiatives for expanding study abroad opportunities. In G.F. Malveaux & R.L. Raby. (2019). Study abroad opportunities for community college students and strategies for global learning. (pp.158-184). IGI-Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-6252-8.ch011>
- Gozik, N. J., & Hamir, H. B. (2022). Unpacking education abroad's invisible knapsack in the pursuit of inclusive excellence. A house where all belong: Redesigning education abroad for inclusive excellence. Forum of Education Abroad. <https://doi.org/10.36366/sia.1.978-1-952376-21-4.1>
- Hubbard, A., Rexeisen, R., & Watson, P. (2018). AIFS study abroad alumni outcomes: A longitudinal study of personal, intercultural and career development based on a survey of our alumni from 1990 to 2017. American Institute of Foreign Study (AIFS). Retrieved July 1, 2023. https://assets.aifsabroad.com/images/v1659032819/PDF/outcomes2018/outcomes2018.pdf?_i=AA
- Hulstrand, J. (2016). Advancing faculty-led programs at community colleges. *International Educator*. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from https://www.nafsa.org/sites/default/files/ektron/files/underscore/education_abroad_facts.pdf
- IIE (Institute of International Education) (2020). *Open Doors 2020: Report on international educational exchange*. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from <http://www.iie.org/Research-and-Publications/Open-Doors>
- IIE. (2023). "Community college – student characteristics for U.S. study abroad, 2019/20." *Open Doors Report on International Educational Exchange*. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from <https://opendoorsdata.org/data/us-study-abroad/community-college-student-characteristics/>.
- Kuh, G. (2008). *High-impact educational practices: What they are, who has access to them, and why they matter*. Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges & Universities.
- Kuh, G., O'Donnell, K., & Schneider, C.G. (2017). HIPs at ten. *Change: The Magazine of the Higher Learning*, 49(5), 8-16. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00091383.2017.1366805>
- Kumari, S. (2017). *Leadership in higher education: Role of persons-in-charge of internationalization efforts in community colleges* (Doctoral dissertation). University of South Florida.
- Kurtzman, R. (2017). Working with a program provider or other outside organization. In L. Chieffo & C. Spaeth, C. (Eds.) *Guide to Successful Short-Term Programs Abroad* (pp. 195-214). NAFSA: Association of International Educators.
- Leeman Bartzis, O., Kirkwood, K.J. & Mulvihill, Thalia M. (2016) Innovative approaches to study abroad at Harper College and Fox Valley Technical College. In R.R. Latiner & E.J. Valeau (Eds.), *International education at community colleges: Themes, practices, research, and case studies*. (pp. 245-254). Palgrave. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-53336-4_17
- Leggert, K. (2011). Encouraging STEM students to study abroad. *International Educator*. NAFSA: Association of International Educators. July-August 2011. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from https://www.nafsa.org/sites/default/files/ektron/files/underscore/ie_julaug11_edabroad.pdf
- Loberg, L. (2012). Exploring factors that lead to participation in study abroad (Doctoral dissertation). University of California at Los Angeles.
- McKee, Anne-Marie (2019). A case study exploring ways to increase access to education abroad for career and technical students with limited ability. In R.R. Latiner & E.J. Valeau (Eds.), *International education at community colleges: Themes, practices,*

- research, and case studies. (pp. 242-254). Palgrave. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-6252-8.ch017>
- Modood, T. (2004). Capitals, ethnic identity and educational qualifications. *Cultural Trends*, 13(50), 87–105. doi:10.1080/0954896042000267170.
- NAFSA. (n.d.). *Simon Award for Campus Internationalization: Selected Institutions* (July 2023). NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from <https://www.nafsa.org/about/about-nafsa/simon-award-campus-internationalization-selected-institutions>
- Opp, D., & Gosetti, P. P. (2014). The role of key administrators in internationalizing the community college. In *Strengthening community colleges through institutional Collaborations* (pp. 67-75). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. <https://doi.org/10.1002/cc.20092>
- Raby, R. L. (2008, September). Meeting America's global education challenge: Expanding education abroad at U.S. community colleges. *Institute of International Education Study Abroad White Paper Series 3*. New York, NY: Institute for International Education Press.
- Raby, R. L. (2018). Adult students studying abroad through community colleges. In E. Brewer & A. C. Ogden (Eds.), *Critical perspectives on education abroad: Leveraging the educational continuum*. New York, NY: Stylus. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003444411-8>
- Raby, R. L. (2019). Changing the conversation: Measures that contribute to community college education abroad success. In G.F. Malveaux & R.L. Raby. (2019). *Study abroad opportunities for community college students and strategies for global learning*. (pp.1-21). IGI-Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-6252-8.ch001>
- Raby, R. L., & Rhodes, G. M. (2005). Barriers for under-represented students participation in California community college study abroad programs. Sacramento, CA: Chancellor's Office of California Community Colleges, Fund for Instructional Improvement Publications.
- Raby, R. L., & Sawadogo, G. (2005). Community colleges and study abroad. In NAFSA's *Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators* (3rd ed.). NAFSA Publications.
- Raby, R. L., & Valeau, E. J. (2016). International education at community colleges: Themes, practices, research, and case studies. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillian Publishers. doi:10.1057/978-1-137- 53336-4
- Raby, R. L., Rhodes, G. M., & Biscarra, A. (2014). Community college study abroad: Implications for student success. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*, 38(2-3), 174–183. doi:10.1080/10668926.2014.851961
- Ruffer, C. (2010). Recruitment initiatives in higher education: A comparison of study abroad and enrollment management procedures. Master's Theses. Paper 490. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from http://ecommons.luc.edu/luc_theses/490
- Salisbury, M., Umbach, P., Paulsen, M., & Pascarella, E. (2009). Going global: Understanding the choice process of the intent to study abroad. *Research in Higher Education*, 50(2), 119–143. doi:10.1007/s11162-008-9111-x.
- Shapiro, D., Dundar, A., Huie, F., Wakhungu, P.K., Yuan, X., Nathan, A., & Hwang, Y. (2017, September). Tracking transfer: Measures of effectiveness in helping community college students to complete bachelor's degrees. (Signature Report No. 13). *National Student Clearinghouse Research Center*. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED580214.pdf>
- Smith, C. (2019). Institutionalizing international education and embedding education abroad into the campus community. In G.F. Malveaux & R.L. Raby. (2019). *Study abroad*

