

ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, A BROADER VIEW: THE IMPACT OF STUDY ABROAD ON GRADUATION RATES, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in the School of Education, Concordia University Irvine.



Dr. Eugene Kim
Committee Chair



Dr. Dan Waite
Committee



Dr. Catherine Webb
Committee

The Dissertation Committee, the Dean, and Executive Director of the Doctor of Education Program of the School of Education, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty.



Dr. Kent Schlichtemeier
Dean



Dr. Dwight Doering
Executive Director

Concordia University
Library 1530 Concordia
West
Irvine, CA 92612
www.cui.edu/librarian_y
librarian@cui.edu

City/State/Zip

VITA

Sean Cochran

ADDRESS



EDUCATION

EdD 2019

Concordia University Irvine
Education Leadership

MS 2007

California State University, Fullerton
Linguistics

BA 2004

California State University, Fullerton
Linguistics

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2016-present

Director of International Recruitment
California State University, Long Beach

2013-2016

Associate Director, American Language Institute
California State University, Long Beach

2011-2013

Assistant Director, American Language Program
California State University, Fullerton

2007-2011

Full-Time Lecturer
California State University, Fullerton

A BROADER VIEW: THE IMPACT OF STUDY ABROAD ON GRADUATION RATES

by

Sean Cochran

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for the
Degree of
Doctor of Education
in
Educational Leadership
December 14, 2019

School of Education
Concordia University Irvine

ABSTRACT

Study abroad is a highly impactful practice in higher education with many benefits (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). Despite a recent increase in participation, less than 2% of students in the US comparatively go abroad (IIE, 2017). Listed among the known obstacles is the fear that study abroad negatively affects students' time-to-degree (Kasravi, 2009; Lucas, 2009; Peterson, 2003). The present study provides a broader view on study abroad's impact on graduation rates by examining how an institution's practices affect participants' time-to-degree. The institutional practices investigated were academic advising and course transferability.

Through a convergent parallel mixed design, the researcher utilized a post-experience student survey and semi-structured interviews with academic advisors, both faculty and staff, at four large California public universities. The sample population (N = 4,291) included students who had studied abroad during the 2016-2018 academic years. Nine academic advisors from separate colleges and advising units were interviewed in order to shed light on how advisors play a role in the timely graduation of study abroad students. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques were applied to analyze the data and determine findings.

Studying abroad was not only found to meet the requirements most students needed to graduate on time, it also appears to have sped up graduation for a small group of students. The amount of transferable coursework a student completed while abroad was the best predictor of timely graduation. Graduation delays were discovered to occur for a variety of reasons other than the lack of transferable coursework. The present study found it clear that academic advisors play a key role in ensuring the timely graduation of study abroad students by being facilitators and advocates.

Dedication

To my wife Lisa, whose support means the world to me
& to Ethan, Celes, and Isaac, who have a whole world yet to discover

SDG

TABLES OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	i
LIST OF TABLES.....	iv
LIST OF FIGURES	v
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	v
Statement of the Problem	2
Purpose of the Study	6
Research Questions	6
Theoretical Framework	8
Significance of the Study	9
Definitions of Terms	10
Summary	12
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	13
Benefits of Study Abroad.....	14
Trends in Study Abroad Participation.....	18
Student Retention and Completion	23
Higher Education Graduation Rates in California	26
Academic Advising and Student Retention	29
Academic Advising and Study Abroad.....	32
Study Abroad’s Effect on Retention and Graduation Rates.....	35
Criticism of Study Abroad’s Impact on Graduation Rates	39
Summary	40

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	42
Context	43
Graduation Requirements in the CSU	45
Sampling Procedures	46
Instrumentation and Measures	47
Student Survey	47
Academic Advisor Interviews	50
Data Collection	54
Student survey	54
Academic Advisor Interviews	54
Data Analysis	55
Quantitative Analysis	56
Qualitative Analysis	57
Summary	58
CHAPTER 4: RESULTS	60
Overview of Findings	61
Descriptive Statistics	62
Demographic Variables	62
Advising Experience	64
Course Transferability	64
Impact on Graduation	66
Research Question 1	68
Findings from Student Survey	68

Findings from Advisor Interviews.....	78
Research Question 2.....	82
Findings from Student Survey.....	82
Findings from Advisor Interviews.....	85
Summary	94
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION.....	97
Summary of the Study.....	97
Discussion of the Findings	98
Implications for Practice	100
Needs of study abroad students	102
Access to the right programs	104
Effective academic advising for study abroad students.....	106
Limitations and Delimitations.....	107
Recommendations for Future Research	108
References.....	111
Appendix A.....	125

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3. 1: CSU Advisor Participants.....	55
Table 4. 1: Survey Demographics.....	63
Table 4. 2: Advising Experience by Campus.....	64
Table 4. 3: Responses to Transfer Support ($n=357$)	65
Table 4. 4: Overall Percent of Study Abroad Courses Transferred to Meet Requirements.....	65
Table 4. 5: Codes for Reported Effects on Graduation Progress.....	67
Table 4. 6: Reported Effects on Graduation Progress ($n=357$).....	68
Table 4. 7: Means of Lengthened Time-to-Degree by Program Type ($n=357$).....	70
Table 4. 8: Percent Means of Courses Not Transferred for GE or Major by Program Type.....	74
Table 4. 9: Interview Participants by Contract Type, Campus, and College Type ($n=9$).....	78

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4. 1. Coefficient Summary of Significant Predictors of Time-to-Degree Delay for Study Abroad Students ($p < .05$).....	71
Figure 5. 1. Institutional practices to ensure the timely graduation of study abroad students....	102

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

According to the Institute of International Education (IIE), more US college students are studying abroad than ever before (IIE, 2017). In fact, more than three times the number of US students went abroad as part of their college education than just twenty years ago (IIE, 2017). While traditional locations such as the United Kingdom and other western European countries are still hosting more than half of all US study abroad participants, there has been an increase in nontraditional study locations such as Czech Republic, Cuba, and South Africa, among others (IIE, 2017).

Despite this growth, however, professionals in the field believe there is still more that can be done to improve participation rates (Loberg, 2012). Presently only about 10% of all undergraduate students in the US study abroad for any length of time, and that number drops to less than 2% when considering both undergraduate and graduate US college students (IIE, 2017). Also concerning is that historically there has been a problem of underrepresentation in study abroad (Hoffa & DePaul, 2010). Male students, students of color, and students majoring in certain academic disciplines (e.g., STEM) are disproportionately represented (IIE, 2017; Penn & Tanner, 2009; Stroud, 2010). This is especially unfortunate in the case of minority students, who seem to benefit the most from the study abroad experience (Norton, 2008).

Research has consistently demonstrated the short- and long-term benefits of studying abroad. Study abroad participants develop intercultural sensitivity (Anderson, Lawton, Rexeisen, & Hubbard, 2006), greater independence, academic maturation (Hadis, 2005), increased student engagement (Gonyea, 2008; Kuh, 2008) and other areas of personal growth (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Sutton & Rubin, 2004). These and other constructs have been measured with instruments like the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI; Bennet & Salonen, 2007) and the

Global Perspective Inventory (GPI; Braskamp, Braskamp, & Merrill, 2008). Kuh (2008) recognized study abroad as a high impact practice linked to student engagement and therefore a theoretical predictor of student success (cf. Astin, 1984).

Recognizing the importance of study abroad as both an educational experience for America's youth and future diplomatic success of the country, the US government has introduced initiatives, including the congressionally established Abraham Lincoln Fellowship Program. These initiatives have supported study abroad and brought its importance to national attention (Durbin, 2006; Lincoln Commission, 2005). Institutions that have enjoyed this growth credit it to the offering of new programs and better outreach to college students about study abroad's benefits (Loberg, 2012).

Statement of the Problem

Although research indicates that the majority of incoming US college students are in fact interested in studying abroad (ACE, 2008), only 2% of all US college students embark on any kind of international study experience during their college career (IIE, 2017). Researchers have identified key student and institutional characteristics to help explain why such a large number of students end up not studying abroad during their college career (Loberg, 2012; Rust et al., 2007; Heisel et al., 2009).

Loberg (2012) argues that while there are many factors outside an institution's control that may prevent students from studying abroad, more research is needed to better understand the obstacles that institutions could be addressing, especially faculty and institutional support (see also NSSE, 2007). Loberg (2012) identified faculty support and academic integration (i.e., courses abroad meeting campus requirements) as the most important institutional factors related to increasing study abroad participation rates. Of course students must also understand how

studying abroad will move them along the path towards graduation by meeting one or more requirements (Seccia, 2018). Loberg (2012) argues that if integration into a student's degree plan does not exist or if students are not aware of which program fits their specific curricular path, it is reasonable to assume that studying abroad may result in a longer time-to-degree. It is incumbent upon institutions to ensure available study abroad programs align with students' academic plans and that sufficient advising and information about study abroad options are provided.

The notion that study abroad might lengthen participants' time to degree, whether true or not, is one which institutions clearly must address (Kasravi, 2009; Loberg, 2012; Malmgren & Galvin, 2008; Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2010; Sánchez et al., 2006; Sutton & Rubin, 2010). Malmgren and Galvin (2008) observe that this is especially true as college tuition continues to rise. For example, most recently the College Board reported tuition increases to be 3.1% each year beyond inflation for in-state four-year institutions. (College Board, 2019). An accepted definition of study abroad, as opposed to education abroad, includes the requirement that the study be accepted by one's home institution in order to earn a degree (Engle & Engle, 2003; Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, & Klute, 2012). Therefore, if study abroad programs are not meeting the requirements of graduation, then despite its many other benefits, institutions are not properly serving their students, especially if going abroad results in a longer time-to-degree and greater student debt.

The relationship between study abroad and timely graduation has been identified as a potential concern for students who wish to graduate on time and their families. However, it also concerns university leaders (Hamir, 2011; Kasravi, 2009; Malmgren & Galvin, 2008). Leaders in higher education often face state-mandated goals, such as the well-publicized Graduation Initiative

2025 in the California State University (CSU) system (California State University, n.d; Gordon, 2016). At the national level, the field of higher education is under increasing scrutiny from accreditors (e.g., Higher Learning Commission, 2017) and political leaders (Obama, 2009a; Obama, 2009b) to graduate students more quickly. Leaders in higher education need a clearer understanding of how study abroad affects timely graduation in order to better address this valid concern for all stakeholders and improve this valuable, high impact practice.

The literature on study abroad and student retention and completion is extensive. Impressive studies such as the GLOSSARI project in Georgia (Sutton & Rubin, 2010) and others (Redden, 2012) have shown that study abroad actually does improve retention and graduation rates, especially for minority students (Dessoff, 2006; Hamir, 2012; Malmgren & Galvin, 2008; O'Rear, Sutton, & Rubin 2012; Xu, de Silva, & Dane, 2013). For example, investigating why study abroad participants graduate at better rates than their peers, Hadis (2005) found that participants underwent a series of value adjustments he terms academic maturation. For example, students who went abroad reported an improved attitude towards learning in general (Hadis, 2005). This, Hadis argues, demonstrates that those returning from study abroad are more *mature* students.

However, like Hadis (2005), these studies tend to focus on the student transformational experience rather than how institutions best match study abroad with specific degree programs. Also lacking in the literature is how academic advisors play a part in ensuring study abroad participants complete their degree in a timely manner (Seccia, 2018).

Because previous studies on the question of study abroad and college completion have focused more on study abroad's impact on students rather than the institutional behaviors which support the study abroad student and ensure timely graduation, researchers have had to control

for a wide variety of potentially confounding variables in their quantitative analyses. These variables include a student's GPA, socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, gender, and class standing (Haupt, Ogden, & Rubin, 2018; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Zhai, 2000). Each researcher has had to grapple with the problem of selection bias. Does study abroad make students more successful and therefore more likely to graduate or is it simply that demonstrably successful students are the ones most likely to study abroad?

In order to better address timely graduation as a potential obstacle to greater participation in study abroad, perhaps it is time to rephrase the question at the hand: Can students graduate *on time* while also studying abroad, however highly motivated and academically mature they may or may not be? Loberg (2012) argues that if the program is not well integrated into students' degree plans or if students are unaware of which study abroad program best fits their graduation requirements, the answer will likely be no. Developing best practice therefore falls to the institution.

Clearly more research is needed on how studying abroad actually is or is not helping students graduate in a timely manner by satisfying academic requirements. This means helping students find the best fit program and courses. Seccia (2018) argues a closer look at the role of academic advisors in this process is necessary. This sort of institutional effort, led by staff and advisors, is different from curriculum integration in which the faculty rightly should be seeking to add international dimensions to their courses (Brewer & Cunningham, 2009; Keillor & Emore, 2003; Parcells, 2010; Woodruff, 2009). The success of study abroad as an overall worthwhile transformative student experience that does not hinder a student's path to completion is the responsibility of several stakeholders. Researchers agree that faculty, administrators, students, and advisors must all be collaboratively involved (Loberg, 2012; Rhodes, Biscarra, Loberg, &

Roller, 2012). In addition to developing programs, policies, and processes which allow for study abroad, each of these stakeholders has been identified as a key factor in a student's decision to go abroad (Kasravi, 2009; Loberg, 2012; Rhodes, Biscarra, Loberg, & Roller, 2012; Seccia, 2018). The theoretical framework adopted by the present study (Astin, 1984) and discussed below narrows this problem to the role of academic advisors (faculty and staff) because of their central role in monitoring and improving student involvement (Astin, 1984, p. 526).

Purpose of the Study

The present study is concerned with providing a clearer picture of how study abroad programs contribute to the timely graduation of student participants and how potential obstacles to timely graduation are addressed. This study contributes to these topics by measuring the degree to which an institution's course transferability process and supportive academic advising help students meet graduation requirements in the four of the most internationally active CSU campuses. The present study seeks to equip international educators with the research they need to address a real and present concern of would-be study abroad students. At the same time, this study explores how institutional pressure to improve time-to-degree averages impacts the role of academic advisors in recommending study abroad as part of a student's path to graduation. The present study was conducted with the understanding that in addition to rallying faculty support and securing necessary resources to make study abroad possible for more students, institutions must also ensure that their study abroad opportunities can help meet their students' graduation requirements (Loberg, 2012; NSSE, 2007).

Research Questions

Previous research on study abroad and graduation rates have used large databases and statistical analysis to determine if study abroad participation is a significant predictor for timely

graduation (Hamir, 2011; Malmgren & Galvin, 2008; University Planning, Institutional Research, and Accountability, 2009; O'Rear, Sutton, & Rubin, 2012; Xu, de Silva, Neufeldt, & Dane, 2013). These studies have attempted to control for other possibly confounding variables that might affect graduation rates such as a student's gender, race/ethnicity, incoming SAT scores, and pre-departure GPA. In each of these studies, studying abroad was positively correlated to graduating on time. However according to unpublished research by the chancellor's office of California State University, the largest four-year university system in the United States, students who studied abroad on one-year programs were actually less likely to graduate on time when compared to their peers (Baldwin, Case, & Woo, 2015; Katie Roller, personal communication).

In contrast to previous studies on how study abroad results in academically focused and engaged students (Hadis, 2005) who graduate on time, the present study seeks to discover to what extent institutions' policies and processes can help or impede students from meeting their graduation requirements and graduating on time. The guiding research questions for this study were:

Research question 1 (RQ1): To what extent do courses taken while studying abroad impact graduation requirements of undergraduate students?

Research question 2 (RQ2): To what degree does the academic advising process impact graduation rates and time to graduation for study abroad students?

The purpose of the second research question is to develop a deeper understanding of how external pressure on university staff to improve graduation rates might affect the advising that undergraduate students receive regarding study abroad participation. Also investigated was

advisors' knowledge and attitude toward study abroad as an educational practice and their concerns about the risk of timely graduation for study abroad participants.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework supporting much of the work on study abroad's impact on college completion is Astin's Student Involvement Theory (1984), which is concerned with providing a student-centric model of how student learning occurs in higher education. This seminal work confronts earlier pedagogical theories that state student learning exists because of (a) exposure to "the right subject matter" (i.e., quality curriculum), (b) adequate resources like facilities or financial aid, or (c) individualized instruction and support (Astin, 1984). Astin (1984) postulates that successful student learning in higher education results instead from students becoming involved in their own educational endeavor. The more invested students are in their learning as a whole or in specific aspects of it, the more student learning and personal development will occur (Astin, 1984, p. 519).

Astin (1984) refers to this construct as student involvement and describes it as "the amount of physical and psychological energy that the student devotes to the academic experience" (p. 518). Astin (1984) maintains that involvement is not only psychological (i.e., synonymous with "motivation") but instead must produce a "behavioral manifestation" (p. 522). Examples of these manifestations might include participation in extra-curricular activities or student organizations. In short, involvement is observable and measurable in a way that a purely psychological construct like "motivation" is not.

Although usually utilized frequently in study abroad literature to explain why students studying abroad might achieve more positive outcomes than their peers (O'Rear, Sutton, & Rubin, 2012; Raby, Rhodes, & Biscarra, 2014), Astin (1984) can serve also as a framework to

explore institutional policies and practice related to study abroad. Astin writes, “the effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement” (1984, p. 519). In other words, institutions can facilitate greater involvement in order to create a better learning environment. Astin’s (1984) framework suggests that less focus can be spent on what is being taught and by which techniques instruction occurs and more focus should be spent on what the student is doing (p. 526).

Academic counselors play a very significant role in student learning according to Astin (1984). This is because in a one-on-one setting, these advisors can help monitor the level of involvement their students have in their studies and work to increase that involvement (p. 356). Academically at-risk students, according to Astin (1984), could possibly be considered as students who spend inordinate amount of time and energy on other objects or objectives in their lives.

In addition to providing this sort of advising, another way Astin (1984) predicts an institution can help to improve its students’ learning is to provide a “hook” to incentivize students to become more involved in their own learning. Educational experiences abroad that fit within a student’s academic program can be just that sort of experience (Hadis, 2005; Loberg, 2012).

Drawing on Astin’s (1984) framework, the present study seeks to understand more clearly how institutional agreements and academic advising policies and practices can best facilitate students to become involved in the highly impactful practice of study abroad.

Significance of the Study

For many reasons including economic, leaders in higher education are concerned with improving graduation rates (McMahon, 2009) and study abroad has been described as a high-

impact practice that can improve student retention through greater engagement (Kuh et al., 2005; Kuh, 2008). At the same time, students who are otherwise interested in going abroad are concerned that doing so will delay their graduation (Kasravi, 2009; Lucas, 2009; Peterson, 2003; Seccia, 2018; Shirley, 2006). Both students and administrators need to understand how academic integration (Loberg, 2012) and advising can better ensure that students enjoy the many benefits of study abroad while still meeting graduation requirements.

By comparing student perspectives, university policies, and current advising practices within the California State University system, the present study provides a broader view on the impact of study abroad on timely graduation. The best practices and potential obstacles explored in the study can assist international education offices in recruiting students, inform academic advisors on preparing their students, and laying out steps that may be needed from academic departments to improve transferability through program remapping or make other needed changes in their students' academic study plans.

Definitions of Terms

Study abroad is distinguished in some literature from *education abroad* in that study abroad is study in another country that counts toward the completion of a degree at home, whereas *education abroad* refers generally to any transnational learning experience (Engle & Engle, 2003; Hoffa & DePaul, 2010). The present study is examining the relationship between institutional practice in study abroad and the graduation rates of study abroad participants. By *institutional practice*, the present study considers two main areas: academic integration and academic advising.

Academic integration refers to how an institution allows coursework completed overseas to satisfy the requirements of its students, for example by meeting major requirements, general

education categories, electives, or other requirements (Loberg, 2012). This differs from *curriculum integration*, in which an international dimension is included in courses taken in one's home country (Brewer & Cunningham, 2009; Keillor & Emore, 2003; Parcells, 2010; Woodruff, 2009). Within the context of the California State University system and this study, study abroad courses typically integrate (or *map*; Dan Waite, personal communication) in a student's degree plan through *course substitution* or *course equivalency*. The former refers to the process by which a student petitions for the one-time replacement of a required course with a course offered by a different department or college. The latter refers to the previously articulated transfer of coursework from an outside institution. If outside courses, like those taken abroad, have not been previously articulated formally, then their transferability is not guaranteed, and students are required to request a substitution.

For the purposes of this study, *academic advising* refers to how an institution helps students who are interested in study abroad understand the cost and benefits of studying abroad and the level of academic integration of any particular program. Campuses may also have study abroad advisors whose role is more specific to the logistics and other details of choosing and preparing for a study abroad program (Rhodes, Biscarra, Loberg, & Roller, 2012).

Although sometimes used interchangeably in earlier literature, Tinto (2010) argues that there is a clear distinction between *student retention* and *student persistence*. The former is defined as "that process that leads students to remain within the institution in which they enroll and earn a certificate or degree" (p. 53). This definition is from an institutional perspective. Often studies on *student retention* are concerned entirely on the retention of freshmen students to their sophomore year, since the first year is so crucial (Kuh, Cruce, Shoup, Kinzie, & Gonyea, 2008; Tinto, 1975, 1993, 2010). Contrastively, the term *student persistence* is from the student's

perspective and is understood to be “that process that leads students to remain in higher education and complete their certificate or degree regardless of the institution from which the certificate or degree is earned” (Tinto, 2010, p. 53). Unless otherwise noted *student retention* is used in present study with Tinto’s (2010) definition.

Summary

Study abroad is a high-impact and beneficial practice (Kuh, 2008), but in order to improve participation rates there remain obstacles that must be addressed. Among these is the understandable fear that study abroad negatively affects students’ time-to-degree (Kasravi, 2009; Lucas, 2009; Peterson, 2003; Seccia, 2018). Building on previous quantitative research (Haupt, Ogden, & Rubin, 2018; Sutton & Rubin, 2010) that suggests there is no negative impact on graduation rates, the present study will examine how institutional practices contribute to timely graduation in order to establish best practices and equip higher education leaders to make improvements where necessary.

