

Introduction

This volume of *Frontiers* signals a further maturation in the short history of this journal. *Frontiers* is now cosponsored by ten colleges and universities, and their support reflects the academic nature and purpose of this journal. In addition, our new Editorial Board members bring with them expertise in a variety of academic fields that relate to study abroad. The journal's expanded Board and its sponsors will assist *Frontiers* in fulfilling its mission of providing the profession of study abroad with a broad, provocative, and stimulating approach to topics within the field.

The articles in this volume offer excellent examples of this purpose. Skye Stephenson's lead article, "Study Abroad as a Transformational Experience and Its Effect upon Study Abroad Students and Host Nationals in Santiago, Chile" provides insights into the views of the "other" in study abroad and how students affect a local culture and are in turn affected by it. Stephenson's research helps us to understand the myriad ways in which student, professor, and host family effect one another.

John and Lilli Engle's article, "Program Intervention in the Process of Cultural Integration: The Example of French Practicum" describes the French Practicum course they developed as part of the curriculum of the American University Center in Aix-en-Provence. The presentation and analysis of this course alerts us to a number of substantial issues regarding study abroad pedagogy and learning that strike at the very nature and purposes of international education.

Colin Ireland's article, "Seventh-Century Ireland as a Study Abroad Destination," examines an early form of study abroad and reveals that the issues that were at work within the study abroad experience of the seventh century, including the challenge of cultural integration, are similar to the ones facing international educators today. Ireland's article is a provocative example of the rich traditions of study abroad that lie buried in our collective past.

"College Students with Disabilities and Study Abroad: Implications for International Education Staff," by Brenda Hameister and colleagues, addresses a critical topic in the field and suggests a useful approach toward advising students with disabilities about study abroad. Drawing on their considerable collective experience in this field, the authors present important concepts and case studies to help guide international education staff in their work with students with disabilities.

In their article, "Evaluation and Study Abroad: Developing Assessment Criteria and Practices to Promote Excellence," Joan Gillespie and her colleagues focus on an essential topic for the field of study abroad: how best to evaluate and improve programs abroad. The Model Assessment Practice developed by IES should stimulate discussion and debate among international educators concerned about program quality.

I hope that you find the variety of articles contained in this volume of *Frontiers* both stimulating and useful. The next volume of *Frontiers*, scheduled to be published in fall, 2000, will be a thematic one that focuses on the topic of Study Abroad and Area Studies.

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