- opportunities for community college students and strategies for global learning.* (pp 172-183). IGI-Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-6252-8.ch012>
- Smith, C., & Hubbard, A. (2019). Good practices and program standards: Considering the unique needs of community colleges. In G.F. Malveaux & R.L. Raby. (2019). *Study abroad opportunities for community college students and strategies for global learning.* (pp.37-52). IGI-Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-6252-8.ch003>
- Sova Solutions. (2023, February). Unpacking financial disincentives: why and how they stymie degree-applicable credit mobility and equitable Transfer outcomes. *Beyond Transfer*. Retrieved July 1, 2023 from <https://sova.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Beyond-Transfer-Unpacking-Financial-Disincentives-Feb-2023.pdf>
- Sutton, Halley. 2019. Communicate the value of study abroad programs for community college students. *The Successful Registrar*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tsr.30596>
- Sweeney, K. (2013). Inclusive excellence and underrepresentation of students of color in study abroad. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*. 23(1), 1–21. <https://doi.org/10.36366/frontiers.v23i1.326>
- Whatley, M. & González Canché, M. S (2021, 26 June). A robust estimation of the relationship between study abroad and academic outcomes among community college students. *Research in Higher Education* (2022) 63:271–308. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-021-09647-7>
- Whatley, M., & Raby, R. L. (2020). Understanding inclusion and equity in community college education abroad. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 32(1), 80–103. <https://doi.org/10.36366/frontiers.v32i1.435>
- Zhang, Y. L., Lui, J., & Hagedorn, L. S. (2013). Post transfer experiences: Adult undergraduate students at a research university. *Journal of Applied Research in the Community College*, 21, 31–40.

Author Biography

Sarah E. Spencer, M.A., is the founder of OnPoint Global Strategies & Coaching, supporting global education with strategy and solutions, leadership and team development and professional coaching. Sarah is also a founding member of the Global Leadership League. She held a variety of management positions at the University of St. Thomas and played an active role in the sector with presentations, committees, and elected positions, including NAFSA, Forum on Education Abroad, and CIEE's Academic Consortium Board.

Alexandra Wood, Ph.D., is Vice President for Global Ventures at the Council on International Educational Exchange, where she is currently responsible for new business development, and where she previously served as Vice President for Academic Affairs. Prior to joining CIEE, Alexandra was a Visiting Assistant Professor at New York University and Administrative Director of NYU's Multinational Institute of American Studies, a program for international scholars funded by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

Appendix: Interview Protocol for CIEE First-Year Abroad Program



Name(s):

Institution:

Date Interviewed:

Introduction – Sarah E. Spencer

- Thanks so much and I appreciate the time.
- CIEE is in the process of establishing a for-credit First Year Abroad experience for an anticipated Fall 2024 launch. This program will integrate key CIEE’s programming aspects and aligns with their High School and Gap Year programs.
- The overall project goal is to identify and potential School of Record partnerships with community colleges, with the goal to create pathways for students to transfer to a 4-year institution.
 - Equally as important is to create a productive partnership with the SOR to support its mission to provide access to HE and support campus internationalization efforts.
- Background: CIEE Study Abroad SOR is Tulane. Also know that CC is more complicated – state by state.
- My intent is to learn best practices and special considerations for community colleges when it comes to SORs, state partner programs, philosophy on the accessibility of credit transfer, and reputable and innovative community colleges at the state level or region.

- Over 900 public community colleges, reviewing Open Doors, CIEE and NAFSA attendees and my own network.
- RFP available for those institutions interested.

Questions:

1. Tell me about your study abroad program.
2. Familiar with SORs? Revenue stream, internationalization goals and enhanced visibility for high school prospective students and higher/global education.
3. Do you have a sense of your state structure that would help or hinder an SOR partnership or approval?
4. Understanding Financial Aid eligibility. Accredited institution for access to Federal and State. Transfer students/systems – any limitations for a program like this? Enforcing Title IV regs on counting toward degree? How do you structure FA packages?
5. Curriculum for first year students? General? Philosophy on accessibility of credit transfer?
 - Instructor qualifications?
 - What is the ___ state transfer system like?
 - Is contracting curriculum to third parties a topic in your __ system?
6. Faculty – who approves? Faculty willing to review and approve CIEE courses for SOR credit? Opportunities? Concerns?
7. Your state system? Governance and decision-making with your leadership, or further with the state?
8. General – best state systems and institutions to investigate?
9. Colleagues to connect with?
10. Something your institution might be interested in? If yes, additional information, points of curiosity?