Chapter Two provides a review of relevant literature on the benefits and criticisms of study abroad, the correlative studies of study abroad and graduation rates, the development of academic advising practices in the United States, and the role of academic advisors in retention and completion. Chapter Three outlines the mixed methods approach used and provides a fuller explanation of the CSU context used for the present study. Chapter Four presents the quantitative analysis and qualitative findings. These come from a survey of CSU students and interviews with staff and faculty advisors at four large CSU campuses. Chapter Five discusses the significance of the results for the California State University system and other institutions of higher education. Finally, recommendations for further research are provided in a discussion of the present study’s limitations.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Study abroad plays an important role in higher education and the desire of institutions to internationalize their campuses and curricula and achieve global learning outcomes (Green, 2012). In fact, more than 90% of all colleges and universities offer study abroad (Hoffa & DePaul, 2010). Although study abroad participation is only one of the outputs representing internationalization and the potential for global learning (Green, 2012; Green & Siaya, 2005), it is easily measurable and the student learning which results is demonstrable (Bennet & Salonen, 2007; Braskamp, Braskamp, & Merrill, 2008). A majority of incoming US college students see study abroad as a desirable part of their academic experience (ACE, 2008). Despite this only one in ten undergraduates studies abroad (IIE, 2017) and study abroad's potential negative effect on timely graduations remains a concern for many (Hamir, 2011; Loberg, 2012; Malmgren & Galvin, 2008).

In order to investigate the role study abroad plays in an undergraduate's college career, this chapter presents an overview of relevant literature about study abroad from the last few decades dealing with its outcomes and what researchers have uncovered about why students choose to go abroad or not. This chapter also includes a summary of previous quantitative and qualitative research on the correlation between study abroad and time-to-degree along with the theoretical frameworks traditionally used to explain the relationship (Astin, 1984; Tinto, 1993, Kuh, 2008). This chapter illustrates the need for the present study by highlighting a gap in the literature, namely institutional behavior. By the end it will be clear a broader view on this issue is required, an understanding that includes the perspective of institutional policy and practice.

Benefits of Study Abroad

There is a clear consensus in the literature that studying abroad has widespread and positive outcomes for both students and institutions of higher education. Participation in a study abroad program has been linked to specific student learning outcomes and dimensions of personal growth. Assessments such as the Global Proficiency Index (GPI; Braskamp, Braskamp, Merrill, & Engberg, 2008), the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI; Bennett & Salonen, 2007), and Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI; Olson & Kroeger, 2001) can measure student learning and personal growth. Additionally, through a myriad of pre/post surveys and other instruments, several researchers have looked at how study abroad benefits students (Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, & McMillen, 2009; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Hadis, 2005; Sutton & Rubin, 2004).

Ingraham and Peterson (2004) define the “extraordinary effect” of study abroad (p. 100) as the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that will serve students well in the modern internationalized world. They identified several desirable aspects: intellectual growth, professional development, personal growth, cross-cultural skills, awareness and understanding of one’s own culture, and finally, contribution to the internationalization of the home campus (p. 84). The latter is important because it means study abroad benefits the student learning of participants’ peers who were unable or unwilling to go abroad themselves. Ingraham and Peterson (2004) found that most of these factors especially intercultural awareness, were manifested most strongly when coming from longer program experiences (p. 89).

Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, and McMillen (2009) used the Global-Mindedness Scale (Hett, 1993) and the Intercultural Sensitivity Index (ISI; Olson & Kroeger, 2001) to test the level of intercultural proficiency between students who went abroad for a semester and those who did

not. Specifically, the researchers were investigating if marketing students who took required major courses abroad would score higher in intercultural proficiency markers (global awareness, intercultural communication, openness to diversity, and intercultural sensitivity) than those students who took the same courses at their home campus. The researchers found that those students who studied abroad ranked higher in global mindedness, intercultural communication, and openness to diversity after returning home (Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, & McMillen, 2009).

The most comprehensive study to date on study abroad's influence on students' academic performance and learning is Sutton and Rubin (2010). In their landmark GLOSSARI study of over 238,000 students in the Georgia state system, they found that study abroad gave participating students better academic performance after returning, higher graduation rates, and better acquisition of applied knowledge for course-specific learning outcomes compared to those who took similar courses domestically. Sutton and Rubin (2010) also found that study abroad produced higher graduation rates including at-risk students.

Studies on how study abroad affects academic performance are especially relevant for the present study. Posey (2003) and Sutton and Rubin (2010) have shown that study abroad participants had an improved GPA after they returned. Ingraham and Peterson (2004) also saw that study abroad participants had a higher graduating GPA than those who did not, but the researchers noted that they are not convinced the difference can be explained by study abroad (p. 99).

Hadis (2005) argues that the use of GPA actually makes other studies in this area less reliable because of selection bias. He observes that there is often a GPA criterion for inclusion in study abroad, which means there is a "low-ceiling problem" (p. 59). Instead of comparing pre/post GPA scores, Hadis (2005) was prompted by observations made by faculty and advisors

about a noticeable change in study abroad students. Recognizing that study abroad may result in so-called academic maturation, Hadis (2005) conducted a survey of study abroad participants ($n = 95$) to measure whether or not their experiences abroad resulted in their feeling more focused on studying and whether they were more likely to study “for the sheer pleasure” of learning (p. 58). No control group was used in the study since there were not enough qualified respondents (i.e., students who met the GPA eligibility requirement for study abroad and had begun the application to study abroad but did not ultimately go abroad). Through multiple regression analysis, Hadis (2005) found that his participants had higher levels of academic focusing while also reporting that their study abroad experiences led them to be more independent and open-minded. These benefits correlated to academic focusing. Hadis (2005) argues these findings have implications for study abroad program design. Independence and open-mindedness, he argues, can be enhanced by requiring host culture appreciation courses and allowing students to make decisions and take responsibility about their own learning experience overseas (p. 68).

Included in the list of long-term benefits of study abroad is greater employability and other professional benefits (Franklin, 2010; Posey, 2003). For example, over 30% of the employers surveyed by the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) said that global and multicultural fluency was an essential attribute for the workforce, but described recent graduates as “not very proficient” in this area (NACE, 2017). In that same vein, Orahod, Woolf, and Kruze (2008) looked at how study abroad influenced the career paths of business students who had studied abroad as part of the Indiana University’s “international dimension requirement” for all business students (p. 135). The researchers surveyed alumni ($n = 417$) five to ten years into their careers. They found that their sample did not significantly agree that study

abroad had influenced their career path, but that it had improved their professionally valuable interpersonal skills (p. 137).

Franklin (2010) surveyed study abroad alumni ten years after they had graduated about how their international experience helped them to develop new skills, knowledge, and self-awareness. Participants were asked to share how their educational experiences abroad influenced them professionally. Franklin (2010) discovered that most of the alumni had moved into a field of work that was international or multicultural. Respondents believed their study abroad experience helped them to relate and work better with their international and multicultural contacts. Over 40% agreed that study abroad had influenced their career choice, and 92% reported career satisfaction. A majority also agreed that studying abroad had made them more competitive in the job market because of the skills study abroad had given them: increased language fluency, cross-cultural communication, adaptability, and “the capacity to learn and succeed in different environments” (p. 181).

Whether it is improved independence, global mindedness, or second language acquisition, the research has implications on how institutions should design their study abroad programs in order to maximize their benefit for students (Engle & Engle, 2003; Engle & Engle, 2004; Hadis, 2005; Hadis, 2010). One example which is relevant to the present study and its emphasis on Astin’s (1984) framework of student involvement is Hadis (2005). Hadis (2005) suggests that in order to maximize academic focusing (i.e., maturation) institutions should focus on increasing students’ open-mindedness and independence by requiring courses on the host country’s culture and allowing students to take on responsibility for their own study abroad experience activities (p. 68).

Trends in Study Abroad Participation

In the 2015-2016 academic year, the United States sent more students abroad for education than ever, an increase of 300% in the last two decades (IIE, 2017). While this is overall a positive trend, there is a problem of underrepresentation (Hoffa & DePaul, 2010). Study abroad students are overwhelmingly female and majoring in liberal arts (Dessoiff, 2006; IIE, 2017; Lincoln Commission, 2005; Penn & Tanner, 2009; Shirley, 2006; Stroud, 2010). The lack of minority students who are able to take advantage of study abroad is particularly unfortunate, as they tend to benefit the most from the experience (Norton, 2008). In short, study abroad students tend to be “white, female, young, single, financially comfortable, and without disability” (Stallman, Woodruff, Kasravi, & Comp, 2010, p. 115).

Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, and Klute (2012) have observed that literature advocating for study abroad has dealt primarily with the problem of low and unequal participation in study abroad programs. Research on participation can be broadly grouped into two categories. First, there are those studies that examine the student factors that influence whether or not a student ultimately decides to go abroad (Luo & Jamieson-Drake, 2015; Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2010; Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009). Secondly, other studies examine the policies and practices of institutions that facilitate to varying degrees a student’s decision and ability to go abroad (Brown, 2002; Brux & Fry, 2010; Loberg, 2012; Pearson, 2005; Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2011; Stallman, Woodruff, & Kasravi, 2010; Whalen, 2009).

Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, and Klute (2012) review the literature on student factors affecting intent to study abroad. These can broadly be grouped as:

- socioeconomic status (Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009),
- lack of accurate information (Dessoiff, 2006; Gore, 2005; Hamir, 2011),

- involvement (Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009),
- attitudes toward international experiences (Goldstein & Kim, 2006; Stroud, 2010),
- motivations for studying abroad (Goldstein & Kim, 2006; Relyea, Cocchiara, & Studdard, 2008; Stroud, 2010),
- gender (Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009),
- academic major (Dessoff, 2006),
- race/ethnicity (Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009)
- financial (Dessoff, 2006; Penn & Tanner, 2009; Stallman, Woodruff, Kasravi, & Comp, 2010)

Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, and Pascarella (2009) analyzed the Wabash National Study on Liberal Arts Education (WNSLAE), a large set of data from a longitudinal study of liberal arts college students. They found that specific student attributes such as socioeconomic status were related to student's intent to study abroad. Study abroad professionals were already aware that lack of financial resources was an obstacle to enroll in study abroad programs (Desoff, 2006; Lincoln Commission, 2005), but the significance of this finding is that students in lower socioeconomic situations are also less likely to want to study abroad in the first place. This suggests that simply having available grants and scholarships might not be enough (p. 133). Finally, the researchers concluded that a student's decision to study abroad, like his or her decision to attend college in the first place, was a "cumulative effect" from the types of capital (e.g., human, cultural, social; Perna, 2006) the student had acquired because of socioeconomic status and demographic background (p. 140).

Salisbury, Paulsen, and Pascarella (2010) applied the integrated student choice model (Perna, 2006) to the same data set in order to understand better the gender gap in study abroad

participation. Perna's (2006) model posits that students' decision to attend college is an interplay between their combined capital (human, financial, social, and cultural) and habitus. Habitus is described as a set of "beliefs, values, perceptions, attitudes, and aspirations an individual acquires through their early home, community, and school environments that...frame and constrain the choices they make" (Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2010, p. 618). Using Perna's (2006) model on a large set of longitudinal data, the researchers found that there were significant differences between men and women when it came to predictors of intent to study abroad.

Of particular interest to the present study is Salisbury, Paulsen, and Pascarella's (2010) discovery about students' intent to study abroad and their chosen major (see also Salisbury et al., 2009). The researchers did not see the same level of disproportionality between students' intended major and their intent to study abroad as is seen in the participation data (IIE, 2017). It could be possible then that students from certain underrepresented majors in study abroad, such as those in the STEM disciplines, may be just as likely to want to study abroad. If this is the case, then the lack of STEM students in study abroad could instead be the result of the strict curriculum of their major (Seccia, 2018).

Interesting studies such as Sánchez, Fornerino, & Zhang (2006) as well as Souto-Otero, Huisman, Beerkens, De Wit, and Vujić (2013) examine the same problem of participation in countries outside the U.S. Sánchez, Fornerino, and Zhang (2006) found that motivations for studying abroad and perceived obstacles to studying abroad differed among students from the US, France, and China. American students were more interested in "seeking new experiences" and family support was not as much of a perceived obstacle as it was with Chinese students.

Souto-Otero et al., (2013) brought together a large data set ($n = 17,845$) from the European Erasmus program in seven countries to investigate the barriers students faced when

deciding to study abroad or not. Souto-Otero and colleagues included students in three categories: those who went on the Erasmus program, those who only considered going, and those who did not seriously consider going at all. Consequently, their results shed light on what obstacles (academic, financial, social) are perceived by students at different stages in the decision making process. For example, curricular compatibility (i.e., transferability of foreign coursework) was a significant concern for Erasmus and non-Erasmus students (p. 73), suggesting that the issue needs to be addressed earlier in the decision making process. This implication closely relates to the present study.

The second category of study abroad participation literature investigates the institutional factors that facilitate or inhibit study abroad participation. Clearly the policy and practices of institutions also play an important role in influencing a student's decision to go abroad (Loberg, 2012; Pearson, 2005; Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009; Whalen, 2009).

Loberg (2012) analyzed a subset of survey data ($n = 49$) sent by IIE to study abroad professionals and administrators working at US colleges and universities. She then used a focused group of seasoned study abroad professionals ($n = 17$), some of whom were independent and working for third party providers. Loberg (2012) sought to discover what administrators and study abroad professionals considered the key factors affecting study abroad participation trends in the United States.

Study abroad professionals and administrators cited financial factors (i.e., the recent economic recession) to explain declines in student participation at their own institutions (Loberg, 2012, p. 52). The college and university representatives who had seen increases in participation on their campuses attributed it to the addition of new study abroad programs and better outreach efforts (p. 53).

Interesting results were gleaned from Loberg's (2012) qualitative data. Loberg's focus groups strongly believed that faculty support and academic integration were the most important factors affecting study abroad participation (2012, p. 55). According to the experience of these study abroad professionals, faculty were "highly influential advisors that could either encourage or discourage students to study abroad" (p. 56). Loberg (2012) notes that this is especially the case at large university campuses and especially when it comes to faculty in a student's major. One of the focus group participants lamented how difficult it was seeing students who otherwise were eager to go abroad decide not to because their professors said 'no' (p. 56).

All of Loberg's (2012) participants also shared how important it was that study abroad be academically integrated into a student's study plan. Loberg (2012) describes integration as "study abroad as a graduation or general education requirement, as a required part of a major, or as one of several ways to fulfill an experiential or cultural requirement" (p. 58). Loberg (2012) found that some institutions who were enjoying an increase in study abroad participation had recently redesigned their curriculum to allow study abroad courses to satisfy specific requirements. Loberg (2012) also discovered that an effective strategy used by some professionals was to send freshmen to go on short-term trips in order to fall in love with study abroad. This is an interesting strategy since freshmen are not typically a large study abroad population (IIE, 2017).

While Loberg (2012) found that study abroad professionals believe curriculum integration can also be important to improving an institution's participation, McCormack (2013) outlined some ways an institution might do this. For example, one institution studied had begun offering degrees with an international focus, such as international economics (McCormack,

2013). The same institution also began to deliver its curriculum transnationally by engaging with faculty abroad.

The final institutional practice recommended by Loberg's (2012) findings was that institutions include an international or global dimension to their mission statement as a commitment to international education. However, Loberg's participants warned that mission statements do not always lead to action. Academic or curricular integration, they argue, was the real test of an institution's commitment to study abroad (2012, p. 59).

Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanut, and Klute (2012) disagree with the surveyed opinions Loberg (2012) discovered. They maintain that offering a variety of study abroad programs will not "broaden the demographic profile of who studies abroad" nor will it "dramatically increase the number of students studying abroad" (p. 38). They point to the very rapid innovation of new types of study abroad experiences with only minor improvements in the demographics and student majors represented in those who go abroad.

Student Retention and Completion

In recent years, institutions of higher education in the United States have faced increased scrutiny and perhaps even buyer's remorse (Salovey, 2018). A recent study from the Pew Research Center has revealed that there is a growing uncertainty in the American public that obtaining a college degree results in getting a better job or achieving social mobility or that it has any "positive effect on the way things are going" (Fingerhut, 2017). US colleges and universities have also been in the spotlight in the last decade because of disappointing graduation rates, ranking low on the list of degree attainment (OECD, 2013). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the 6-year graduation rate for undergraduate students sits at a

disappointing 59% (NCES, 2017). DeAngelo and her colleagues (2011) found that overall the national four-year completion rate was a disappointing 38.9% (p. 6).

College completion continues to be a national concern in the United States. Higher education benefits not only individual graduates but also society as a whole (DeAngelo, Frake, Hurtado, Pryor, & Tran, 2011; McMahon, 2009). Obama announced in 2009 the *American Graduation Initiative*, calling for colleges to produce five million more graduates in order to create a more educated and competitive workforce (Obama, 2009b). The initiative laid out that the way to move forward was to increase completion rates, decrease students' time-to-degree, and achieve greater equity between different student populations. States like California have also funded new initiatives to address disappointing graduation rates and the perennial equality gap in college completion (Moore & Tan, 2018)

Previous efforts in higher education to improve college completion rates have not reached the levels hoped for in recent decades (Carey, 2004; NCES, 2005; Tinto, 2010). The *Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act* passed by Congress in 1990 made it a requirement for institutions receiving federal money to disclose to students the school's 100% and 150% graduation rates of their certificate- or degree-seeking full-time students (i.e., four- and six-year rates for four-year institutions). A school's graduation rates have since become one of the most important ways a school is evaluated as being high quality (DeAngelo et al., 2011).

DeAngelo et al. (2011) argue that it is not always fair to judge institutions by their graduation rates without first considering the types of students who attend because certain student populations may be less likely to graduate (p. 4). In order to provide institutions with a fairer means by which to measure themselves, DeAngelo et al. (2011) created a dataset from the 2004 Cooperative Institutional Research Program Freshmen Survey (CIRP) and the National

Student Clearinghouse. The researchers calculated graduation rates at the 4-, 5- and 6-year marks and took note of how these rates differed among public, private, and religiously affiliated institutions. Finally, they noted graduation rates among the dataset for students based on gender, race/ethnicity, first-generation college status, high school GPA, and incoming SAT scores.

DeAngelo and her colleagues (2011) have contributed several significant findings to this topic. First, it was discovered that the difference in graduation rates between institutions could be explained to some degree by the types of students enrolled at those schools, confirming their original hypothesis (p. 15). Secondly, by comparing the 1994 and 2004 cohorts, the researchers discovered that the slight improvement in graduation rates (1-2 percentage points) was mostly among those students who were already academically well prepared as demonstrated by their GPA and SAT scores (p. 16). Conversely, in the time range studied, it appears as if fewer of the less academically prepared students (i.e., those with lower GPA and SAT scores) graduated from the 2004 cohort as compared to the 1994 cohort.

Another important finding of DeAngelo et al. (2011) is that a student's likelihood of eventually graduating with a degree drops at a much quicker rate after five years. The goal of institutions therefore must be to graduate students within 150% of the regular program length (Ober, Beekman, & Pierce, 2018). It should be noted that within DeAngelo et al.'s regression model, the intent to study abroad was included but not discussed in the findings (2011).

Although there exists extensive literature about student retention, Tinto (2010) points out that there is no model as of yet to explain how institutions can improve retention. Moreover, Tinto (2010) argues, research on this topic has largely been theoretical, and what is really needed now is actionable strategies that institutions can execute in order to improve retention. Tinto (2010) categorizes these actions into three broad areas: facilitating better student expectations of

courses, programs and the institution as a whole; providing academic, personal and social support; fostering a culture of continual assessment and feedback; and, most importantly, encouraging deeper levels of student engagement, both academically and socially (Astin, 1984; Tinto, 1975; Tinto, 1993). Tinto (2010) observes that it is the first category, a student's expectations of the academic experience, in which academic advising best can help.

Higher Education Graduation Rates in California

In California, the nation's most populous state, institutions are striving to find ways to graduate more Californians in less time in order to create a competitive workforce and to increase their capacity to enroll a larger number of new students. One of the most notable examples occurred within the California State University (CSU) system with the launch of Graduation Initiative 2015, which surpassed its goal (Moore & Tan, 2018), and now the current Graduation Initiative 2025 (GI 2025). In 2016 the California legislature passed Assembly Bill (AB) 1602 to provide \$35 million dollars to the CSU Trustees. The purpose of this appropriation is to fund initiatives within the CSU that would help increase the four-year graduation rate for freshmen and two-year graduation rate for transfer students. In addition, CSU campuses are now also expected to eliminate the equity gap in graduation rates between low-income, underrepresented minority, and first-generation college status students (AB 1602, §40).

Before the GI 2025 was launched in 2016, Moore, Tan, and Shulock (2014) utilized the last set of publicly available data from the California Postsecondary Education Commission. Moore, Tan, and Shulock (2014) found that California ranks best when it comes to first-time freshmen retention to sophomore year, but only about average among other states in college completion rates. California also enjoys a better than average rating in college participation and in the benefits of being a college graduate (Moore, Tan, & Shulock, 2014). Graduation Initiative

2015, launched in 2009, was a response to the disappointing 43% system wide six-year graduation rate. The initiative had the ambitious goal of reaching a 54% six-year graduation rate within the entire CSU system. The CSU exceeded that goal by achieving a 59% six-year rate for the 2010 freshmen cohort. At the time, Moore, Tan, and Shulock (2014) argued that there was still much to be done to address regional and racial disparities in college completion rates.

The goal presently set out in GI 2025 is to increase the system wide four-year graduation rate for freshmen to 40% and the six-year rate to 70%, up from the 59% in 2016. For transfer students the GI 2025 goal is to reach 45% for a two-year rate and 85% for the four-year transfer graduation rate, up from 74% in 2016 (California State University, n.d.-a; Moore & Tan, 2018). In order to reach these ambitious goals the CSU has implemented system wide changes, like the removal of so-called “remedial” courses for the academically underprepared (Moore & Tan, 2018), and the restructuring of General Education (GE) breadth requirements through Executive Order (EO) 1100 (California State University, 2017). Each of the 23 CSU campuses has been directed to develop its own plans with long-term objectives and strategies (Moore & Tan, 2018). These strategies include better enrollment management to avoid so-called “bottleneck courses” and e-advising technology, among others (California State University, n.d.-a).

Moore and Tan (2018) surveyed over 1,000 current CSU students, roughly half of whom began as freshmen at their respective CSU campuses. The other half was transfer-in students from community colleges. Moore and Tan’s research goal was to contribute empirical data on students’ expectation of time-to-degree and their experience in reaching that goal. The survey was supplemented by focus groups at three CSU campuses ($n = 54$). As might be expected, the researchers found that most CSU students do want to graduate in a timely manner: 80% of incoming freshmen desiring to graduate from the CSU in four years and 70% of transfer students

wanting to graduate in two years (Moore & Tan, 2018). In fact, Moore and Tan (2018) found that only 1% of the CSU freshmen students surveyed expected to graduate in six years. Most students expressed that the reason they intended to graduate at the ideal time was to avoid financial problems such as running out of financial aid or accruing more debt.

With 85% of first-time freshmen students initially planning to graduate in four years and only 33% reaching that goal (Moore & Tan, 2018), clearly the expectations of the majority of students Moore and Tan interviewed do not meet the system or national average as previously discussed. The researchers then looked at students' perspectives on the barriers to timely graduation they were encountering. Moore and Tan (2010) discovered that first-time freshmen believed "limited course availability" was the greatest obstacle to graduating on time with over 50% agreeing that sections they needed were already full and unavailable (p. 12).

Since the present study is concerned with the role of academic advisors in timely graduation, it is important to note Moore and Tan's (2018) finding on students' perceptions of advisors helping them graduate on time. Less than half of the first-time freshmen and transfer students surveyed agreed that general advisors (i.e., not their major department or faculty advisor) helped them to make a four-year or two-year graduation plan respectively. Only about half of all those surveyed were satisfied or very satisfied with the quality of academic advising on their campus. In the focus groups Moore and Tan (2018) held, students expressed a desire to have a more structured and clear path with courses clearly aligned with the academic goals in their degree program.

Moore and Tan (2018) concluded that CSU campuses would not need to spend much effort in convincing students to attempt to graduate in the traditional amount of time. This is already what students want and expect. And while GI 2025 has already seen some results

(California State University, n.d.-a), these still fall short of the ultimate goals as laid out by the California legislature.

Academic Advising and Student Retention

The practice of academic advising has been called the “cornerstone of student retention” (Crockett, 1978, p.29). Throughout the history of higher education in the United States, the practice of academic advising has developed in response to changing student populations and curricular specializations (Cook, 2009). Today an *intrusive* model of advising seeks to intervene at the right times and connect students to valuable support resources while fostering a sense of self-efficacy (Cuseo, 2003; Earl, 1998). Larson, John, Aiken-Wisniewsky, and Barkemeyer (2012) present a research-based definition: “Academic advising applies knowledge of the field to empower students and campus and community members to successfully navigate academic interactions related to higher education” (p. 86). Other researchers have demonstrated that academic advising is an effective practice to increase an institution’s student retention rate, most notably during the first year (Cuseo, 2003; Clarke, 2009; Reyes, 1997; Reader, 2018; Tinto, 1996).

Cook (2009) points out that the evolution of academic advising in the United States was the result of the emergence of greater and greater specialized and practical (i.e., vocational) curricula and an influx of diverse students. The first major shift occurred after World War II, when veterans on the GI bill came with a unique set of needs (Cook, 2009). At this time faculty still served as the main academic advisors and only 60% of schools offered any kind of freshmen orientation (Cook, 2009).

Cook (2009) notes that it was the increase in the number of community colleges as well as federal financial aid that brought to college campuses more first-generation students and

students with a lower than traditional socioeconomic status. This required a different type of advising to help meet their diverse needs. She notes the importance of Crookston's work (1972) in changing the theoretical understanding of academic advising. The theme of advising's development in the early 21st century has been "declining resources, growing enrollment pressures, expectations for greater accountability based on assessment and student populations who were more technically savvy and diverse" (Cook, 2009, p. 26). Cuseo (2003) observes that since students do not take sufficient advantage of these limited support services institutions must find ways to deliver their support intrusively and pro-actively.

As noted, Crookston (1975) was a seminal influence in the development of academic advising theory. Crookston states that with the introduction of developmental mental health in the 1960s, educators could expand their understanding of how advisors can best help college students. Crookston (1975) compares the "developmental relationship" in this new model with the traditional "prescriptive relationship" between an advisor and a student. One key difference is that a developmental mode of advising involves fostering self-efficacy on the part of the student. Crookston (1975) makes the distinction that an advisor concerned with student development will ensure that goals are self-committed and the rewards are self-fulfillment. Similar to Astin's (1984) model of student involvement, it is important to Crookston (1975) that students take responsibility for their own decisions. Crookston warns that if an advisor takes an entirely prescriptive approach, then students may feel that the advisor is to blame if the advice does not work.

The quality of advisor-student relationship in the developmental model of advising is much higher, allowing the advisor to become a greater social influencer on the student (Crookston, 1975). Since advisors can have such a positive influence on students, Winston

(1994) argues in his discussion of developmental advising that students should be challenged to take advantage of the multitude of learning opportunities outside of the classroom. Doing so would certainly increase a student's level of involvement (Astin, 1984).

The term intrusive counseling (i.e., advising) was first used by Glennen (1975) to describe a new counseling program at the University of Nevada Las Vegas (UNLV). At that time, UNLV only required students to attend advising sessions at the beginning of the semester and after midterm grades were posted if the student had received low grades (Glennen, 1975). Many years later Reader (2018) at Indiana University describes a program in which a student receives only three intrusive advising sessions as having "low intrusivity" whereas other students may require higher intrusivity (p. 13). In addition to requiring more frequent advising sessions, high intrusivity programs may also include other modalities of advising, such as tutoring or group sessions (Reader, 2018).

Cuseo (2003) observes that though it seems logical that better student advising will result in higher rates of student retention, more empirical data are needed. However, he notes that research has demonstrated an indirect relationship between advising and retention through advising's impact on student factors known to affect their retention in higher education. These factors include college satisfaction, career planning, student use of campus support services (e.g., tutoring, counseling), student-faculty contact outside the classroom, and student mentoring (Cuseo, 2003). Considering the importance of these factors to improve a student's likelihood of retention, Cuseo (2003) argues for several strategies that institutions can implement to improve their advising effectiveness and therefore student retention rates. It should be noted that most of Cuseo's (2003) strategies involve ways of recruiting, training, and rewarding effective advisors and only one with how to incentivize students.

Academic Advising and Study Abroad

Kadar (2011) argues that advisors and counselors must holistically consider both academic and personal aspects of student development in order to guide students towards realizing their goals. As noted above, participating in study abroad has been shown to be beneficial in students' development academically (Hadis, 2005; Sutton & Rubin, 2010) and professionally (Ingraham & Peterson, 2004) while also helping them to develop intercultural competence and sensitivity (Engle & Engle, 2004). It follows then that academic advisors should consider how best to advise students who are interested in study abroad as it relates to their own goals in life so as to encourage student involvement (Astin, 1984).

Rhodes, Biscarra, Loberg, and Roller (2012) argue that more collaboration is needed between a campus's Education Abroad office, the faculty, and the academic advising units. They observe that study abroad staff are more familiar with best practices in study abroad programming and safety protocols. At the same time because advisors in the study abroad office have a wide range of responsibilities, they need campus partners as resources in order to ensure quality support for students (Rhodes, Biscarra, Loberg, & Roller, 2012).

Seccia (2018) investigated how academic advisors are helping engineering students to study abroad and graduate on time. Engineering students have long been underrepresented in study abroad (IIE, 2017). Seccia (2018) first sought to discover the goals and motivators engineering students have to study abroad and what their perceived obstacles are. She conducted a mixed methods study with a survey sample size of 146 students and interview sample size of 84 students. All student participants were current engineering students or recent alumni who had studied abroad. Seccia (2018) used Kasravi's (2009) themes to interpret the results.

Seccia (2018) discovered that the desire for cultural experience and knowledge (e.g., “I want to travel/visit a particular country/live in another culture”) was the top reason engineering students went abroad (p. 119). She concludes that completing degree requirements was only a secondary goal of studying abroad for these students. Seccia (2018) also found that engineering students perceived cost and course requirements were the largest obstacles in their decision to study abroad.

Seccia (2018)’s study provides a rare perspective on this topic of study abroad and graduation rates by including academic advisors and their role in study abroad planning. Seccia (2018) considers academic advising as a social factor in the decision-making process (Kasravi, 2009) because it involves human attitudes and experiences, unlike institutional factors like degree curriculum and program characteristics. Seccia (2018) also points out that since engineering majors have not traditionally gone abroad, advisors are all the more important to answer questions and help (Seccia, 2018).

The advisors interviewed by Seccia (2018) identified a number of factors that helped engineering students in their decision to study abroad, as well as a number of challenges that made this process more difficult. In terms of personal factors, advisors state that a student’s previous international experience (e.g., student has traveled before) and early interest (i.e., in high school) were facilitators. Advisors also agreed with Loberg’s (2012) assessment of the importance of faculty engagement and support in helping students to study abroad. Finally, advisors understood that they themselves and their understanding of study abroad’s benefits were important facilitators (Seccia, 2018).

Seccia (2018) found that academic advisors were aware that it was important to inform students on the best time of year to go abroad so that students would not miss courses they

needed at their home campus that were only offered once a year. One campus included in the study had changed the frequency and order in which they offered required engineering courses to facilitate study abroad (Seccia, 2018). Finally, advisors saw that it was important to prescreen the courses offered by the international college to ensure that students understood which courses would meet which requirements and not add any time to their current academic plan (Seccia, 2018).

Advising for study abroad students involves more than just pre-departure academic planning. Study abroad researchers have not ignored the important question of student reentry, described as “the continuum of experience and behaviors which are encountered when an individual returns” home after studying abroad (Westwood, Lawrence, & Paul, 1986, p. 223). These studies tend to focus on the psychological, emotional, and social challenges student returnees face (Attah, Bofo-Arthur, & Bofo-Arthur, 2018; Gray & Saviciki, 2015; Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1963; Martin, 1986; Miller, 2016; Musini, 2018; Wielkiewicz & Turkowski, 2010).

Miller (2016) provides a comparative review of reentry support provided by a small sample of state universities, small private colleges, and Ivy League institutions. Miller (2016) used a qualitative survey of administrators to investigate how each institution approached the student reentry support process. A majority of institutions used alumni mentor programs, but less than half regularly used reentry support groups or other counseling type sessions. Unfortunately, 70% of those institutions studied had no outcome assessment as part of their reentry process to ensure that students were adjusting to being back at their home campus (Miller, 2016, p. 31). Not addressed in Miller’s (2016) study or others is how institutions are (or are not) providing effective intrusive academic advising upon a student’s return to ensure academic reintegration and timely graduation.

Study Abroad's Effect on Retention and Graduation Rates

Study abroad can be considered a strategy for improving student retention and academic success (Sutton & Rubin, 2004). Kuh (2008) described study abroad as a high-impact practice, which increases student engagement (i.e., involvement; Kuh, 2008; c.f. Astin, 1984) and therefore can be expected to have a positive impact on student learning (Astin, 1984). A growing body of quantitative research has demonstrated that study abroad may also have a positive effect on graduation rates (Malgren & Galvin, 2008; University Planning, Institutional Research, and Accountability, 2009; Hamir, 2011; O'Rear, Sutton, & Rubin, 2012; Xu, de Silva, Neufeldt, & Dane, 2013).

International educators have examined the impact that study abroad has on student retention and success in order to advocate for study abroad as a legitimate strategy for improved learning outcomes (Haupt, Ogden, Rubin, 2018; Kuh, 2005; O'Rear, Sutton, & Rubin, 2012). There seems to be a consensus in the literature that those who study abroad are more likely to graduate eventually (i.e., student completion; Twombly, Salisbury, Tumanaut, & Klute, 2012), and a growing body of research has even shown that study abroad participants graduate sooner than their peers (Haupt, Ogden, & Rubin, 2018). Some institutions such as University of San Diego and Indiana University have chosen to fund study abroad, having already identified it as a strategic way to improve retention and graduation rates (Rhodes, Biscarra, Loberg, & Roller, 2012).

The GLOSSARI project is a landmark study in the field of study abroad research (O'Rear, Sutton, & Rubin, 2012; Sutton & Rubin, 2004; Sutton & Rubin, 2010). O'Rear, Sutton, and Rubin (2012) analyzed seven years' worth of data from the University System of Georgia, looking at 19,109 degree-seeking students who had studied abroad. The researchers used

clustered sampling to create a control group ($n = 17,903$; O'Rear, Sutton, & Rubin, 2012, p. 7). O'Rear, Sutton, and Rubin (2012) measured the four-, five-, and six-year graduation rates and used logistic regression to control for potentially confounding variables such as previously high grades. The researchers found that students studying abroad had a 10% greater probability of graduating on time and a 25% greater chance to graduate within five years.

In order to explain how “enriching educational experiences” including study abroad participation is correlated to better graduation rates, Carini, Kuh, and Klein (2006) and others have relied on Astin’s (1984) theory of student involvement (cf. Tinto, 1975, 1993). Astin postulates that student involvement (i.e., engagement) is directly proportional to personal development. Kuh (2008) identifies study abroad as a high-impact practice that builds capacity for greater student engagement. O'Rear, Sutton, and Rubin (2012) summarize this best when they write “given that study abroad is one mechanism for improving student engagement, it is reasonable to expect students who study abroad to have higher graduation rates compared to those who do not” (p. 5).

Ingraham and Peterson (2004) studied study abroad’s effect on students at Michigan State University. The researchers administered pre/post surveys to study abroad participants ($n = 1,104$), collected faculty observations, and utilized institutional data. The researchers were primarily interested in measuring how study abroad experience might correlate to an increase in academic performance, personal growth, intercultural awareness, and professional development. They also discovered that study abroad participants enroll for more terms than students who do not go abroad, but study abroad students take less time to graduate. Ingraham and Peterson (2004) believe this may be because of the popularity of summer and intersession study abroad opportunities. They do not provide example data on this point.

Many of the studies summarized thus far have relied on samples from a single institution. This poses problems for reliability (Johnson & Stage, 2018). In response, Haupt, Ogden, and Rubin (2018) have called for joint research among institutions to create a national database of research using similar methodologies in order to advocate for more study abroad research and participation. The Leveraging Education Abroad Participation for Graduation (GRAD LEAP) model was intended to generalize findings and influence policy at both the institutional and governmental levels. Haupt, Ogden, and Rubin (2018) point out that research on the relationship between study abroad participation and graduation rates has not included data from across different institutes of higher education, and therefore a national collaborative effort is needed. The researchers suggest having common sampling criteria and quantitative methodology.

Even before Haupt, Ogden, and Rubin (2018) was published, a larger successor project led by some of the same researchers was already in the works that would include many of the same features proposed in GRAD LEAP (Don Rubin, personal communication). The successor to GRAD LEAP is the Consortium for the Analysis of Student Success through International Education (CASSIE), led by the University System of Georgia and the Institute of International Education (IIE). CASSIE will use sophisticated statistical analyses on “big data” drawn from many US institutions of higher education, including at least one of the present study’s test sites, to establish empirical evidence for the many ways study abroad benefits students, including its impact on time-to-degree (University System of Georgia, 2019).

Not one of these studies, however, includes a description of the actual institutional practices at play. At this time it is unclear to what degree institutions allow students to meet graduation requirements through study abroad or how institutions can best ensure the timely graduation of participants. Even if study abroad can be said to make students somehow “better”

(Sutton & Rubin, 2004), is it possible institutional policies or practices can prevent their timely graduation?

Baldwin, Case, and Woo's (2015) study of the California State University system may have illustrated that it is possible for study abroad to delay graduation considerably. In 2015 the California State University (CSU) Academic Research and Analytic Studies conducted an unpublished study of CSU students who participated in a one-year exchange program during 2000-2011 ($N = 5,681$; Baldwin, Case, & Woo, 2015). Participants' graduation rates were compared to their respective cohorts and to matched peers. The CSU found that one-year study abroad participants had significantly better completion rates than non-participants. However, they did have significantly lower four-year graduation rate when compared to non-participants with the same GPA and other factors. This suggests that those who qualify for study abroad may have other predictors, such as GPA, that contribute to self-selection bias (Erika Baldwin, personal communication). More important to the present study is that one-year study abroad participants in the CSU may actually be delaying their graduation, though the reasons are unclear (Katie Roller, personal communication). One that is apparent in the data is that students who went abroad on this time had much higher unit count at graduation ($M=147.17$ semester units) than what was needed (120 semester units) (Baldwin, Case, & Woo, 2015). It is possible that these one-year CSU study abroad students received credits toward their graduation but did not satisfy an adequate number of major or general education requirements during their time abroad (Katie Roller, personal communication). The lack of clarity on this phenomenon is what first motivated the present study.

It should be noted that Baldwin, Case, and Woo (2015) were only examining data from the CSU International Programs (IP). These are single academic year programs organized by the

CSU Chancellor's Office with a smaller set of international partner institutions. It may be possible that direct exchange students (i.e., those attending an institution that has a partnership with their home CSU campus) have a different experience. No comparison has yet been made (Erika Baldwin, personal communication; Katie Roller, personal communication).

Criticism of Study Abroad's Impact on Graduation Rates

The essential question international education researchers face is whether study abroad makes students better or if better students are simply the ones who study abroad (Sutton & Rubin, 2004). Ingraham and Peterson (2004) note that at their institution there was a higher chance a student would study abroad if he or she had already been placed in a higher-performing category of students.

Haupt, Ogden, and Rubin (2018) maintain that though the literature clearly shows some sort of relationship between study abroad and on-time graduation rates, their account for self-selection bias is insufficient and therefore cannot conclusively state that study abroad improves graduation rates. Zhai (2000) argues that study abroad research on this topic tends to use samples sizes too small to find any significant statistical differences.

As described in the previous section, quantitative studies have demonstrated a positive correlation between study abroad and timely graduation. Is the relationship between study abroad and better graduation rates merely the effect of *better students* (Sutton & Rubin, 2004)? Many of the studies already cited have used statistical analysis to investigate the correlation between study abroad and graduation rates. Each have controlled for relevant factors. For example, Hamir (2011), O'Rear, Sutton, and Rubin (2012) and the institutional research department at Indiana University, Bloomington (University Planning, Institutional Research, and Accountability, 2009)

all used logistical regression to control for factors such as early academic achievement, gender, area of study, socioeconomic status, and other demographics.

Johnson and Stage (2018) in particular are skeptical that study abroad or other so-called high-impact practices (Kuh, 2008) improve graduation rates at all. They surveyed academic officers at 101 institutions about their campuses' use of Kuh's (2008) effective practices: first-year seminars, core curricula, learning communities, writing-intensive courses, collaborative assignments, undergraduate research, diversity/global learning experiences (e.g., study abroad), service learning, internships, and capstone projects. Johnson and Stage (2018) included Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) as secondary data in their collection. The researchers then used multiple regression models to measure these practices' impact on four- and six-year graduation rates while controlling for other factors such as institutional selectivity and use of private student loans. They discovered that there was no significant relationship between four- and six-year graduation rates and most of Kuh's (2008) high-impact practices. Two of the practices, internships and freshman seminars, actually had a minor negative correlation (Johnson & Stage, 2018). Johnson and Stage (2018) conclude that graduation rates were better predicted by the student demographics and enrollment factors already well established in the literature.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the relevant literature on study abroad, college completion rates, and the role of academic advising as an institutional best practice. The literature has revealed that despite the many benefits of studying abroad, the national participation rate is still very low. Many obstacles to students going abroad have been identified, including concerns over graduating on time. This concern has been addressed by several quantitative studies that have

demonstrated study abroad does not delay graduation. GLOSSARI and the upcoming CASSIE project include large sets of data from many institutions thereby increasing the reliability of their findings. However, the validity of these quantitative studies has sometimes been questioned: does study abroad really make better students who graduate on time or are better students who are already likely to reach completion on time the ones who study abroad?

Also included in this chapter was a review of relevant literature on college retention and completion. Special attention was paid to the role of academic advisors. The research discussed in this chapter has shown that providing intrusive advising can improve student retention. However, there is still much to learn about the role of academic advisors in influencing their students' decision to study abroad and what advisors can do to help ensure they can still graduate on time.

Chapter Three will discuss the methodology utilized by the present study to investigate how institutional practice including academic advising impacts the timely graduation of study abroad students.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

As discussed in Chapter Two, research on study abroad participation and its outcomes has understandably tended to focus on who the student is and not what an institution does. By better understanding what motivates or inhibits students from studying abroad, advocates have sought to facilitate the student decision-making process as well as improve the study abroad experience itself in order to maximize its benefits. Concern over how study abroad might affect one's time to graduation is one of these potential obstacles identified in prospective study abroad participants (Hamir, 2011; Kasravi, 2009; Loberg, 2012; Malmgren & Galvin, 2008; Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2010; Seccia, 2018; Sutton & Rubin, 2010). To alleviate this concern, studies on the topic have used statistical analyses to investigate if there is in fact a demonstrable delay in graduating for those who decided to go abroad. As summarized in Chapter Two, this does not seem to be the case. However, these studies have had to control for potentially confounding factors of study abroad participants such as GPA, which has already long been understood to correlate to retention and timely graduation (Sutton & Rubin, 2004).

The present study takes a different approach than previous studies (e.g., Hadis, 2005; Malmgren & Galvin, 2008). Through a convergent parallel mixed design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010), the present study seeks to understand the phenomenon of study abroad and its effect on timely graduation from the perspective of institutional practice rather than individual student characteristics. For the purposes of the present study, institutional practice refers primarily to a university's policies and practices for study abroad course transfer and academic advising of students by staff and faculty. The present researcher utilized a post-experience student survey and semi-structured interviews with academic advisors, both faculty and staff, at

four large California public universities known to send thousands of American students overseas each year for short- and long-term programs.

Context

With its impressive size and student diversity, the California State University (CSU) system provides an excellent context within which to study this phenomenon. With more than 470,000 students enrolled in 23 campuses, the CSU is the largest four-year university system in the world (California State University, n.d.-c). The CSU student population is very diverse, made up of 60% students of color and 30% first generation college students (California State University, n.d.-c).

To varying levels, each CSU campus is involved in study abroad and other internationalization efforts. At the system level the chancellor's office each year organizes a consortium of exchange opportunities, called International Programs (IP), allowing CSU students to study abroad in over 45 different one-year programs in 15 different countries (California State University, n.d.-b). CSU IP has already sent more than 15,000 students abroad for year-long study to 70 partner institutions (California State University, n.d.-b). By offering International Programs with different levels of GPA requirements, the CSU Chancellor's Office has also seen a rise in IP participation (Monica Schecter, personal communication).

In addition to the yearlong IP opportunities, each campus has its own exchange agreements with partner universities around the world. The most active campuses send 1,000 or more students abroad on short-term, semester, and yearlong programs (Noah Kuchins, Ryan McLemore, Monica Schecter, Sharon Olson, & Katie Roller, personal communication). There has been a rising trend in CSU study abroad participation, especially faculty-led short-term trips (Sharon Olson, personal communication). San Diego State's College of Business is a surprising

exception, sending the majority of their students on semester and yearlong exchange programs (San Diego State University, n.d.-b).

While education abroad offices seek to increase their campuses' participation rates, the California State University as a whole is currently facing a mandate from the California state legislature (AB 1602) to provide an actionable plan to improve graduation rates, shorten time-to-degree, and eliminate the achievement gap for underrepresented minority students, low-income students, and first generation college students (§40). As a result, the CSU has launched a system wide initiative called Graduation Initiative 2025 (GI 2025), setting a goal for each campus to raise its four-year graduation rate to 40% and six-year rate to 70% and bring the achievement gap to a zero point difference. Campus leaders are looking for ways to increase tenured faculty, expand early start programs, provide more online courses, remove the obstacle of so-called "bottleneck courses", and improve academic advising through new electronic tools and enhanced, data-driven enrollment management (California State University, n.d.-a). As of now, the CSU seems well on its way to meeting its ambitious goals (Watanabe, 2018).

Within this context of a large, public university system with a diverse student body and ambitious goals like GI 2025, where does study abroad fit in? If study abroad is seen as a "laudable but luxurious practice" (Engle & Engle, 2003) which may lengthen students' time-to-degree, then it is conceivable that campus leaders and academic advisors might feel it necessary to advise undergraduates to stay at home so that they can more likely graduate on time. If however the study abroad opportunities offered by each CSU campus are well integrated into student degree plans and advisors are well equipped to help students plan accordingly, then it is conceivable that campus leaders may be more likely to support this valuable, high-impact practice.

Graduation Requirements in the CSU

For all their differences, CSU campuses share similarities when it comes to what is required for graduation. In 2017 the chancellor's office issued Executive Order (EO) 1100 (California State University, 2017) which introduced changes to the General Education (GE) Breadth requirements for each degree program offered in the CSU. Students participating in the present study fall under the previous paradigm, but the difference is only in how courses are counted, not the number of GE units required (California State University, 2017). It should be noted though that EO 1100 has affected academic advisors and was often discussed during their interviews.

In short, CSU students must complete a total of 120 semester units (or 180 quarter units) before graduating. 39 lower-division (e.g., 100 and 200 level courses) and 9 upper-division semester-units are required. GE requirements also refer to the breadth of coursework completed by CSU students. GE is divided into four areas and subareas. Briefly the general breadth areas are:

- Area A (English Language Communication and Critical Thinking),
- Area B (Scientific Inquiry and Quantitative Reasoning),
- Area C (Arts and Humanities), and
- Area D (Social Sciences).

It is possible for courses to double count, meeting both GE and major or campus-specific requirements.

In addition, the GE Residency requirement states that the 9 semester (or 12 quarter) units of upper-division GE must be taken within the CSU. Coursework completed through direct exchange programs, wherein a student pays CSU tuition but studies abroad for a term, can count

as resident credit (e.g., San Diego State University, n.d.-c). Independent provider coursework, however, would be considered as transfer credit and not satisfying the Residency requirement. This GE Residency requirement clearly has implications for those who are considering studying abroad. It would suggest that in order to complete graduation requirements, a study abroad participant would need to maximize the number of courses abroad that could meet lower-division GE or major-related coursework.

Sampling Procedures

The present study is limited to four California public comprehensive universities, all of which are sister campuses: San Francisco State University (SFSU), Cal Poly San Luis Obispo (CALPOLY), California State University, Long Beach (CSULB), and San Diego State University (SDSU). These campuses were selected because within the CSU system these campuses send the most students overseas each year, and they also differ from one another in the degree to which they have integrated study abroad into their undergraduate curricula (Katie Roller, personal communication).

In addition, each of these campuses was ranked in various categories in recent years by the Institute of International Education (IIE) as leading institutions for sending students abroad (IIE, 2017). The present researcher had access to these sites and their personnel because of his current role in international education in the CSU. Counterparts at each of these campuses agreed to assist the researcher in data collection and validation of results.

Study abroad administrators at each test site sent a Google Forms survey to every student who went abroad in the 2016-2017 or 2017-2018 academic years ($N = 4,291$). Since the survey was conducted at the end of the 2018-2019 academic year, these dates allowed the inclusion of both students who have and have not yet graduated. Students who went abroad on short-term

(e.g., two-three weeks), faculty-led programs were excluded from the survey. Faculty-led courses are optional course options which are included in a CSU campus course catalog. This means that they do not need to be transferred or assessed for course equivalency or substitution and therefore fall outside the scope of the present study.

Education abroad coordinators and directors at each test site recommended a list of staff and faculty advisors at their respective campuses. The researcher contacted each prospective interviewee directly, and those willing and able to participate were asked for written consent before beginning the confidential interview. The researcher visited three test sites (CALPOLY, SDSU, and CSULB) to interview eight of the participants. One final interview with a staff advisor at SDSU was conducted and recorded via Zoom due to scheduling conflicts. The participating advisors were not offered any compensation for their time.

Instrumentation and Measures

Student Survey

The student survey was comprised of 16 items: two open response prompts, ten short-answer or multiple-choice questions, and four four-point Likert scale statements. The survey was designed to investigate how institutions support study abroad students with academic advising and learn how study abroad affected students' graduation plans. Specifically, two areas of institutional practice were important: (1) the policies and procedures related to course transferability whereby study abroad students can meet graduation requirements, and (2) the way in which study abroad students receive academic advising and other support.

The first section of the survey contained demographic questions to gather the participants' race/ethnicity, Pell Grant eligibility (an indicator of socioeconomic status), their academic major and class standing at the time of studying abroad, and which study abroad

program the student participated in: one-year IP, one-semester direct exchange, one-semester with an independent program, or a summer program, either through exchange or an independent provider. Program type was included since it was assumed type and length might determine the availability of transferable courses or have other significant effects. When asking about the participant's academic major and class standing the survey included the wording *when you attended this program* because it was considered possible that students might have decided to change their major or declare minors after their study abroad experience. Class standing was included in order to determine whether it might have affected the course transferability process (e.g., upper division versus lower division coursework) or had other effects on a student's time-to-degree.

Participants were presented with two open-ended prompts. The first prompt was worded as, *Please tell me about the level of support or resistance you received from your university regarding transferability of courses from your study abroad program.* This prompt was used in order to elicit a general response about the many different stakeholders a study abroad participant would have experienced. Following from previous research, it was assumed this would include academic advisors, study abroad office staff, faculty, the registrar's office, and the financial aid office (Loberg, 2012; Rhodes, Loberg, & Roller, 2012; Seccia, 2018). The researcher reviewed all responses and for analysis coded them as either POSITIVE, NEGATIVE, or MIXED experiences. The full written responses were also used in the qualitative analysis phase.

The second prompt in the open-ended section elicited responses on participants' plans for graduation. It was worded, *How did your study abroad experience affect your plans for and progress toward graduation?* This question was perhaps the most important. Although previous research has made a strong statistical argument that study abroad does not delay graduation,

qualitative data is still lacking on how this is made to happen (Malgren & Galvin, 2008; University Planning, Institutional Research, and Accountability, 2009; Hamir, 2011; O'Rear, Sutton, & Rubin, 2012; Xu, de Silva, Neufeldt, & Dane, 2013). The researcher reviewed the responses and for comparative analysis coded them as either \leq Semester Delay, Year Delay, Sped Up Graduation, Had to Compensate, No Change, or Other Effects. The latter code was used for those responses that described benefits unrelated to graduation. Examples of each code are given in Chapter Four.

Four-point Likert prompts measured participants' beliefs on whether before leaving they understood how many units would be transferred back to their home institution upon return, whether they received help from their academic advisors before they left regarding graduation requirements, and finally whether they believe studying abroad lengthened their time to degree. While researchers have demonstrated that fear of delayed graduation is an obstacle for students who are deciding to go abroad (Kasravi, 2009), research is still needed to discover if upon return students believe study abroad has in fact slowed their progress to graduation.

Using the data collected, the researcher added to each participant's response four calculated variables for use in analysis: the type of major (STEM, non-STEM), percent of coursework transferred for GE requirements, for major requirements, and for neither type of requirement. Since participants reported belonging to a very wide variety of different majors, STEM and non-STEM was used to categorize these majors for easier analysis and because for several reasons STEM students are considered underrepresented in study abroad (Hoffa & DePaul, 2010; IIE, 2017; Seccia, 2018). The transfer percent variables were calculated by finding what percentage of reported courses taken abroad were transferred back to the student's home campus as meeting general education (GE), major requirements, or neither. The expected

result was that students who had a higher percentage of coursework transferred to meet requirements would have a higher chance of graduating on time. These calculated variables were included in order to learn whether there was any relationship between academic major, class standing, and whether the majority of coursework satisfied GE or major requirements.

Academic Advisor Interviews

The researcher conducted eight face-to-face interviews and one online video interview with advisors at three of the four test sites. Unfortunately, no advisor was available at SFSU during the time of the study. However, the nine participating advisors provided a variety of valuable perspectives, including both college-based (i.e., major) advisors, faculty advisors, and one advisor based in a centralized advising unit. Two of the interviewees held administrator status, overseeing the advising conducted in their respective units. One staff advisor held a lecturer position (i.e., adjunct faculty) in addition to her staff advisor responsibilities. These advisors were chosen so as to include the majors that have the highest and lowest participation of study abroad at their respective campuses.

The interviews were semi-structured (Merriam, 2009) and each lasted approximately an hour. The ethnographic interview prompt included questions drawn from the findings of previous literature on academic advising and study abroad while also including questions meant to shed light on the results of the student survey. The researcher also sought to learn from the advisors how each institution's goal for improving its four-year graduation rate (i.e., GI2025) might be affecting the advising experience for would-be study abroad students.

Before the interview, the researcher sent a few of the questions to the participants in a pre-interview questionnaire by email. These questions are noted below as "Questionnaire". All other the questions were delivered by the researcher in a face-to-face or online video interview,

recorded, and then transcribed for analysis. Seminal research on advising best practices was used to develop of a list of a priori themes used in analysis.

For each topic explored, the most relevant literature is cited in the protocol below. These are the studies from which questions and relevant themes were drawn. The researcher also asked probing questions where it was necessary to elicit additional examples or clarification.

Academic Advising in General

1. (Questionnaire) How long have you been an academic advisor at CAMPUS?
Were you previously at any other campus?
2. (Questionnaire) What is the organizational model of academic advising responsibility here at CAMPUS (Habley & McCauley, 1987)?
3. (Questionnaire) How would you describe your role as an academic advisor (Chickering & Reisser, 1993; Larson, 2018; Reader, 2018)?
4. (Questionnaire) Please describe for me your weekly responsibilities as an academic advisor, including your typical caseload and any specific academic majors or student populations you are responsible for (Cuseo 2003; Habley & McCauley, 1987; Reader, 2018; Winston, 1994).
5. (Questionnaire) What are the ways in which you engage with your students? Can you break it down by percentage? – i.e., 50% email, 25% phone, 25% one-to-one, 10% group sessions, etc. (Earl, 1998)

CSU Advising for Retention and Improved Graduation Rates

1. Please describe for me how you understand your campus's graduation rate goals and in what ways you believe the university is or is not moving towards that goal (Jackson & Cook, 2016; Watanabe, 2018).

2. In the context of CSU Graduation Initiative 2025, how has your role as an undergraduate advisor been affected by these graduation rate goals? Has the advising model or role of the advisor at CAMPUS changed, and why? (Habley & McCauley, 1987; Watanabe, 2018)
3. In what way do you believe academic advising at CAMPUS helps to improve retention and overall graduation rates (Cuseo, 2003; Earl, 1998; Habley & McClanahan, 2004; Tinto, 2006; Watanabe, 2018)?

Advisor's Knowledge of Studying Abroad Benefits

1. Did you study abroad, or have you traveled internationally? If so, how often do those experiences come up in your sessions with students who might be considering studying abroad (Loberg, 2012; Seccia, 2018)?
2. As an academic advisor, how do you understand the benefits of studying abroad (Loberg, 2012; Clarke, Flaherty, Wright, & McMillen, 2009; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004; Hadis, 2005; Sutton & Rubin, 2004)?
3. What benefits to studying abroad do your students seem to be aware of or often bring up (Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2010; Paulsen & St. John, 2002; Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009; Seccia, 2018; St. John, et al., 2001)?

Advising Students Considering Study Abroad

1. How frequently would you say that you advise undergraduate students who express an interest in studying abroad (NSSE, 2007)? Do you usually encourage students to study abroad or not? Why?

2. In what way is advising this type of student different at the initial stage? In the semesters before a student goes abroad, what areas do you make sure to cover in your advising sessions (Seccia, 2018)?
3. Do these students seem aware of obstacles or challenges to choosing to study abroad? What are they? Are they mostly real or perceived (Perna 2006; Salisbury, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2010; Paulsen & St. John, 2002; Salisbury, Umbach, Paulsen, & Pascarella, 2009)?
4. Once a student has decided to study abroad, can you describe what the process is here at CAMPUS? How long is this pre-departure process (Seccia, 2018)?
5. Given the lengthiness of the process, do you ever find that your students ask about study abroad too late and that provides a challenge for them to go? (Seccia, 2018)?

Advising Students Who Study Abroad

1. Do you usually communicate with your students while they are studying abroad? If so, what are the topics you usually are concerned about (Hoffa, 1993)?
2. After your students return from study abroad, do you usually meet with them or advise them somehow? Please tell me about how that happens and what you are doing (Seccia, 2018).

Challenges Posed by Study Abroad

1. What challenges or drawbacks does study abroad pose for your students (Seccia, 2018)?
2. Do you believe that students who study abroad risk not graduating on time, and why (Seccia, 2018)?

3. Is it more difficult for students of specific majors to study abroad and graduate on time (Seccia, 2018), and why?
4. Is there any type of student that you would not advise to study abroad? Why? (IIE, 2017)
5. How can an advisor help study abroad participants make the most of their experience but also graduate in a timely manner (Seccia, 2018)?

Data Collection

Student survey

To collect student survey data, the study abroad office at each university was asked to send the Google Form to students who went abroad in the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 academic years ($n = 4,291$). The responses were anonymous unless the student elected to include their email address in order to win a \$25 coffee gift card. The sample only included those students who had studied abroad in a one-year program organized by the chancellor office (International Programs, or “IP”), a semester- or summer-long program with a campus partner, or a semester-long program organized by an independent, third party provider. As already explained, the only category of study abroad program not included is short-term faculty-led programs.

The results of the survey were digitally kept and password protected by the researcher. Student participants were informed of the confidentiality of their responses both in the invitation email and in the Google Form itself.

Academic Advisor Interviews

It was important to include both faculty and staff academic advisors in the interviews since both play a part in advising study abroad participants. Study abroad directors recommended advisors who had notably active or inactive study abroad participation rates in their respective

colleges. In total nine advisors were interviewed, representing different colleges or academic advising units at three CSU campuses. Three were faculty advisors and six were staff advisors. The advisor's aliases and other information are included in Table 3.1.

Table 3. 1

CSU Advisor Participants

Role	Campus	College/Division	Years of Experience
Faculty Advisor	CALPOLY	Business	4
Staff Advisor	CALPOLY	Science & Math	15
Staff Advisor	CALPOLY	Engineering	13
Staff Advisor	CSULB	Business	7
Faculty Advisor	CSULB	Liberal Arts	5
Staff Advisor	CSULB	Science & Math	13
Faculty Advisor	SDSU	Health & Human Services	5
Staff Advisor	SDSU	Business	26
Staff Advisor	SDSU	Undergraduate Advising	13

After the interviews were completed, the researcher used an online, machine-generated transcription service called Temi to transcribe the interviews. After the researcher corrected transcription errors and highlighted important themes, advisors were asked to member check what the researcher had analyzed. One advisor offered additional input, but the others were satisfied with what the researcher had already produced.

Data Analysis

Mixed methods research has been called “a pragmatic approach to educational research” because often the questions posed by practitioner-scholars fall within both qualitative and quantitative domains (Lochmiller & Lester, 2017, p. 213). This is the appropriate approach for the present study which is concerned with presenting an overview of how study abroad is

currently helping students meet requirements for timely graduation while also shedding light on the best practice employed by institutions for that same purpose.

The researcher used a convergent parallel design for the present study (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010). The purpose of any mixed methods approach is to combine not only the findings of two different data sources but also their techniques and concepts (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This study combines the student and institutional perspectives of study abroad's impact on graduation rates by analyzing two data sources: the student survey and interview transcriptions of academic advisors who work with this student population. Responses from the student survey as well as previous literature on the topic of academic advising helped to inform the design of the advisor interview prompt. Likewise, what advisors shared in their interviews was used to interpret and clarify what the students reported in their survey responses.

The quantitative and qualitative analysis of the student experience survey had more weight in answering RQ1 (*To what extent do courses taken while studying abroad impact graduation requirements of undergraduate students?*). The qualitative analysis of interview transcripts with academic advisors provided the most insight in answering RQ2 (*To what degree does the academic advising process impact graduation rates and time to graduation for study abroad students?*).

Quantitative Analysis

Quantitative analysis of survey data included numerical variables gleaned from items 3-4, 9-11, and 13-16. The four-point Likert scale prompts (items 13-16) were designed in such a way as to be acceptable as interval data. Short answer responses gathered in items 6, 8, and 12 were coded and counted for quantitative analysis. Data were analyzed by using the StatPlus Pro program to run statistical tests. In order to answer the research questions to satisfaction, different

statistical tests were conducted. The researcher chose Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) tests when determining the effect of categorical independent variables on numeric values like the percentage of transferable courses (items 9-11) and the lengthening of a student's time-to-degree (item 16).

Chi-Square tests were employed when examining the distribution of observed variation between categorical groups of students and categorical responses: namely, the level of support received during the course approval and transfer process (item 8) and the impact of study abroad on graduation plans (item 12).

Finally, after significant variables were identified, a multiple linear regression test was used to determine which factors had the greatest effect on time-to-degree (item 16) for study abroad students. The results of all these tests are provided with analysis in Chapter Four.

Qualitative Analysis

In order to more fully understand what the data say about study abroad participation, course transferability, and time to graduation, thorough qualitative analysis was also conducted. Two open-ended responses on the student survey (items 8 and 12) provided the qualitative data for students. Nine interviews with academic advisors were recorded and transcribed. The qualitative analysis of data was comprised of categorizing emergent themes while at the same time comparing and contrasting the experiences of study abroad students with that of their advisors and faculty. Seminal research from the field of higher education advising as well as study abroad literature were used to design the interview questions and create a list of a priori themes for coding the transcriptions. Through qualitative analysis additional themes emerged and compared to one another as well as those themes emerging in-vivo and descriptively from the student survey.

Specifically, the present researcher looked at how academic advisors facilitate the course articulation and transferability processes and how they advise undergraduate students who indicate interest in study abroad. Another topic explored was the level of intervention (c.f., *intrusivity*; Reader, 2018) advisors felt was necessary when working with study abroad participants and certain subgroups such as pre health majors and seniors. Advisors shared how the CSU GI2025 context with its ambitious goals and new resources affected how academic advisors counsel undergraduate students in planning their path to graduation. Overall 95 different codes were used in the initial stages of analysis and later combined into the most frequently occurring themes, all of which helped to answer central research questions. These themes are discussed in Chapter Four.

Summary

Previous research in the area of study abroad and graduation rates has focused on large-scale statistical analysis or qualitative studies of student constructs like academic maturation in order to explain observed trends. In contrast, the present study provides a broader understanding of the issue through a mixed method approach. The sites chosen for this study were four public universities in California known for sending thousands of students abroad for semester and yearlong programs. The findings, discussed in Chapter Four, come from the results of student surveys and interview responses with academic advisors. The survey was designed to measure participants' experience with the policies and practices of their campus, namely course transferability and advising support, as well as their belief about study abroad's impact on time to graduation. Semi-formal interviews with academic advisors responsible for ensuring the timely graduation of their students provide a professional insight into the variety of factors involved in working with the study abroad student population. Through both quantitative and

qualitative analyses, several themes and best practices were revealed, shedding light on the effectiveness of each site. These findings are explored further in Chapter Four. The implications are laid out in Chapter Five and will aid study abroad professionals and academic advisors looking for best practices and hoping to address concerns over graduation rates and increase study abroad participation at their institutions.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The present study was undertaken in order to examine in a broader way how policies and advising around study abroad contribute to timely graduation by examining the institutional practices involved. As discussed in Chapter Two, previous research has focused more on student characteristics and learning outcomes in order to explain study abroad's effect on retention and completion. As outlined in Chapter Three, the researcher took a mixed methods approach (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2010) by comparing the results of a post-experience student survey ($n = 357$) and what could be learned from interviews with academic advisors representing nine separate colleges and advising units within the California State University system. Data resulting from quantitative analysis were compared alongside qualitative data obtained from open responses in the student survey and the academic advisor interviews. This mixed methods approach was used to investigate two research questions:

RQ 1) To what extent do courses taken while studying abroad impact graduation requirements of undergraduate students?

RQ 2) To what degree does the academic advising process impact graduation rates and time to graduation for study abroad students?

Merging quantitative results with qualitative findings provided insight into why risks to timely graduation exist for certain students and what institutions can do to support those students interested in study abroad but also want to graduate on time. Following a brief overview, this chapter will present the findings from the study according to each of the two research questions.

Overview of Findings

Studying abroad was found not only to meet the requirements most students needed to graduate on time, it also appears to have sped up graduation for a small group of students. Through quantitative analysis it was determined that the factor which contributed the most to the timely graduation of study abroad students was the amount of transferable coursework a student completed while abroad. Other factors were found to be significant predictors as well.

A qualitative analysis of data from participating students resulted in several findings regarding study abroad's impact on timely graduation. First, it was discovered that graduation delays stemming from study abroad might occur for a variety of reasons other than the lack of transferable coursework. Faced with possible delays, some students were still able to graduate on time but only after compensating through extra classes or other changes to their study plans. Interestingly, study abroad was found in some cases to actually facilitate an early graduation, especially for students going on a summer exchange.

Regarding the impact of academic advising on timely graduation (i.e., RQ2), quantitative analysis of the student survey revealed that advisors have a measurable impact on a student's ability to study abroad and graduate on time. Those students who reported a positive level of support from their campus in transferring classes were less likely to have an extended time-to-degree. Conversely, more students reported having a lengthened graduation timeline if they had encountered resistance from their campus during the course transfer process. Qualitative findings regarding advising and campus support brought to light just how important a clear and easy preapproval process was to student success.

A qualitative analysis of academic advisor interviews revealed several key practices used by advisors to ensure students graduate in a timely manner. It was discovered that academic

advisors actually play several roles and take on multiple responsibilities when working with this population of students. The common obstacles advisors and their students face are mostly academic or curricular in nature (i.e., stemming from a student's major), but these obstacles to timely graduation can also come from logistical factors outside the student's (or advisor's) control. Finally, all the advisors participating in this study were in agreement that an intrusive (i.e., proactive) and developmental approach to academic advising was important when working with study abroad students, especially those who are at greater risk of time-to-degree delays or who have other extenuating circumstances.

Descriptive Statistics

This section lays out an analysis of the different variables gathered in the student survey. The 16-item online survey was sent to students from four CSU campuses who had studied abroad in 2016-2017 or 2017-2018 academic years. The total sample population was 4,291. After removing duplicates, there were 357 responses. The relatively low response rate (8%), likely due to the time of year the survey was deployed, may indicate a non-response bias and is discussed further in Chapter Five.

Demographic Variables

The demographic variables captured in the survey included the respondent's race/ethnicity, Pell Grant eligibility (i.e., socioeconomic status), class standing, study abroad program type (e.g., exchange, independent, CSU IP), program length, and academic major. For comparison academic major is classified here as either STEM or non-STEM (e.g., business, social sciences, and the arts). Following the national trend (IIE, 2017) the majority of respondents were white non-STEM juniors who were not eligible for Pell Grants and who went

on semester or quarter direct exchange programs. A complete breakdown of participant demographics is presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4. 1

Survey Demographics (n=357)

<i>Demographic</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n% (n= 357)</i>
Race/Ethnicity		
White	183	51%
Hispanic	73	20%
Asian	67	19%
Biracial	25	7%
African-American	4	1%
Other	5	1%
Pell Grant Eligible		
No	175	49%
Yes	112	31%
Not Sure	70	20%
Class Standing		
Freshman	1	0%
Sophomore	36	10%
Junior	213	60%
Senior	103	29%
Not Sure	4	1%
Program Type		
Sem/Qtr Exchange	177	50%
Sem/Qtr Independent	59	17%
Summer Exchange	33	9%
Summer Independent	19	5%
One Year IP	67	19%
One Year Exchange	2	1%
Major Type		
STEM	62	17%
Non-STEM	295	83%

Student participants were also asked to provide their GPA at the time of going abroad.

The sample ($n = 357$) as a whole was a high performing group of students. The average self-report GPA before going abroad was 3.40 ($SD = .35$).

Advising Experience

In a four point Likert prompt, the survey asked participants to what extent they agreed with the statement, *Before I left on my study abroad program, my academic advisor helped me to understand how this study abroad program would satisfy my graduation requirements*. 4 meant *I strongly agree*. Overall students agreed their advisors were helpful ($M = 3.17$; $SD = .99$).

However, as shown in Table 4.2, SFSU students received less help from academic advisors before going abroad.

Table 4. 2

Advising Experience by Campus

<i>Campus</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
CALPOLY	113	3.03	.98
CSULB	93	3.38	.90
SDSU	89	3.40	.96
SFSU	62	2.75	1.03

Course Transferability

Five variables measured students' experience with the course transferability process at their respective campuses. First students were asked in an open response prompt to share the level of support or resistance they encountered at their home campus while transferring courses back from their study abroad host institution. The researcher coded the responses for this item as Positive, Negative, or Mixed. An example of a mixed result is one student's response: *"There was some contradictory information, but overall pretty helpful"*. Those who reported a negative experience in the process frequently cited problems with the registrar's office and being unable to get definitive information on which courses would transfer or had successfully transferred for other students in the past (i.e., course articulation). The majority of students, however, reported a positive experience during the transferability process and shared that they felt supported by staff and faculty.

Table 4. 3

Responses to Transfer Support (n=357)

	<i>n</i>	<i>n%</i>
	357	100
Positive	247	69
Negative	45	13
Mixed	65	18

Students also generally felt that they understood how many units taken abroad would ultimately transfer back. The survey included a four-point Likert-scale item which stated *Before I left on my study abroad program, I understood how many credits would be accepted upon returning to my university.* The average score was 3.35 ($SD=.89$).

The final three variables related to students' experience with the course transferability process measured the percent of coursework that was successfully transferred back as satisfying either GE or Major related requirements, including electives. Courses which did not meet either of these could have still been transferred back and added simply as total units towards graduation. Satisfying no requirements, however, these courses would not be as helpful in graduating a student on time. To measure this occurrence, students were asked to report how many courses taken abroad did not meet GE or major requirements.

Overall students in the study reported coursework being transferred back mostly to meet major requirements ($M=.44$, $SD=.34$). However, as the high standard deviations in Tables 4.4 reveal, responses varied widely. Factors influencing the number of units that transferred back to meet requirements are explored further under the discussion of RQ1 findings.

Table 4. 4

Overall Percent of Study Abroad Courses Transferred to Meet Requirements (n=357)

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
GE	.35	.34
Major	.44	.35
Neither	.18	.26

Impact on Graduation

Three survey items were designed to measure the student's belief about study abroad and his or her own graduation. Students were asked in two four-point Likert prompts to agree or disagree with the following statements. The first was, *I have (or will have) more units than I need to graduate because of studying abroad* and was included in order to measure if the participants may have accumulated an overload of units. As previously described, earlier research on study abroad in the CSU has revealed that One Year IP students from 2000-2011 had more semester units than they needed to graduate because they had gone abroad ($M=147.17$; Baldwin, Case, & Woo, 2015). Fortunately, this does not seem to be the case with this population, who mostly did not agree with the statement ($M=2.58$, $SD=1.20$).

The second Likert-scale statement used to measure this area was stated plainly as, *Participating in this program has lengthened my time to degree*. Students largely disagreed with this statement ($M=2.04$, $SD=1.28$). This is an important finding and will be discussed further in later sections.

In order to learn more about how students saw study abroad impacting their graduation progress, students were asked to respond openly to the question, *How did your study abroad experience affect your plans for and progress toward graduation?* Responses to this question varied in length from a few words to over 250 words. For analysis, the researcher coded these as \leq Semester Delay, Year Delay, Sped Up Graduation, Had to Compensate, No Change, and Other Effects. A brief definition of these codes with example responses are presented in the following table.

Table 4. 5

Codes for Reported Effects on Graduation Progress

<i>Code</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Sample Response</i>
≤ Semester Delay	Student's graduation has been (or will be) delayed by up to a full term	<i>It put me behind by a semester, since I didn't take any major classes when I went abroad</i>
Year Delay	Student's graduation has been (or will be) delayed by an academic year	<i>It completed most of my remaining major requirements, but put me behind by one year because I did not take any GE classes.</i>
Sped Up Graduation	Student's graduation will be/was earlier because of study abroad	<i>It allowed me to be on track. I actually graduated early a whole year.</i>
Had to Compensate	Student is still on track but had to change plans	<i>I had to take 7 classes the following semester and two summer courses to be able to graduate on time in four years</i>
No Change	Study abroad had did not delay or hasten their graduation	<i>It fit perfectly towards my plans to graduate within 4 years</i>
Other Effects	Student did not directly answer the question	<i>It made me want to pursue a more international career.</i>

Two-thirds of students surveyed responded that study abroad either sped up their time-to-degree progress or had no effect on their progress toward graduation. Those who felt study abroad facilitated a quicker graduation timeline described taking classes over the summer when they otherwise would not have. A few attending CALPOLY, a quarter system institution, shared that going abroad in the Fall allowed them to take more credits (i.e., semester credits) than they would have been able to at CALPOLY during the Fall quarter.

Table 4. 6

Reported Effects on Graduation Progress (n=357)

<i>Code</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n%</i>
	357	100
≤ Semester Delay	56	16
Year Delay	14	4
Sped Up Graduation	34	10
Had to Compensate	25	7
No Change	199	56
Other Effects	29	8

The reasons for study abroad extending graduation mostly stemmed from delays with transcripts being received and the lack of transferable courses. These issues aligned closely with the themes discovered in the academic advisor interviews and will be discussed further below.

Research Question 1

The following section addresses how inferential analysis and qualitative findings answered the study's first research question: *To what extent do courses taken while studying abroad impact graduation requirements of undergraduate students?* This section is subdivided into the two data sources utilized in the study.

Findings from Student Survey

In order to measure the extent to which study abroad programs affected students' ability to graduate on time, the treatment of several independent variables were tested on whether study abroad had lengthened students' time-to-degree and how participants described study abroad's effect on their graduation plans. In addition, the researcher also examined whether any factors influenced how much of the coursework completed abroad was transferable for GE or major requirements.

Lengthening of Time-to-Degree

To compare the effect of major type (i.e., STEM or non-STEM) on lengthened time-to-degree, a one-way ANOVA test between groups was conducted. STEM was investigated because

previous research has identified STEM majors as being underrepresented in study abroad (IIE, 2017; Seccia, 2018). This test found there was no difference in lengthening of graduation between STEM and non-STEM majors, $F(1, 355) = .17, p=.68$. The finding was surprising since, as will be explored later, academic advisors clearly identified STEM majors as those who risked timely graduation when going abroad.

Next, a one-way ANOVA group test was run to measure if there was a significant difference in reported lengthened time-to-degree between the means of student groups by program type. This was found to be the case, $F(5, 351)=9.04, p<.05$. A Scheffé post hoc comparison revealed the difference was between the One Year IP ($M=2.67, SD=1.31$) and Semester/Quarter Independent ($M=1.79, SD=1.22$) groups. However, a Fisher LSD post hoc comparison, which requires less of a difference between the means (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008), found that the One Year IP group was more likely to have a lengthened time-to-degree when compared to all other program types except One Year Exchange.

This more liberal post hoc test also found that those students going on summer exchange ($M=1.06, SD=.24$) were less likely to experience a lengthened graduation than those that went on semester/quarter length programs. These results are summarized in Table 4.7.

Table 4. 7

Means of Lengthened Time-to-Degree by Program type (n=357)

<i>Group</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Fisher LSD Comparisons				
				1	2	3	4	5
1Y IP (1)	67	2.67	1.31			<.001	<.001	<.001
1Y Exchange (2)	2	2.50	2.12					
Sem/Qtr	177	2.11	1.28		<.001			<.001
Exchange (3)								
Sem/Qtr	59	1.79	1.22		<.001			.005
Independent (4)								
Summer	33	1.06	.24		<.001	<.001	.005	
Exchange (5)								
Summer	19	1.57	1.12		<.001			
Independent (6)								

Note. The numbers in parentheses in group names refer to the numbers used in illustrating statistically significant differences.

When using a one-way ANOVA test to examine lengthened time-to-degree and a student's home campus, a significant difference was found between the groups, $F(3, 353) = 13.36, p < .05$. The Scheffé post hoc comparison revealed that CALPOLY ($M=1.49, SD=.98$) had a significantly lower mean average. No other campus was found to be significantly different than the others. Since CALPOLY is the only academic quarter campus in the CSU system, it is unclear looking at the present quantitative data what might explain this difference.

The final one-way ANOVA conducted to address RQ1 examined whether a student's class standing at the time of going abroad had any effect on lengthening of time-to-degree. Interestingly, when students went abroad (e.g., junior or senior years) did not significantly affect the lengthening of their time-to-degree, $F(4, 352) = 1.07, p = .36$.

A multiple linear regression analysis was calculated to predict time-to-degree delay based on all previously described variables. Categorical variables were coded in order to be included in the linear regression (e.g., by being coded as 1 or 0). For these variables, treatment values were coded as 1. For example, Pell Grant eligibility was coded as "0" for No and "1" for Yes to represent socioeconomic status. The only exception was the transfer experience variable, which

was coded as 1 for Positive Support, 2 for Mixed Experience, and 3 for Negative experience. The nontransferable coursework variable was measured as a percent of total coursework completed abroad. Student and advisor written feedback seemed to suggest that coming from a quarter campus might influence the amount of transferable coursework one could complete abroad. Consequently, the researcher also coded responses as either “0” for coming from a semester-based campus or “1” as quarter-based campus in order to use this variable in the multiple linear regression calculation.

A significant regression was found, $F(17,269) = 6.128, p < .001$, with an R^2 of .279. The significant predictors ($p < .05$) for graduation delay were whether or not the home campus was quarter-based, whether the study abroad occurred in the summer, whether the student’s major was STEM designated, whether the student had an overload of units, and the amount of nontransferable coursework taken abroad. The results of the multiple linear regression calculation are presented in Figure 4.1.

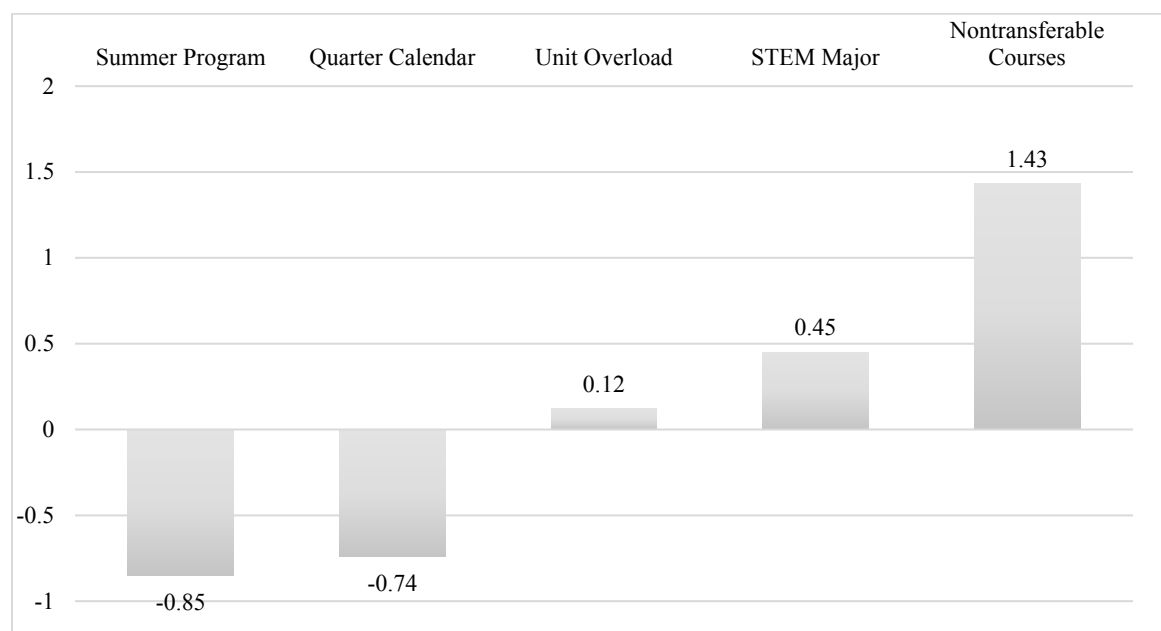


Figure 4. 1. Coefficient Summary of Significant Predictors of Time-to-Degree Delay for Study Abroad Students ($p < .05$)

As illustrated above, having nontransferable coursework greatly increased the chances students reported a delay in their graduation ($\beta = 1.43$). Students who went on a summer program, either independently organized or through direct exchange, were less likely to suffer a graduation delay ($\beta = -.85$). Coming from a quarter calendar campus, like CALPOLY, may also improve one's chances at timely graduation after studying abroad ($\beta = -.74$), but only one test site in the present study (and the CSU system overall) is quarter-based, so more data are needed to definitely state this. Being enrolled in a STEM major like engineering or the natural sciences also increased the chances that delays would occur ($\beta = .45$) and, to a lesser extent, having more units from study abroad than needed to graduate ($\beta = .12$).

Impact on Graduation Plans

Survey participants were invited to share how study abroad specifically affected their plans for and progress towards graduation. These were coded for statistical analysis. A series of Chi-Square tests were conducted to determine if there was any unequal distribution between variables and the type of effect study abroad had on participants' graduation plans. No disproportionate distribution was found when comparing STEM and non-STEM majors, $\chi^2(5, N=357) = 9.42, p=.09$. Likewise the student's class standing was not significant, $\chi^2(20, N=357) = 21.41, p=.37$.

Program type and home campus did affect how students reported study abroad affecting their graduation plans and progress. A Chi-Square test found a difference when comparing program type groups, $\chi^2(25, N=357) = 110.33, p<.05$. A significant difference was also discovered between the four campuses, $\chi^2(15, N=357) = 50.68, p<.05$. These findings were expected since it was already determined that participating in a summer program and not

attending quarter-based campus were significant predictors that a student would more likely suffer a graduation delay.

A one-way group ANOVA test was conducted to determine if having an overload of units changed how study abroad impacted graduation plans. A difference was found between the groups, $F(5, 351)=4.34, p<.05$. A Scheffé post hoc test revealed the difference was between those who reported having to compensate in some way upon return in order to graduate on time ($M=1.84, SD=1.14$) and those who felt study abroad sped up their graduation ($M=3.17, SD=1.05$). In other words, students who felt their graduation was sped up were more likely to have extra units than those who had to compensate by taking extra coursework later. This unexpected finding suggests that extra units may not be seen by students as a risk to timely graduation.

Nontransferable Coursework

Since the amount of nontransferable coursework was found to correlate with a lengthening of time-to-degree, the researcher conducted one-way ANOVA group tests in order to determine if any specific student group was more likely have this type of coursework. There was no difference between the means of groups by class standing, $F(4, 352)=1.63, p=.16$. The participant's type of major was important, however, with STEM majors having significantly more nontransferable coursework ($M=.25, SD=.30$) than non-STEM majors ($M=.16, SD=.25$), $F(1, 355)=6.23, p<.05$. This finding aligned with what advisors shared about the relatively low number of major electives available for STEM students to take overseas as well as the highly sequenced study plans for many STEM disciplines. Both of these factors were seen by academic advisors as the biggest challenges for STEM students who want to graduate in four years but also study abroad.

The percentage of nontransferable coursework taken abroad also differed for students based on their program type, $F(5, 351)=8.78, p<.001$. However, a Fisher LSD post hoc comparison only showed a significant difference between those who went on One Year IP ($M=.24, SD=.28$) and those going on a traditional Semester/Quarter Exchange ($M=.16, SD=.25$). One Year IP is at least twice as long as semester-long programs, so this finding may not at first seem to be important. However, earlier research using a much larger dataset found that One Year IP students were more likely to graduate with more units than necessary (Baldwin, Case, & Woo, 2015).

Table 4. 8

Percent Means of Courses Not Transferred for GE or Major by Program Type ($n=357$)

<i>Program Type</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
One Year Exchange	2	.05	.07
One Year IP	67	.24	.28
Semester/Quarter Exchange	177	.16	.25
Semester/Quarter Independent	59	.19	.21
Summer Exchange	33	.16	.34
Summer Independent	19	.14	.23

Other Findings

Survey participants had the opportunity to share comments about how study abroad affected their graduation plans. These were coded and analyzed quantitatively above. However there is much to be learned from qualitatively reviewing the specific situations study abroad students face. Here are just some of themes that can be drawn from the survey as it relates to RQ1.

Graduation Delays Occur for Various Reasons. As described earlier, 20% of the participants reported a delay in their graduation because of study abroad. By analyzing the survey responses a wide variety of reasons are apparent. Most frequently students described not being able to take coursework abroad that satisfied their major's requirements. "It put me behind

by a semester,” one student wrote, “since I didn’t get to take any major classes”. Another student shared, “While it helped me essentially to finish my minor, I still have to complete two major classes and one GE, so I have had to push out graduation by a semester.”

Some students expressed disappointment when courses they were planning to take abroad were not available. Academic advisors confirmed that often students knew which classes were typically offered at their host institution but not when in the year or at which time slots during the week. Consequently, class time conflicts could occur and desirable classes might not be available. When this happened, the affected participants ended up missing out on valuable units. The other consequence was a few students had to take classes they were not prepared for. Such a student wrote, “I also failed a class because I was limited to what classes were available there. I had to take a 4th year political science class...in Spanish.” This was a common challenge that academic advisors spoke about during the interviews and which will be explored further below.

One frustrating cause of graduation delay came when some students received fewer credits than expected for the classes they took. One specific example came from a student who went to Europe: “I did not know until I came back that when the units are transferred back, they are cut in half here. So, I was supposed to take three courses for a total of nine units...but the units available were either four or six units. I could not meet the unit requirements for two categories in my major.”

A final reason given for the delay in graduation had to do with transcripts. This was also an area of frequent discussion with academic advisors during the interview phase of the study. There can be lengthy delays in transcripts being received from abroad and updating a student’s record at their home campus can also take time. One frustrated student wrote, “I’m still waiting

for a class I took abroad to show up on my transcript as a transferable course and this has set my graduate date back at least one semester.”

Despite these challenges, many students in this group stated that they were fully aware that study abroad was going to delay their graduation before they left and were not concerned. “It delayed graduation by one semester. Worth it!” one student shared. “My study abroad experience extended my graduation date,” another participant wrote, “although I thought the experience was worth it.” “Worth it” was actually a common phrase used by students when describing their graduation delays. These comments and others like them echo what academic advisors shared about study abroad being a worthwhile experience for students’ personal and professional development and not just a means to meeting their graduation requirements.

Study Abroad Can Actually Facilitate an Early Graduation. 10% of the survey population ($n = 357$) responded explicitly that study abroad helped them to graduate early. Most mentioned graduating a quarter or semester early. “I actually graduated early a whole year,” wrote one student. The most commonly cited reason for study abroad hastening their graduation was that it reduced the number of courses students had to take in subsequent terms. One student wrote, “I was able to get five classes out of the way.” Another shared that study abroad “helped me graduate on time and lessened my course loads during upcoming semesters.”

The advantage of studying abroad in the summer was clear from this subgroup of students and aligns closely with the quantitative findings already discussed in this chapter. A summer exchange student shared, “I completed two semesters of Spanish in a month so yeah, it helped me out a lot.” Another summer abroad student wrote, “It put me at an advantage because I wouldn’t have otherwise taken summer classes.”

Of particular interest was how studying abroad during the Fall term proved very beneficial for CALPOLY students. As already mentioned, CALPOLY is the only quarter-based campus in the CSU system. Semester units are weighed more heavily than quarter units because of total classroom hours. Therefore being able to take a full semester worth of classes abroad instead of only three or four quarter courses at CALPOLY meant students came out ahead. For example, one CALPOLY student responded, “The Fall semester abroad allowed me to take more units than I would have been able to at Cal Poly for the fall quarter. I took 18 semester units that all count towards my degree”. Another participant from CALPOLY wrote, “[Study abroad] accelerated my progress towards graduation. I received 24 [quarter] credits while abroad. More than I would have here at Cal Poly that quarter.”

Students May Need to Compensate To Stay on Track. A small number of students (7%) described having to change their plans in order to stay on track. Several students described having to take more units than they had planned to upon return. For example, one participant wrote, “I had to take seven classes the following semester...and two summer courses to be able to graduate on time in four years”. Another student responded, “I did take heavier course loads (22 [quarter] units) upon my return to graduate on time, but it was manageable.”

Another example of how students had to compensate to stay on track is concurrent enrollment wherein a student takes a course and its prerequisite at the same time. This was a theme that came up in the advisor interviews and was also mentioned by the student survey participants. For instance, one STEM major shared, “I had to cram in the rest of my classes and take a class at the same time as the prerequisite”. As will be explored below, STEM majors often have highly sequential courses so prerequisites are frequent.

Finally, participants in this group discussed how the lack of transferability of some courses meant having to take the course again. One such student in this scenario wrote, “The course I took didn’t fulfill the requirement general advising told me it would and I had to retake a course for that gen ed [requirement]”.

Findings from Advisor Interviews

In order to gain more in-depth understanding about how coursework completed abroad might or might not help students meet their graduation requirements and graduate on time, nine academic advisors comprised of both staff and faculty were interviewed from three CSU campuses. Each of these advisors have been at their respective campuses for a minimum of five years, though most worked at the same campus for far longer than that. Table 4.10 presents a summary description of the participating advisors. Of the nine total participants, three held the position of director or assistant director, overseeing any number of advisors in their respective college or advising center.

Table 4. 9

Interview Participants by Contract Type, Campus, and College Type (N=9)

<i>Demographic</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>n% (n= 9)</i>
Contract Type		
Staff Contract	6	66%
Faculty Contract	2	22%
Both Contracts	1	11%
Campus		
CALPOLY	3	33%
CSULB	3	33%
SDSU	3	33%
College Type		
Business College	3	33%
Science College	2	22%
Human Services College	1	11%
Liberal Arts College	1	11%
Engineering College	1	11%
Undergraduate Advising	1	11%

Students Often Believe Studying Abroad Will Delay Graduation

Each advisor was able to easily identify based on his or her responsibilities what obstacles to studying abroad stand in the way of better participation at their campus. As already established in the review of literature, concern exists among students that study abroad will not meet their requirements and will set them back. An advisor who both advises and teaches freshmen students stated that, “A lot of them [freshmen students] think they can’t graduate in four years if they go abroad. That is definitely something you hear.” An advisor in a large college of business agreed but said not being able to graduate in four years was a myth. “I tell them, if you plan this well, you know, everything that you take abroad will count towards your major. So that's another part of my advising since day one...I talk about those myths.”

Study Abroad Students Have Very Different Circumstances Threatening Timely Graduation

Students choose to study abroad for different reasons, and study abroad has different effects on their graduation progress depending on a variety of circumstances. The factors which seemed most relevant to academic advisors were the student’s major, class standing, and long-term career goals.

Sequenced majors. The topic that was most often discussed in the nine interviews was how timely graduation was more difficult for study abroad students from specific majors. Broadly speaking, advisors felt highly sequenced majors or those which are not commonly found abroad meant students would have a harder time finding classes that fit into their study plan. One general academic advisor stated, “Definitely I would say for example, nursing, because of the sequential courses, so they typically have to do their international experience during the summer.” The natural sciences are another example of highly sequenced curricula. A staff advisor working with science majors explained, “You start with your year of general chemistry,

then you go into your year of organic chemistry. That's four semesters. And some still have to start with a pre-college chemistry course. So that could be five semesters right there... Keeping a student going down that pathway is important and students going abroad is when you have gaps in those sequences; you're losing some of the information that you've learned. And it makes it more challenging then to come back to it and pick it up."

Less common majors. Depending on the popularity of a major in the US or abroad, some required classes might infrequently be offered. A staff advisor working in a popular engineering department described what happens at her campus: "I mentioned aerospace [engineering] and Materials [engineering] because these are smaller departments that only offer classes once a year normally. So, it's a huge challenge. I'm actually dealing with one student who is aerospace and he wants to study abroad in the fall in Spain. We're having a really hard time finding classes, but he still wants to go abroad. And I told him, you're aware that you are going to be here for another year? You're going to be a fifth year graduate, right? And he said, yes, I'm totally aware of that." When asked why this was, the advisor stated, "It's aerospace engineering and the courses are very specialized, and it's really hard to match."

Majors with regional accreditation. Some majors were identified as being difficult for study abroad because of the nature of their accreditation. Academic advisors in two different colleges of business mentioned accounting. "They [accounting majors] can take our basic business courses abroad, but not accounting courses. Because, you know, with CPA and licensing and stuff, but they're different abroad." A colleague agreed, "But for my majors, I know for accountancy students it is very challenging because they take a class very specific to tax laws for the US so those students have to plan even better than other majors it seems."

Another example of this is for nursing and for any student who is considering being a pre-health student. One faculty advisor in a department of food science shared, “For example, nutrition and dietetics, they have some classes that are accredited by a body here in the US, so medical nutrition therapy is accredited through this organization. And so that course has to be taken here in the US because the accreditation is specific to the US.”

Pre-health students, who could belong to different majors, are a special population that requires different advising. An advising director at a science college described the problem. “If they're pre-health, we don't want them taking their prerequisite courses abroad because it can be a bit of a nightmare to get the medical schools or other schools to accept the course. So that is another big one.”

Seniors. After students in the majors mentioned above, the next most frequently mentioned group of students was seniors. One academic advising director stated that senior students who have an uncompleted practicum, capstone class, or senior project are examples of students who might prolong their graduation if they decided to go abroad. Other advisors pointed out that seniors might risk a delay in graduation if they went abroad because of the delay in transcripts. The worst case mentioned came from an advising director in a large college of business. “We have to remind seniors that if that's what they would like to do, their graduation will be delayed because sometimes it takes a year to get the transcript. It depends on what kind of program that they go to.”

Transfer students. Those coming to the CSU from community colleges or other institutions face different challenges to timely graduation if they decide to study abroad. One advisor pointed out that typically transfer students will have most of their lower-division GEs finished, which means they would have to plan for major requirements or make sure any upper division GE

coursework taken abroad still meets the CSU residency requirement. Another adviser who worked closely with transfer students mentioned that she always asked right from the start at orientation if transfer students are interested in study abroad. “If they just transferred in, we need a plan now because the first semester is already done.”

Research Question 2

The following section will address how inferential analysis and qualitative findings have answered the study’s second research question: To what degree does the academic advising process impact graduation rates and time to graduation for study abroad students? This section is subdivided into the two data sources utilized in the study.

Findings from Student Survey

RQ2 is concerned with how the academic advising services offered to study abroad students help to ensure their timely graduation. The treatment was measured by two variables: the participant’s response to the four-point Likert statement on academic advisors help during pre-departure and the participant’s answer to an open response regarding the support or resistance they encountered at their campus when transferring classes. In order to measure how these institutional behaviors affected students’ ability to graduate on time, these two variables were tested against the dependent variable of time-to-degree lengthening and the categorical variable representing how study abroad changed their graduation plans. Additional findings drawn qualitatively from students’ written responses are also included below.

Academic Advising and Campus Support

A linear correlation test was run to measure the relationship between the help students felt they had received from academic advisors and the lengthening of their time-to-degree. A weak correlation was found, $r(355) = -0.10, p < .05$. Although the coefficient is only minor, the

finding suggests academic advisors can have a measurable impact on a student's ability to study abroad and graduate on time.

The advising variable was also tested in a one-way group ANOVA to determine if academic advisors had an effect on students' graduation plans. The ANOVA test revealed that academic advisors did not affect the way study abroad altered participants' graduation plans and progress, $F(5, 351) = 1.12, p=.34$.

In order to determine if the level of support a student received overall from their home institution (e.g., from faculty or registrar's office) during the transferability process had any impact on their time-to-degree, a one-way group ANOVA test was run between those who reported positive, negative, and mixed experiences. This "transfer support" variable included participants' comments about how different staff and offices on campus assisted them before, during, and after studying abroad in order to transfer courses back. The test found there was a difference between the groups, $F(2, 354) = 7.24, p<.05$. A Scheffé comparison showed a significant difference between the positive ($M=1.99, SD=1.24$) and negative ($M=2.57, SD=1.27$) experience groups. Students who felt supported during the transferability process were less likely to feel study abroad resulted in a lengthening of their graduation timeline. No significant difference was observed when comparing these groups to the mixed experience group ($M=2.29, SD=1.35$).

A Chi-Square test was performed to examine the relationship between support received during the transferability process and how study abroad ultimately affected participants' graduation plans. The responses were not equally distributed within the population, $\chi^2 (10, N=357) = 33.37, p<.05$, suggesting support during the transferability process influences how study abroad ultimately affects students' plans for graduation.

Other Findings

Participants wrote about how they experienced support or resistance regarding the transferability of courses taken abroad. These were coded and analyzed quantitatively as described above. Important findings can also be drawn qualitatively from the survey as it relates to RQ2.

Confusion from Having Multiple Advisors. Each campus included in this study had slightly different processes for how prospective study abroad students were advised. One finding shows that occasionally there was confusion about which type of advisor students had to see. As one advisor corroborated, students might have as many as three or four different advisors to meet with before going abroad. For some of the students included in the study this was confusing and frustrating. For example, one student wrote, “[There was] a high level of run around, aka ‘That’s not my department’”. Another participant shared that “I had a lot of complications because my study abroad advisor told me to go through professors when I needed approval through my major director. I was sent on a wild goose chase because nobody knew who had the authority to approve my courses.” These comments align with findings from advisor interviews where it was discovered that course preapprovals depend on whether the student is seeking to get credit for GE or their major.

Although some students saw department advisors as more helpful than study abroad office staff, others felt the study abroad office was more helpful overall. “The study abroad department provided little assistance. I figured everything out with my department advisor,” wrote one participant. During what can be a confusing process, students who felt supported often shared that the study abroad office was helpful in pointing them in the right direction. “I had lots

of support from the university,” shared one student. “The study abroad office helped me get in contact with my advisor who helped pick out classes.”

Importance of Preapproval. Overall students who reported a positive experience with the transferability process are those who stated all courses were preapproved. “I was able to receive support from major academic counselors about what courses were transferable and once I was back I was able to use the pre-departure form...this eased the process when I came back since they had confirmed the courses were transferable before I took them.”

Students who experienced a negative or mixed transferability process identified the problem as being the lack of preapproved coursework. “My major advisor couldn’t guarantee that courses would be transferable and to come back with all the coursework and talk to them. I’m still waiting for a class I took abroad to show up on my transcript...Going abroad has actually set me back at least one semester.”

One way in which the lack of pre-approval appears to happen is when advisors do not have course descriptions. As one student described it, “There was a lot of difficulty verifying what classes would be transferable or not...Since the study abroad office doesn’t have the syllabi of the foreign university, that made the process very vague and unclear...forcing my hand to take only general education courses abroad.”

Findings from Advisor Interviews

RQ2 is concerned with what advisors can do to ensure timely graduation of their study abroad students. From an analysis of interviews with the nine advisors, several findings clarified the best practices employed by academic advisors to that end. Before presenting these it is beneficial to discuss advisors’ perceptions of Graduation Initiative 2025 (GI2025), which set the context for the present study by laying out such ambitious graduation rate goals.

GI2025 Goals Are Important but Have Not Changed Advising

All the advisors were fully aware of GI2025 and its goals. They described it being discussed regularly in department meetings, and a few shared ideas that had been brainstormed to meet the goals within their own colleges. One advisor proudly shared that her college had the best graduation rate in the entire system even before GI2025 was introduced. Where advisors differed was in whether or not they believed their students were aware of CSU's ambitious graduation rate goals. Some had heard of campaigns deployed in other campuses to raise awareness of students on the issue, but none had participated in such activities at their own institution.

Advisors also seemed to agree that GI2025 has not really changed their day-to-day advising activities or responsibilities. An advisor in a science college who also oversaw other advisors mentioned that the new early alerts and other tools they had begun using would mostly have happened anyway since they are always trying to improve their services.

According to the assistant director of an undergraduate advising unit, what has affected advising is Executive Order 1100 (EO 1100). This EO revises GE breadth requirements in hopes of improving graduation rates through streamlined requirements (California State University, 2017). "Because of general education changes that were brought on by EO 1100 from the chancellor's office, things are kind of up in the air. So we for one could not update our degree planners because we are waiting on EO 1100 and the academic senate to approval all the different changes." This advisor's team is responsible for helping students understand how GE courses sequence, and this particular advisor is also responsible for pre-approving GE coursework taken abroad. Once the changes have been approved, this advisor might change how she will advise future study abroad students.

Although every advisor was aware of their own college's progress towards their graduation goals, there was a shared sense that a four-year graduation might not be right for every student, and therefore there was no conflict between GI2025 and study abroad. An advisor in a science and mathematics college stated clearly, "There's never an issue in my mind. A four year graduation rate should ever stand between them and going to study abroad."

Encouraging study abroad

Academic advisors play an important role in encouraging study abroad, addressing student concerns and describing how study abroad benefits students holistically as part of the developmental relationship between advisor and student (Crookston, 1975). This practice draws from an advisor's own attitude towards study abroad and knowledge of its benefits.

Study Abroad Myths. To encourage the practice of study abroad, advisors must be prepared to address commonly held misunderstandings that students have about it. One staff advisor frequently referenced the literature on study abroad participation. For her, there were three common "myths" believed by prospective study abroad participants. "One is it's going to be more expensive; I cannot afford it. Two: I don't speak another language; I cannot go abroad. Three: I want to graduate in four years, but the courses that I want to take are not going to be available." For each of these myths the advising director had very specific answers and examples to dispel these: some of the countries had a lower cost of living, some programs actually provided a stipend or scholarship to participants, business courses are regularly taught in English abroad and align well with student's major requirements, and with proper planning everything a student takes abroad can count towards their major.

Benefits of Study Abroad. All advisors interviewed believed study abroad was a beneficial experience for students. They described the self-efficacy their students developed and

the benefits of overcoming challenges. Their comments are similar to how Astin (1984) has been understood to explain study abroad as a high-impact practice resulting in student learning and development (Kuh, 2008). However, they came to this conclusion in the different ways. Three of the advisors had studied abroad during their college career for varying lengths of time. Three others had not studied abroad while in college but had traveled extensively or lived abroad. The remaining three advisors were born outside of the United States and came to the US for education. Those who had studied abroad gave specific examples of how study abroad impacted them. “To me [study abroad] is what defined my undergraduate experience,” one advisor shared. A science college advisor who had not studied abroad could still reflect on the difference he noticed in his students. “Most of the time I hear students talk about it when they come back, and you know it was one of the best experiences in their lives...And, you know, it looks great on a resume, too.”

Three advisors shared the benefits of study abroad with their students through instruction or research. An international studies professor shared, “Part of having the pre-departure course was to make very explicit to students what the benefits of studying abroad are, both academic but also personal skills and professional skills we expect them to get through these kinds of experiences.” A business adjunct lecturer described a similar strategy taken by her college. Students were told about several areas for personal and intellectual growth that the business college would like to see in their students. One of these was called cultural agility or intelligence and students were told study abroad could help them in this area.

A third and final example of providing explicit information about study abroad’s benefits outside of meeting graduation requirements comes from the advising director in a business college known for sending many students abroad. Like the previous example, this advisor’s

college also has clearly communicated learning outcomes that include becoming “globally competent”. “Global competencies are the main reason why students should be abroad,” the advisor stated. “I introduce the notion that the experts are saying that the longer they go abroad, the more culturally competent they become...And the longer they are abroad, you know, they will gain these competencies,” she explained.

In a two-hour workshop for business students as well as on an extensive website, this advisor presents the research on what cultural competencies are and how they are developed. She shares with students Bennett’s developmental model of intercultural sensitivity (Bennett & Salonen, 2007), the seven components of overseas programs (Engle & Engle, 2003) as well as research. According to the advisor, this information is well received and appreciated by the students.

Navigating Policies and Facilitating Processes

Larson’s (2018) research-based definition of academic advising included navigate as a keyword. It refers to all activities an advisor takes in “assisting, directing, or guiding students as they interact with the higher education setting” (p.88). The present study found that for study abroad students, advisors assist students in anticipating obstacles to their timely graduation and preparing them to make the best decisions in order to avoid these obstacles. Just as important is to help facilitate the processes otherwise outside the advisor or student’s control so that students can successfully accomplish what they need to. As a liberal arts advisor stated honestly, this can be a challenge: “That sort of guiding them at almost every step in the process, it’s very labor intensive for us as advisors.”

Creating Infrastructure and Resources. An advisor with a track record of high study abroad participation attributed her success to building “infrastructure” and developing resources

like easy-to-use webpages. In this more decentralized campus, this advisor was responsible for developing exchange partnerships for her college. “I think it’s basically up to us, the university,” she stated, “to provide the infrastructure to create a very clear path. I mean, if we want students to go abroad for a semester or year, you have to create that clear path and make it really easy for them to do it.” When asked to elaborate on what she meant by infrastructure, the advisor clarified: “I started with curriculum integration. I started getting programs in locations where the students wanted to go and look what happened!” The advisor’s college has seen a large increase in students going abroad over the last several years while the advisor was tasked with leading study abroad efforts.

Providing Early and Frequent Advising. Because of the complexities of their respective student populations, advisors seemed in complete agreement that the key to timely graduation after studying abroad was early and frequent pre-departure advising. When asked what advisors can do to make sure study abroad students graduate on time, the director of a student success center in a large college of business responded, “Talk about it [study abroad] early and plan ahead. It’s like with anything else; these are the two things.”

For a few advisors “early” meant as soon as the student arrived for orientation in their major’s college. An engineering advisor stated that as soon as a student expressed interest in possibly studying abroad, she would always recommended checking back in each semester to make sure the right courses were being taken at home so as to allow the most transferable units possible abroad. In order to handle the caseload that comes with a large academic college, one business advisor described the effectiveness of using peer advising where new business freshmen interested in study abroad would meet with other business students who had gone abroad and discuss their experiences and how it affected their study plans.

Saving Courses. Perhaps the greatest benefit from early advising is that students can be guided in how to best plan out their college career and save courses. Most advisors interviewed brought this practice up when asked to describe how they help students to graduate on time. In early sessions with future study abroad students, advisors recommend which classes the students should not take at their home campus, giving them more options when they go abroad and letting them focus on those classes that are less likely to be available overseas. A business college advisor stated, “We always tell them about the GE areas that they can save, but we also tell them about major courses that they can save...A lot of our [business] concentrations actually have electives that they can take overseas.” At another campus a science college advisor agreed: “My process is here are some courses that you might want to save because these ones could be...more readily able to be completed at a study abroad than others.” When asked for specific examples, the advisor responded, “So maybe like a physics class or maybe a lower division humanities course because you could do foreign language.”

The Preapproval Process. Each of the three campuses represented by the academic advisors had different processes for study abroad students to get courses preapproved so that they can transfer back and meet graduation requirements. At each campus, though, advisors played a facilitating role. Some advisors could actually approve the courses themselves. One such advisor working in an advising and evaluation unit explained, “We are the first office that they’re supposed to visit because we go over all of the information about what will be considered upper division...We maintain the website of GE course equivalencies and the process for that is for students to submit the course description or syllabi to us, and there is a committee in this office that reviews them.” Other advisors have to explain to students who approves each of the courses separately: faculty advisors, department chairs, or even the college dean. “We don’t approve

anything,” explained a business college advising director. “It has to be approved by the chair, and remember chair positions change.”

Although each of the three campuses examined had slightly different processes, most advisors explained that a lot of a paperwork was involved; none had a paperless or digital process. One campus until very recently required a different form for every course for which a student needed preapproval. Other campuses used a single form. When asked why this was the case, the advisor explained that the administrative mechanism for getting study abroad courses preapproved had not been separated from the regular process of course substitution. The difference, she explained, was that non-study abroad students asking for a course substitution rarely asked for more than a few whereas study abroad students needed several all at once.

The number of courses study abroad students sought preapproval for also was important. A handful of advisors mentioned that a best practice was to advise their students to get several more courses preapproved than was likely to be needed. This was due to the fact that students are not always able to get their first choices because of time conflicts or because some classes might not be offered the semester the student was attending. By getting a longer list of preapproved courses, the student could increase their chances of taking a full load of transferable units.

Advocating for study abroad students

All interviewed advisors showed a real concern for providing a type of advising experience commonly referred to as developmental advising (Crookston, 1975; Winston, 1994). This was demonstrated in how each of the advisors responded when asked about what their early goals were with prospective study abroad students. Each advisor was initially concerned with understanding what the student was looking for in their future study abroad experience. The advisor’s overarching aim was student development and reaching self-affirmed goals, not just

graduating them on time. An advisor with adjunct faculty status commented, “We’ve talked about whether we should let students do minors if it is slowing them down, and I think it’s the same with [study abroad students]. What we’re hoping to learn is, you know, what are they wanting to get out of their experience? How’s that going to shape them and help them with future goals? And I feel there’s support for study abroad from the president and provost on down.”

Academic advisors were found to be advocates for their students. This was demonstrated in a few different ways. For example, a couple advisors explained that sometimes they had to intervene on behalf of students to request concurrent enrollment in a course and its prerequisite or enroll in the first half of a year-long senior project class at home while actually studying abroad. Concurrent enrollment was described earlier as one way in which students might have to compensate in order to graduate on time after studying abroad.

Advisors also commonly described advocating for a student by acquiring course approvals for them when students arrive at their host institution and find that some of their preapproved courses are unavailable. One advising director explained, “I communicate with them while they are trying to enroll in classes and they cannot get in, or the classes are full, or sometimes the courses have changed with a different code or class name.”

Collaborating with Campus Stakeholders

The final finding was that in order to be a facilitator and an advocate, academic advisors had to collaborate with several different campus stakeholders. In responding to the interview questions advisors drew on regular contact and collaboration they had with the study abroad office on their campus, the financial aid office, registrar, departments chairs within their college, as well as faculty advisors. For example, a faculty advisor who lives with students in the

residence hall as a residence advisor stated that she regularly invites study abroad office staff to meet with all freshmen during the first weeks of the semester to discuss study abroad and answer questions.

Summary

This chapter presented the results from a mixed methods research on how study abroad impacts graduation rates. The sample population included students from four campuses in the California State University system who had studied abroad during the 2016-2018 academic years. Nine academic advisors from three CSU campuses were interviewed in order to shed light on how advisors play a role in the timely graduation of study abroad students. Using a mixed methods approach, the researcher applied both quantitative and qualitative techniques to analyze the data and determine findings.

One-way ANOVA group tests with Fisher LSD post hoc comparisons found One Year IP students reported more of a delay in graduation than other students, and those going on summer exchange programs had less of a delay versus those going on full semester and quarter programs. A multiple linear regression analysis revealed that a few certain factors related to students, their study abroad programs, and the coursework they completed abroad affected the likelihood they encountered a delay in their time-to-degree. The variable that correlated strongest to a delay in graduation was having a high percentage of coursework that could not meet GE or major related requirements. CALPOLY students were less likely to feel study abroad lengthened their time to degree. This is possibly because it is uniquely a quarter-based campus, but the reasons for this remain unclear.

Since the amount of nontransferable coursework correlated so strongly with a lengthening of time-to-degree, additional analysis was conducted to discover if any group was

more likely to have a higher percentage. One-way ANOVA group tests found that STEM majors did have a significantly higher amount of nontransferable coursework. When comparing students by program type, ANOVA tests revealed that those going on One Year IP had more nontransferable coursework than those going on traditional exchange programs.

Academic advisors did have a quantitatively measurable impact on study abroad students graduating on time. Pearson tests found a correlation between students receiving help from academic advisors and not experiencing delays in graduation. An ANOVA group test discovered students who felt supported during the course transferability process experienced significantly less delay.

This chapter also presented the findings of a qualitative analysis of student and advisor perceptions of how study abroad affected graduation plans as well as what advisors and other campus stakeholders can do to help study abroad students graduate on time. Findings showed that delays in graduation occur for many reasons, not just the lack of transferable coursework so strongly suggested by the quantitative results described above. Students who went abroad in the summer or who received more semester units during the fall than were possible at their quarter-based home campus reported that study abroad could in fact hasten their graduation progress because of the extra transferable units accrued. Students shared that even when delays might occur there were ways they could compensate and still graduate on time by taking extra courses upon returning or changing their study plans.

Findings from academic advisor interviews on this topic were also presented in this chapter. It is clear that academic advisors play a key role in study abroad through encouraging students to go abroad, assisting them in navigating the sundry policies involved, facilitating the preapproval and course transfer processes, and advocating for the student when problems arise.

This chapter briefly discussed some of the best practices these advisors have found helpful in ensuring study abroad students stay on track to graduate. Finally, advisors identified specific student groups they felt were more at-risk of graduation delay if going abroad and what could be done to mitigate those risks.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Summary of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to provide a broader view on study abroad's impact on graduation rates by examining how an institution's practices affect participants' time-to-degree. The institutional practices specifically investigated were academic advising and course transferability, the process whereby a student receives credit for coursework taken abroad in order to meet graduation requirements. A review of relevant literature revealed that improving study abroad participation is a worthwhile goal for institutions, but the concern of timely graduation may be an obstacle for some. Recent quantitative research has made a strong argument that study abroad does not in fact delay graduation, however concern exists in the field that this may be the result of confounding variables, namely that study abroad students are self-selected for success and completion when compared to those who do not qualify for study abroad or have ever expressed interest in such an endeavor.

To address an apparent gap in the literature on how institutions can ensure timely graduation for any study abroad participant, four campuses in the California State University system served as the test sites for mixed methods research. Students who went abroad during the 2016-2018 academic years were surveyed in order to determine how certain factors influenced the likelihood of time-to-degree lengthening or changes to graduation plans. These variables were related to student demographics, program type and length, and the amount of support received from the campus. Nine academic advisors, both faculty and staff, from nine different colleges or advising units within in the CSU were invited to participate in interviews in order to shed light on the role they play in ensuring the timely graduation of study abroad students and what best practices they employed.

Discussion of the Findings

The first research question was *to what extent do courses taken while studying abroad impact graduation requirements of undergraduate students?* To date the literature is relatively silent, although Seccia (2018) found that meeting graduation requirements may be a secondary motivation even for STEM students who are underrepresented in study abroad. Baldwin, Case, and Woo (2015) already identified that students going abroad for a year, when matched with peers, can in fact delay their graduation.

The present study found that in the four CSU campuses studied, study abroad overall helped undergraduate students graduate on time by satisfying both GE and major-related requirements. High standard deviations, however, suggested that this could vary greatly between students. For some students having the option to study abroad sped up their time-to-degree, largely because of being able to take major and GE courses over the summer or because they were able to transfer back semester weighted units to a quarter-based campus for the Fall term.

Problems arose when for various reasons students took classes abroad that could meet their graduation requirements. Findings suggest that it is not as much a concern that a study abroad student ultimately has more units than needed to graduate, but that by studying abroad they are not able to fully utilize the opportunity to take courses that satisfy major or GE requirements. This seemed more likely to happen for students who attended the One Year International Programs (IP) organized through the chancellor's office or who were STEM majors.

Student and advisor participants identified other groups as those facing challenges in meeting graduation requirements. Seniors had fewer classes left that they could take abroad and delays in transcripts being received and processed could delay their graduation. Pre-health

majors had to be more careful about what courses they could take abroad, GE or major related, because of how those courses may not be accepted by their future medical school. Students in less common disciplines could find it difficult to take major-related courses abroad or even miss the opportunity to take at their home campus infrequently offered core classes they needed.

The second research question built on the first: *to what degree does the academic advising process impact graduation rates and time to graduation for study abroad students?* A number of important factors and best practices were found to be used by academic advisors in the CSU to help their study abroad students graduate on time. Much of the advising offered was the same as for the general population. Advisors were primarily considered with the holistic development of their students (i.e., developmental advising; Crookston, 1975) and utilizing intrusive practices (Cuseo, 2003; Earl, 1998) to ensure students were taking advantage of available resources.

The present study found that students who felt they had received help from their advisors before departure or felt supported by the campus during the course transferability process experienced less delays in time-to-degree. Whether students felt support (as opposed to resistance) from campus staff during the transferability process also had an impact on the way in which study abroad ultimately affected their graduation plans. The most common ways in which students felt unsupported was when there was confusion or unmet expectations during the preapproval and course transfer process.

Through interviews with academic advisors, the present study revealed that advisors play various roles to ensure study abroad students graduate in a timely manner. Faculty advisors have the unique role of being subject matter experts and in some campuses can approve courses for substitution. All advisors, whether staff or faculty, though, can encourage study abroad,

collaborate with campus stakeholders, and help students navigate the policies and processes that are unique to their campus and degree program. When problems inevitably arose, advisors could advocate for the student. Although advisors were found to have several best practices to make sure students had an effective plan, every participant expressed a greater concern than meeting a four-year graduation quota.

Implications for Practice

The California State University rightly prides itself on providing access to quality higher education for California's students. In fact at one of the test sites, the campaign for 2019 is “#NoBarriers”, which represents the culture of inclusion and access the campus is striving to create. It follows then that CSU leaders will be motivated to provide greater access to this high-impact practice. For a multitude of reasons, delaying graduation is not acceptable to many students and would be a barrier to participation if it came with studying abroad.

The present study discovered that study abroad does not have to be an out-of-the-ordinary course option that some students choose. Instead, if study abroad is a priority, it should be a part of the complete inventory of programmatic experiences an institution offers its students. As with any other institutionally developed program for student learning, Astin's (1984) theoretical framework of student engagement has something to say about how institutional practice related to study abroad is to be assessed: “The effectiveness of any educational policy or practice is directly related to the capacity of that policy or practice to increase student involvement” (1984, p. 519). By applying this principal to study abroad, the processes and policies related to course transferability and academic advising can be assessed by considering to what degree they help to increase involvement, that is, greater numbers of students who have benefited from studying abroad. Interestingly, although some students were delayed or had to compensate to avoid delays

because of study abroad, there is a sense that students believed this was worth the life-changing experience of studying in another country. The notion that students might feel studying in another country is “worth it” even if not meeting requirements aligns with the maturation effect described by Hadis (2005).

Assuming an institution would like to increase its study abroad participation as well as its graduation rates, the findings discussed above have implications for practice. These implications for institutional practice can be summarized into three broad areas: understanding the unique needs of study abroad students, ensuring these students have access to the right programs, and offering effective academic advising for study abroad students. When these three areas of institutional practice align, findings from the present study point to timely graduation as the expected outcome. Figure 5.1 presents these factors with r values for those drawn from quantitative findings. A discussion of each implication follows.

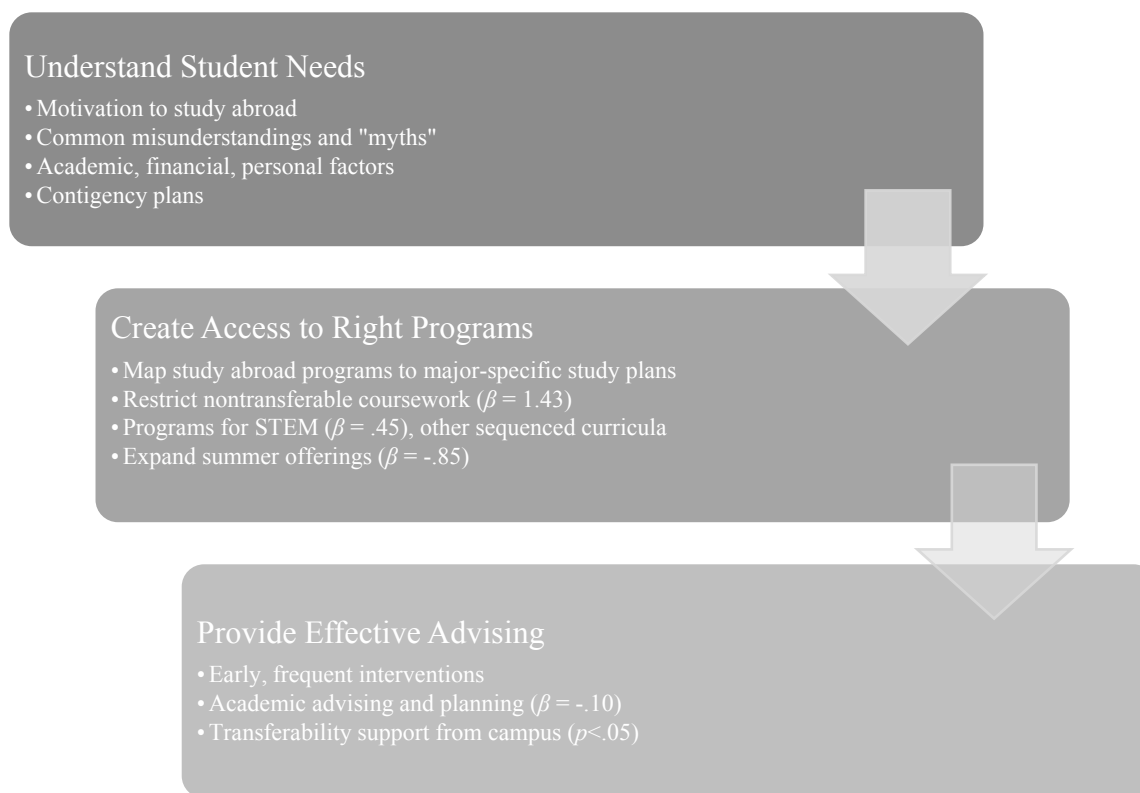


Figure 5. 1. Institutional practices to ensure the timely graduation of study abroad students

Needs of study abroad students

Why do students go abroad? Although not surveyed directly about their motivations for study abroad, it seems from comments they submitted and from discussions with advisors that meeting graduation requirements was not a primary motivation for studying abroad. Students desire a life-changing experience but timely graduation is a preference. The fact that students facing delays could still compensate in order to graduate indicates their willingness to take an active role in their own success and learning (Astin, 1984). Due to persistent myths about study abroad, students need encouragement and could benefit from receiving explicit instruction on the benefits of study abroad as well as how to mitigate risks to timely graduation through early and frequent advising.

It was clear that there was a need for study abroad students to be familiar with GE and major requirements and how the two might overlap in some cases. Students need to know which from both types are offered through study abroad and who at their home campus can authorize additional substitutions in order to satisfy which types of GE or major requirements.

As institutions are more successful at increasing study abroad participation from untraditional disciplines like STEM, students will need personalized advising and informational materials. Even when presented with the ideal time to go abroad and the ideal partner location, students have personal preferences as well as other factors that will influence the program they want to attend. Understanding what those financial or personal issues are specifically for an institution's student population can help inform which new partnerships are needed and what type of advising will be necessary.

Students need a streamlined process. In decentralized campuses, students can be overwhelmed by multiple forms, advisors, and campus offices that are involved in the course approval and transfer processes. In order to facilitate a more flexible and easy-to-navigate experience before and after departure, it may be beneficial to separate the study abroad transferability process from the larger process of course substitution used by non-study abroad programs.

There will be elements outside an institution's control once students depart, so study abroad students need contingency plans. Students should be aware of common problems such as time conflicts, course availability, how units are counted differently, and how long it takes for their chosen partner typically to send back transcripts. If problems arise, students will need to know how to compensate in order to stay on track

Access to the right programs

Previous study abroad literature has established guidelines and best practices for what constitutes a quality study abroad program (e.g., Hadis, 2005; Ingraham & Peterson, 2004). These are closely related to what the expected student outcomes for these experiences are. However, institutions must also consider how study abroad programs can best integrate into the study plans of their students, creating a map by working on pre-articulated course equivalencies that do not require substitution petitions. Findings from the present study add to these best practices by identifying the ways in which study abroad can facilitate a timely graduation.

First, the timing of study abroad did prove important inasmuch as summer exchange appears to be the most helpful for timely graduation. For those quarter-based campuses, expanding offerings in the Fall term means students will have the opportunity to get ahead by taking semester credit while abroad.

Though students will always have a preference as to where they would like to study, it is important that institutions consider highlighting the programs which would be most beneficial for students by major. The implied principal here is that institutions focus on developing exchange partnerships with institutions that can help students meet the most requirements possible. The average percent of courses taken by the study's population that transferred in for major-related requirements was 44%. GE was on average 35%. This means that on average around 79% of coursework taken abroad by the studied population was transferred in to meet requirements. Since overall the students included in the present study did not agree study abroad lengthened their time-to-degree, this amount may be a good starting point for the minimum needed to be a worthwhile partnership to develop with a foreign institution. Advisors should be

aware of which foreign institutions offer the best opportunities for the student groups in their purview.

Students in highly sequenced disciplines, like STEM, may find it more difficult to meet major requirements. Taking a “break” from their core sequences to go abroad for a semester may make it challenging to continue upon return. Institutions will need to develop a strategy to improve STEM participation rates in study abroad in a way that will allow them to also graduate in a timely manner. Recommendations from this study are that department chairs consider approving courses in mathematics or earlier in the sequences, always keeping in mind how units are calculated abroad for laboratory science classes and informing faculty in those departments that students may return to take the next class in the sequence having met the prerequisite elsewhere. Policies related to unofficial foreign transcripts for such a purpose may need to be examined.

Although class standing did not prove to be a significant predictor of time-to-degree delays, the present study did find that seniors were often discouraged from going abroad because they had fewer classes remaining than could be found abroad and because transcripts from host institutions could take up to a year to be received. Seniors may have capstone classes or projects they must complete in residence. For this group of students, institutional leaders should work with academic departments to offer programs that will allow a senior to have a final life-changing college experience without delaying their graduation. For example, campuses might allow their seniors to be concurrently enrolled in a senior project course through their home campus while abroad at a host institution. Keeping track of how long each exchange partner typically takes in sending official transcripts back would also help seniors have realistic expectations of graduation delays.

Finally, institutions should review the way in which their exchange agreements are assessed and managed. Having an expiration date on course articulations (a practice not utilized by any of the campuses studied) means a more regular and systematic review of syllabi and course descriptions, which may lead to giving students a clearer expectation of what courses will meet requirements at home. Whether centralized or not, institutions should consider tracking how study abroad students do at each partner university or with every independent provider. Delegating this responsibility to a subject matter specialist within each college may also prove helpful as this person would be best equipped to cultivate support among the faculty to approve articulations.

Effective academic advising for study abroad students

The present study found a number of best practices utilized by academic advisors within the CSU to help study abroad students navigate its policies and processes. In general these each had to do with providing early and frequent advising, academic planning, and providing support during the transferability process.

The study found that the sooner prospective study abroad students spoke to an advisor, the better. Even if a student does not plan to study abroad until his or her junior year, there is much that can be done even in the first semesters that will set the student up for success. For example, students need to consider which classes to set aside now so that they can take them overseas later. The classes they take abroad will of course depend on where they want to go, so students need an opportunity to explore with an advisor what sort of study abroad experience they want to have for personal or professional reasons.

Academic planning is needed so students can ensure study abroad will fit into their four-year trajectory. Advisors can help students think about how study abroad classes will fit into the

sequencing of their major or the GE breadth areas. For example, students may not be aware that certain classes in their major are only offered in certain terms. Working on a study plan “map” can help students make the best decisions to move forward.

The study found that students can feel resistance when preapproving or transferring back study abroad classes. Those who have a negative experience were found to be more likely to graduate later than expected. Institutions should examine how the approval process works not only at the campus level (i.e., policies related to course substitution) but also at the college or departmental level. Do students really need to get a signature from an academic dean for course preapproval? For courses that have transferred in the past, how is this kept track of and presented to future students and their advisors? Alongside an online description of which GE and major coursework is required for any given discipline, institutions could also put information about which of these classes can be completed at a partner foreign university through study abroad.

Limitations and Delimitations

This section briefly discusses the limitations and delimitations of the present study. First, the study benefited from having the support of many well-qualified international education professionals who are deeply interested in its results. The researcher consulted several international education experts familiar with the practices and policies of study abroad in the California State University system in order to decide on the research design, delimitations, and research sites. The present researcher and his counterparts do have an obvious agenda in this study. All involved want to see study abroad participation increase at their respective campuses and feel more research is needed to advocate for necessary resources and support.

Secondly, the response rate of the student survey was approximately 8% (N = 4,291). This low response rate could be indicative of a non-response bias, possibly favoring a sample

which had strong feelings (positive or negative) about study abroad. The survey was sent out near the end of the 2018-2019 academic year, so it is possible that students in the target population were busy with finals, graduation, or simply were not checking their student emails frequently.

By using a student survey, quantitative findings are based on self-reported data. It is possible that students themselves are not fully aware of whether their time-to-degree had been affected. An advantage of the upcoming CASSIE results will be its use of institutionally reported data for quantitative document analysis. This will provide researchers with more reliable data upon which to measure how study abroad courses meet graduation requirements and affect a student's time-to-degree.

The present study included only four CSU campuses, and these should not be considered a representative sample of the system. The researcher chose to delimit the study by choosing only the most actively sending campuses. Therefore the present study cannot generalize that the CSU as a whole is or is not ensuring the timely graduation of study abroad participants. However, it is hoped that this initial study might create a benchmark for future assessment and still provide actionable recommendations.

Recommendations for Future Research

It is expected that with the expected release of CASSIE, more research aimed at understanding the academic benefits of study abroad and correlative institutional practices will be conducted. CSULB, one of the test sites included in the study, will also be represented in CASSIE's final results (Don Rubin, personal communication). Future research should include a representative sample of institutions of higher education, including both state university systems and private stand alone schools. Community college is also an area that can benefit from more

research on study abroad's impact on student success and completion. One benefit from increasing the diversity of institutions included in such research will be to see how study abroad fits into different types of curricula including various GE schema that will differ from the present study's research context. Findings from the present study also suggest that quarter-based campuses should be examined more closely. Quarter campuses are somewhat unique in their course transferability since many overseas partners offer semester credit.

The field would also benefit from research on this topic from the perspective of host institutional practices. What are the factors that influence how foreign universities can best help US students meet graduation requirements and graduate in a timely manner? The problem of transcripts is one that was frequently referenced in the present study. This is largely outside the control of the US institution, so a better understanding of best practice in this area may be warranted.

The problem of practice addressed by the present study was increasing student participation in study abroad by addressing the obstacle of timely graduation. More research is still needed to determine if there is any significant correlation between having a high level of student participation in study abroad and the high graduation rate achieved for study abroad students.

Finally, more research is needed which is similar to what Seccia (2018) accomplished for engineering students. Although attention has been paid to underrepresented minorities and other demographics, campus leaders and advisors will benefit from understanding the unique motivations, needs, and challenges of students in specific academic groups, such as STEM, business, or pre-health as they relate to effective study abroad experiences that meet graduation requirements. Although not directly related to time-to-degree, advisors in the study also

described needing to better understand how to assist undocumented (DACA) students who face their own challenges in studying abroad.

References

- American Council on Education (ACE), Art & Science Group LLC, and the College Board. (2008). College-bound students' interest in study abroad and other international learning activities. Baltimore, MD: Art & Science Group.
- Anderson, P. H., Lawton, L., Rexeisen, R. J., & Hubbard, A. C. (2006). Short-term study abroad and intercultural sensitivity: A pilot study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30(4), 457-469.
- A.B. 1602, Cal. Education Code §40. (Ca. 2016)
- Astin, A. W. (1984). Student involvement: A developmental theory for higher education. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 25(4), 297-308.
- Attah, D. A., Boafo-Arthur, S., & Boafo-Arthur, A. (2018). The sojourner's return: Risks and challenges of the study abroad experience on re-entry. *Study Abroad Contexts for Enhanced Foreign Language Learning*, 218-255.
- Baldwin, E. A., Case, M., Woo, H. (2015). Analysis of graduation rates for international programs participants. Unpublished manuscript. CSU Analytic Studies.
- Bennett, J. M., & Salonen, R. (2007). Intercultural communication and the new American campus. *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning*, 39(2), 46-50.
- Braskamp, L. A., Braskamp, D. C., Merrill, K. C., & Engberg, M. (2008). *Global Perspective Inventory (GPI): Its purpose, construction, potential uses, and psychometric characteristics*. Chicago: Global Perspective Institute.
- Brewer, E. and K. Cunningham (eds.) 2009. *Integrating study abroad into the curriculum: Theory and practice across the disciplines*. Sterling, VA: Stylus.

- Brown, L. M. (2002). Going global: Traditionally, the percentage of African American students who studied abroad has been low; however, university officials are looking into ways to increase those numbers. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 19(6), 28.
- Brux, J. M., and Fry, B. (2010). Multicultural students in study abroad: Their interests, their issues, and their constraints. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 14(5), 508–527. doi: 10.1177/1028315309342486
- California State University. (n.d.-a). Graduation initiative 2025. Retrieved from <https://www2.calstate.edu/csu-system/why-the-csu-matters/graduation-initiative-2025/>
- California State University. (n.d.-b). International Programs. Retrieved from <http://csuip.calstate.edu>
- California State University. (n.d.-c). About the CSU. Retrieved from <https://www2.calstate.edu/csu-system/about-the-csu>
- California State University. (2017, August 23). Executive Order 1100. Retrieved from <https://www.calstate.edu/EO/EO-1100-rev-8-23-17.html>
- Carey, K. (2004). A matter of degrees: Improving graduation rates in four-year colleges and universities. New York: The Education Trust.
- Carini, R. M., Kuh, G. D., & Klein, S. P. (2006). Student engagement and student learning: Testing the linkages. *Research in higher education*, 47(1), 1-32. Dessoiff, A. (2006). Who's not going abroad? *International Educator*, 15(2), 20-27.
- Chickering, A. W., & Reisser, L. (1993). *Education and identity. The Jossey-Bass Higher and Adult Education Series*. Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers, San Francisco, CA.
- Clarke III, I., Flaherty, T. B., Wright, N. D., & McMillen, R. M. (2009). Student intercultural proficiency from study abroad programs. *Journal of Marketing Education*, 31(2), 173-181.

- College Board. (2019). Average rates of growth published charges by decade. Retrieved from <https://trends.collegeboard.org>.
- Cook, S. (2009). Important events in the development of academic advising in the United States. *NACADA Journal*, 29(2), 18–40
- Creswell, J.W., & Plano Clark, V.L. (2010). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Crockett, D. S. (1978). *Academic advising: A cornerstone of student retention*. In L. Noel (Ed.) *Reducing the dropout rate*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- Crookston, B. B. (1972). A developmental view of academic advising as teaching. *Journal of College Student Personnel*, 13, 1972, 12–17
- Cuseo, J. (2003). Academic advisement and student retention: Empirical connections and systemic interventions. National Academic Advising Association. Retrieved from <http://www.nacada.ksu.edu/clearinghouse/advisingissues/retain.htm>
- DeAngelo, L., Franke, R., Hurtado, S., Pryor, J. H., & Tran, S. (2011). *Completing college: Assessing graduation rates at four-year institutions*. Los Angeles: Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA
- Dessoff, A. (2006). Who's not going abroad? *International Educator*, 15(2), 20.
- Durbin, R. J. (2006). The Lincoln Commission and the future of study abroad. *International Educator*, 15(1), 4-6.
- Earl, W. R. (1988). Intrusive advising of freshmen in academic difficulty. *NACADA journal*, 8(2), 27-33.
- Engle, L., & Engle, J. (2003). Study abroad levels: Toward a classification of program types. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 9(1), 1-20.

- Engle, L., & Engle, J. (2004). Assessing language acquisition and intercultural sensitivity development in relation to study abroad program design. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 10, 219–236.
- Fingerhut, H. (2017, July 20). Republicans skeptical of colleges' impact on U.S., but most see benefits for workforce preparation. Pew Research. Retrieved from <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/07/20/republicans-skeptical-of-colleges-impact-on-u-s-but-most-see-benefits-for-workforce-preparation/>
- Franklin, K. (2010). Long-term career impact and professional applicability of the study abroad experience. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 19, 169-190.
- Glennen, R. E. (1975). Intrusive college counseling. *College Student Journal*.
- Goldstein, S. B., & Kim, R. I. (2006). Predictors of US college students' participation in study abroad programs: A longitudinal study. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 30(4), 507–521.
- Gonyea, R. M. (2008, November). The impact of study abroad on senior year engagement. In annual meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education, Jacksonville, FL.
- Gordon, L. (2016, August 25). Cal State system pushes students to graduate in four years, improve low completion rates. EdSource. Retrieved from <https://edsource.org/2016/cal-state-system-pushes-students-to-graduate-in-four-years-improve-low-completion-rates/567770>
- Gore, J. E. (2005). *Dominant beliefs and alternative voices: Discourse, belief, and gender in American study abroad*. New York: Routledge.
- Gray, K. M., & Savicki, V. (2015). Study abroad reentry: Behavior, affect, and cultural distance. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 26, 264-278.

- Green, M. F. (2012). Measuring and assessing internationalization. NAFSA: Association of International Educators, 1, 1-26.
- Green, M. F., & Siaya, L. M. (2005). Measuring internationalization at liberal arts colleges. Washington, DC: American Council on Education
- Gullahorn, J.T., & Gullahorn, J.E. (1963). An extension of the U-curve hypothesis. *Journal of Social Issues*, 19(3), 33-47.
- Habley, W. R., & McCauley, M. E. (1987). The relationship between institutional characteristics and the organization of advising services. *NACADA Journal*, 7(1), 27-39.
- Hadis, B. F. (2005). Why are they better students when they come back? Determinants of academic focusing gains in the study abroad experience. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 11, 57-70.
- Hamir, H. B. (2011). Go abroad and graduate on-time: Study abroad participation, degree completion, and time-to-degree. (Doctoral dissertation). The University of Nebraska-Lincoln.
- Haupt, J., Ogden, A. C., & Rubin, D. (2018). Toward a common research Model: Leveraging education abroad participation to enhance college graduation rates. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, DOI: 1028315318762519.
- Heisel, M., & Stableski, R. (2009). Expanding study abroad: Where there's a will, there's a way. In P. Blumental & R. Gutierrez (Eds.), Expanding study abroad capacity at U.S. colleges and universities (28-37). *Institute of International Education*.
- Hett, E. J. (1993). Development of an instrument to measure globalmindedness. *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 54(10), 3724. (UMI No. 9408210)
- Higher Learning Commission. (2017). C-Rac Graduation rate research initiative: HLC study findings. Retrieved from <http://www.hlcommission.org>.

Hoffa, W. (1993). NAFSA's Guide to Education Abroad for Advisers and Administrators.

Publications Order Desk, NAFSA: Association of International Educators. Washington, DC.

Hoffa, W., & DePaul, S. C. (Eds.). (2010). A history of US study abroad: 1965-present. Forum on Education Abroad.

Ingraham, E. C., & Peterson, D. L. (2004). Assessing the impact of study abroad on student learning at Michigan State University. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 10, 83-100.

Institute of International Education (IIE). (2017). Open Doors: 2016 Report on international education exchange, New York, NY.

Jackson, J., & Cook, K. (2016). Improving college graduation rates: A closer look at California State University. Public Policy Institute of California.

Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. (2004). Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational researcher*, 33(7), 14-26.

Johnson, S. R., & Stage, F. K. (2018). Academic engagement and student success: Do high-impact practices mean higher graduation rates? *The Journal of Higher Education*, 1-29.

Kadar, R. S. (2001). A counseling liaison model of academic advising. *Journal of College Counseling*, 4(2), 174-178.

Kasravi, J. (2009). Factors influencing the decision to study abroad for students of color: moving beyond the barriers. Retrieved from <http://conservancy.umn.edu/handle/11299/55058>

Keillor, B.D. and Emore, J.R. 2003. The structure and process of curriculum integration in study abroad programs: The University of Akron international business model. In G.T. Hult and E.C. Lashbrooke (Eds.), Study Abroad: perspectives and experiences from business schools. *Advances in International Marketing*, 13. Elsevier Science Ltd., 227-245.

- Kitsantas, A., & Meyers, J. (2001). Studying abroad: Does it enhance college student cross-cultural awareness? Paper presented at combined Annual Meeting of the San Diego State University and the U.S. Department of Education Centers for International Business Education and Research (CIBER 2001), San Diego, CA.
- Kuh, G. D. (2008). High-impact educational practices: what they are, who has access to them, and why they matter. Washington, DC: Association of American Colleges and Universities
- Kuh, G. D., Cruce, T. M., Shoup, R., Kinzie, J., & Gonyea, R. M. (2008). Unmasking the effects of student engagement on first-year college grades and persistence. *The Journal of Higher Education*, 79(5), 540-563.
- Larson, J., Johnson, A., Aiken-Wisniewski, S. A., & Barkemeyer, J. (2018). What is academic advising? An application of analytic induction. *NACADA Journal*, 38(2), 81-93.
- Lincoln Commission. (2005). Global competence and national needs: One million Americans studying abroad. Final Report from the Commission on the Abraham Lincoln Fellowship Program, Washington, DC.
- Loberg, L. (2012). Exploring factors that lead to participation in study abroad (Ed.D.). University of California, Los Angeles. Retrieved from <https://search.proquest.com/docview/1114544616/abstract/2E6551B80177440APQ/1>
- Lochmiller, C. & Lester, J. (2017). *An introduction to education research: connecting methods to practice*. Los Angeles: SAGE.
- Lucas, J. M. (2009). Where are all the males?: A mixed methods inquiry into male study abroad participation. Michigan State University.

- Luo, J., & Jamieson-Drake, D. (2015). Predictors of study abroad intent, participation, and college outcomes. *Research in Higher Education*, 56(1), 29–56.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-014-9338-7>
- Malmgren, J., & Galvin, J. (2008). Effects of study abroad participation on student graduation rates: A study of three incoming freshman cohorts at the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. *NACADA Journal*, 28(1), 29–42.
- McMahon, W. W. (2009). Higher learning, greater good: The private and social benefits of higher education. JHU Press.
- Merriam, S. B., & Grenier, R. S. (Eds.). (2019). Qualitative research in practice: Examples for discussion and analysis. Jossey-Bass.
- Miller, D. W. (2016). Returning from abroad: A comparative review. SIT Graduate Institute.
Retrieved from <https://digitalcollections.sit.edu/capstones/2876>
- Moore, C., & Tan, C. (2018). "Get me from point A to point B": Student perspectives on barriers to timely graduation at the California State University. Education Insights Center. California State University, Sacramento. Sacramento, CA. Retrieved from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED584705.pdf>
- Moore, C., Tan, C., & Shulock, N. (2014). Average Won't Do: Performance Trends in California Higher Education as a Foundation for Action. Institute for Higher Education Leadership & Policy.
- Musini, D. (2018). Closing The Circle: Comprehensive Study Abroad Reentry Programming in a Small Liberal Arts College.
- National Association of Colleges and Employers. (2017). Job outlook 2018. Retrieved from <http://careerservices.wayne.edu/pdfs/2018-nace-job-outlook-survey.pdf>

- National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE). (2007). Experiences that matter: Enhancing student learning and success. Indiana University.
- Norton, I. (2008). Changing the face of study abroad. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 55(5).
- O'Rear, I., Sutton, R.L., & Rubin, D.L. (2012). The effect of study abroad on college completion in a state university system. Retrieved from <http://glossari.uga.edu/wpcontent/uploads/downloads/2012/01/GLOSSARI-Grad-Rate-Logistic-Regressions-040111.pdf>
- Obama, B. (2009a, February 24). Remarks of President Barack Obama address to joint session of Congress. Washington, DC: Obama White House.
- Obama, B. (2009b, July 14). Remarks of President Barack Obama on the American Graduation Initiative in Warren, MI. Washing, DC: Obama White House.
- Ober, D. R., Beekman, J. A., & Pierce, R. L. (2018). Analyzing Four-Year Public University and Two-Year College Graduation Rates. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 6(4), 221-247.
- Olson, C., & Kroeger, K. R. (2001). Global competency and intercultural sensitivity. *Journal of studies in international education*, 5(2), 116-137.
- Orahood, T., Woolf, J., & Kruze, L. (2008). Study abroad and career paths of business students. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 17, 133-141.
- Organización para la Cooperación y el Desarrollo Económicos (OECD). (2013). Education at a glance 2014: OECD Indicators.
- Penn, E. B., & Tanner, J. (2009). Black students and international education: An assessment. *Journal of Black Studies*, 40(2), 266–282.

- Perna, L. W. (2006). Studying college choice: A proposed conceptual model. In J. C. Smart (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (XXI, 99-157). New York: Springer.
- Peterson, D. L. (2003). The decision to study abroad: Contributing factors and implications for communication strategies. Michigan State University, Department of Communication.
- Posey, J. T. (2003). Study abroad: Educational and employment outcomes of participants versus non participants (Doctorial Dissertation). The Florida State University.[On-Line]. Available: [etd. lib. fsu. edu/theses/submitted/etd-11142003-213320/unrestricted/JPDissertation.pdf](http://etd.lib.fsu.edu/theses/submitted/etd-11142003-213320/unrestricted/JPDissertation.pdf).
- 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.
- Reader, C. M. (2018). The Effectiveness of Intrusive Advising Programs on Academic Achievement and Retention in Higher Education (Doctoral dissertation). Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN.
- Redden, E. (2012, July 10). New studies link study abroad to on-time graduation. Inside Higher Ed. Retrieved from <http://www.insidehighered.com>.
- Relyea, C., Cocchiara, F. K., & Studdard, N. L. (2008). The effect of perceived value in the decision to participate in study abroad programs. *Journal of Teaching in International Business*, 19(4), 346-361.
- Reyes, N. (1997). Holding on to what they've got: A look at programs designed to keep college students in college. *Diverse Issues in Higher Education*, 13(26), 36.
- Rhodes, G., Biscarra, A., Loberg, L., & Roller, K. (2012). Study abroad as a collaborative endeavor. *About Campus*, 16(6), 2-10.

- Rust, V., Dhanatya, C., Furuto, L.H.L., & Kheiltash, O. (2007). Student involvement as predictive of college freshmen plans to study abroad. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 15(Fall), 1-16.
- Salisbury, M. H., Paulsen, M. B., & Pascarella, E. T. (2010). To see the world or to stay at home: Applying an integrated student choice model to explore the gender gap in the intent to study abroad. *Research in Higher Education*, 51(7), 615-640.
- Salisbury, M. H., Paulsen, M. B., & Pascarella, E. T. (2011). Why do all the study abroad students look alike? Applying an integrated student choice model to explore differences in the factors that influence white and minority students' intent to study abroad. *Research in Higher Education*, 52(2), 123-150.
- Salisbury, M. H., Umbach, P. D., Paulsen, M. B., & Pascarella, E. T. (2009). Going global: Understanding the choice process of the intent to study abroad. *Research in Higher Education*, 50(2), 119-143.
- Salovey, P. (2018, February 17). How to sway higher ed's skeptics. The Chronicle of Higher Education. Retrieved from <https://www.chronicle.com/article/How-to-Sway-Higher-Ed-s/242645>
- San Diego State University. (n.d.-a). Programs requiring study abroad. Retrieved from: http://http://oip.sdsu.edu/oip/required_study_abroad.aspx
- San Diego State University. (n.d.-b). Fowler College of Business Study Abroad. Retrieved from [http:// https://cbabroad.sdsu.edu/](http://https://cbabroad.sdsu.edu/)
- San Diego State University. (n.d.-c). Academics for Study Abroad Students. Retrieved from http://go.sdsu.edu/student_affairs/studyabroad/creditsandgrades.aspx

- Sánchez, C. M., Fornerino, M., & Zhang, M. (2006). Motivations and the intent to study abroad among US, French, and Chinese students. *Journal of Teaching in International Business*, 18(1), 27-52.
- Seccia, L. N. (2018). Developing a Global Engineer: Study Abroad Experiences of Engineering Majors in One University System. ProQuest LLC.
- Shirley, S. W. (2006). The gender gap in post-secondary study abroad: Understanding and marketing to male students (Doctoral dissertation, University of North Dakota).
- Souto-Otero, M., Huisman, J., Beerkens, M., De Wit, H., & Vujić, S. (2013). Barriers to international student mobility: Evidence from the Erasmus program. *Educational Researcher*, 42(2), 70-77.
- Stallman, E., Woodruff, E., Kasravi, J., & Comp, D. (2010). The diversification of the student profile. A history of US study abroad, 115-160.
- Stroud, A.H. (2010). Who plans (not) to study abroad? An examination of U.S. student intent. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 14(5), 491-507.
- Sutton, R. C., & Rubin, D. L. (2004). The GLOSSARI project: Initial findings from a system-wide research initiative on study abroad learning outcomes. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 10, 65-82.
- Sutton, R. C., & Rubin, D. L. (2010, June). Documenting the academic impact of study abroad: Final report of the GLOSSARI project. In annual conference of *NAFSA: Association of International Educators*, Kansas City, MO.
- Tinto, V. (1975). Dropout from higher education: A theoretical synthesis of recent research. *Review of Educational Research*, 45(1), 89-125.

- Tinto, V. (1982). Limits of theory and practice in student attrition. *Journal of Higher Education*, 53, 687-700.
- Tinto, V. (1993). *Leaving college* (2nd ed.). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tinto, V. (2010). From theory to action: Exploring the institutional conditions for student retention. In *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research* (pp. 51-89). Springer, Dordrecht.
- Twombly, S. B., Salisbury, M. H., Tumanut, S. D., & Klute, P. (2012). Study abroad in a new global century: Renewing the promise, refining the purpose. *ASHE Higher Education Report*, 38(4), 1–152.
- University Planning, Institutional Research and Accountability. (2009). Plans, participation, and outcomes: Overseas study at Indiana University Bloomington. Retrieved from http://overseas.iu.edu/docs/UIRR_Overseas_Study.pdf
- University System of Georgia. (2019). CASSIE. Retrieved from <https://www.usg.edu/cassie>
- Watanabe, T. (2018, October 17). Cal State graduation rates reach record highs and equity gaps narrow. *Los Angeles Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.latimes.com/local/education/la-me-edu-cal-state-graduation-rates-20181017-story.html>
- Westwood, M. J., Lawrence, W. S., & Paul, D. (1986). Preparing for re-entry; a program for the sojourning student. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counselling*, 9, 221-230.
- Whalen, B. (2009). Assessment and improvement: Expanding education abroad capacity and enhancing quality through standards of good practice. In P.B.R. Gutierrez (Ed.), *Expanding study abroad capacity at U.S. colleges and universities*. New York: Institute of International Education

- Wielkiewicz, R. M., & Turkowski, L. W. (2010). Reentry issues upon returning from study abroad programs. *Journal of College Student Development*, 51(6), 649-664.
- Winston Jr, R. B. (1994). Developmental academic advising reconsidered: Chimera or unrealized potentiality? *NACADA Journal*, 14(2), 112-116.
- Woodruff, G. A. (2009). Curriculum integration: Where we have been and where we are going. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota
- Xu, M., de Silva, C. R., Neufeldt, E., & Dane, J. H. (2013). The impact of study abroad on academic success: An analysis of first-time students entering Old Dominion University, Virginia, 2000-2004. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, 23, 90-103.
- Zhai, L. (2000). The influence of study abroad programs on college student development in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences at the Ohio State University (Doctoral dissertation, The Ohio State University).

APPENDIX A

Study Abroad Student Survey

Thank you for participating in this survey. You were selected because during the 2016-2017 or 2017-2018 academic years you studied abroad. The purpose of this survey is to help assess the extent to which your study abroad experience has helped you to meet your graduation requirements and affected your time to graduation. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Please answer the following questions in regard to your study abroad experience in the 2016-2017 or 2017-2018 academic years. If you participated in two or more study abroad experiences, please answer these questions in regard to your most recent study abroad experience.

1. Please indicate your ethnicity/race

☐ African American

☐ Asian American

☐ Caucasian/White

☐ Hispanic

☐ Two or more races

☐ Other

2. Are you a Pell Grant eligible student?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not Sure

3. What was your GPA before you left for study abroad?

4. What is your GPA now?

5. In which study abroad program did you participate during the 2016-2017 or 2017-2018 academic years?

6. What was your major when you went on this program?

7. What was your class standing when you went on this program?

- ☐ Freshman
- ☐ Sophomore
- ☐ Junior
- ☐ Senior
- ☐ Not sure

8. Please tell me about the level of support or resistance you received from your university regarding transferability of courses from your study abroad program.

9. How many courses did you take abroad that were accepted at your home university as fulfilling GENERAL EDUCATION (GE) requirements?

10. How many courses did you take abroad that were accepted at your home university as fulfilling requirements for your MAJOR?

11. How many courses did you take abroad that did not meet any General Education or Major requirements?

12. How did your study abroad experience affect your plans for and progress toward graduation?

To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Completely Disagree (1) (2) (3) (4) Completely Agree

13. Before I left on my study abroad program, I understood how many credits would be accepted upon returning to my university.

14. Before I left on my study abroad program, my academic advisor helped me to understand how this study abroad program would satisfy my graduation requirements.

15. I have (or will have) more units than I need to graduate because of studying abroad.

16. Participating in this program has lengthened my time to degree