

Time to Change: Perspectives on Assessing Programs of Varying Lengths

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During this session you will:

- hear about three assessment initiatives of short- and long-term education abroad programs;
- consider the challenges of assessing programs of varying length;
- through discussion and debate, learn how other institutions are approaching these challenges.



Yes, we will ask you to
talk to each other and
report back
to the group!



The First Time Effect:

The Impact of Study Abroad on Intellectual Development

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Study Abroad Has Changed

Short-term program
growth

Non-traditional study
abroad formats

Programs not designed
for language learning

Not just for language
and social science majors
anymore





The First Time Effect

College Student Intellectual Development



Measures a student's ability to **think in complex ways**

Gauges a student's ability to **interpret information** in a diverse and pluralistic world

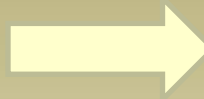
A **progression** from simple to advanced ways of thinking and knowing

An embrace of **multiple** and **relativistic** viewpoints



William Perry's Model

Dualism



Multiplicity

- Knowledge is either right or wrong
- Professors (and other knowledge authorities) are also either right or wrong
- No nuance, no shades of gray
- Student seeks these correct answers and “keepers of knowledge”

- Students appreciate that there are multiple perspectives and opinions
- Everyone has a right to their own opinion, no one is right or wrong
- Professors and authorities are suspect for providing the right answer



Intellectual Development

Perry's next stage, called *relativism*, is one in which students still appreciate that people have a right to their own opinions, including themselves.

However students are beginning to appreciate the importance of context, including cultural context, for determining what is correct and incorrect.

“I learned that America is not it. There's so much more out there... Just because we do things in a certain way doesn't mean that it is correct, or right. And it doesn't necessarily mean that there is a wrong or right, it's just our culture.”

-- London study abroad returnee

Perry's Model

- New experience can cause temporary confusion (disequilibrium)
- Confusion forces mental process that allows new experience “in”
- Student's ability to understand and make meaning expands
- A measurable process





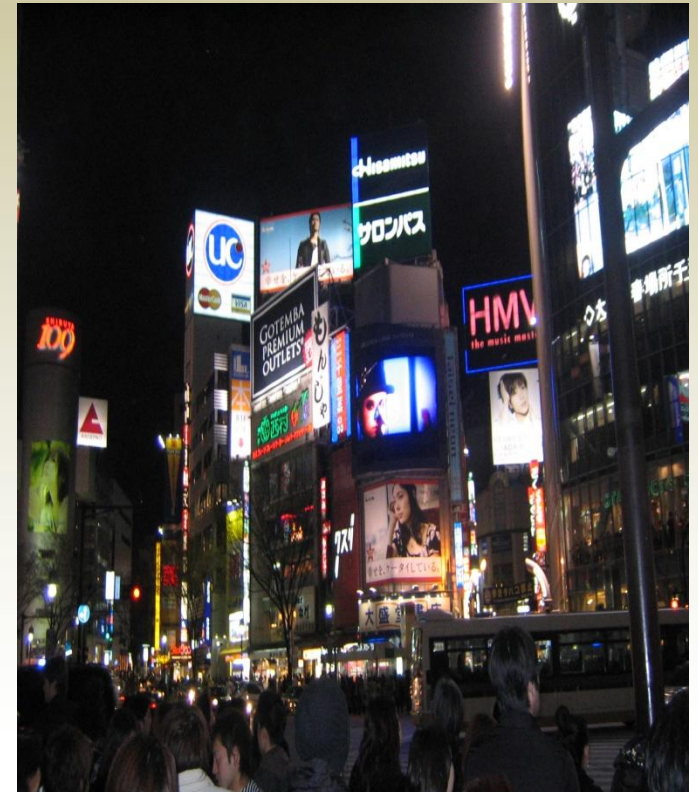
The First Time Effect

“In Hong Kong, you don’t need an ID to drink. There is no 21. We were really psyched at the beginning, and everyone got really drunk the first nights and then we were like ‘what are we doing’? We’re here in China... we traveled half way around the world – *to drink?!*”

-- China study abroad returnee

Intellectual Development

- Process that started with the recognition of different laws and rules, and led to a more complex understanding of how context impacts what laws mean
- Old view:
Age 21 is important, it's the law
- New view:
Turning 21 means nothing here,
so why are we drinking so much?





The First Time Effect

Study Data and Design:

- Sample of 226 students
- 8 university programs
- Pre-test and post-test study design
- Statistical tests for generalizability (Chi square and two proportions)
- Representative sample of study abroad population
- Comparison of means using t-tests, pre- to post-, and by variable

Study Variables:

- Language of country
- Amount of cultural immersion built in to program
 - where/with whom do you study?
 - where/with whom do you live?
- Gender
- Previous international experience



Snapshot of the Study Sample

Representative of nationwide data available (Open Doors, Monalco)

- 68 % female
- 43 % to English language countries
- Direct placement and study center models represented
- 70 % had no or very little previous international travel
- List of countries represented (226 total students):
 - England 56
 - Italy 38
 - Spain 33
 - Australia 28
 - France 24
 - All the rest 3% or less:
 - New Zealand, Mexico, Cuba, South
 - South Africa, Czech Republic, Greece,
 - Puerto Rico, Japan, Belize, Brazil,
 - China, Egypt, Canada, Costa Rica,
 - Holland, Denmark, Ireland, Dom. Republic



Results of the Study

No gains:

- Pre- to post- overall
- When analyzing groups of students pre- to post- for any of these variables:
 - Language of country
 - Amount of cultural immersion
 - Gender

Gain:

- Analyzing pre- and post- scores for groups of students on the variable of previous international experience

The First Time Effect:

- Students who, prior to study abroad, had traveled abroad previously , for two weeks or longer, began study abroad at a statistically higher level of intellectual development.
- After one semester abroad, their less-experienced peers had caught up



What do they think happens
over there?

Students' Perceived Changes on
Short- and Long-Term Programs Abroad

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Study Abroad at Delaware

- 4-1-4 calendar (5-week January term), abroad and on-campus courses offered
- About 1,400 UD students abroad in 2009/10; almost 80% on January programs (1100 in 2010); over 90% on short-term programs
- Over 40% of undergraduates (population 15,000) study abroad
- About 70 UD programs annually, 50 in January, all faculty led, representing 75% of academic departments
- About 8 semester programs/year (about 120 students total)



Methodology

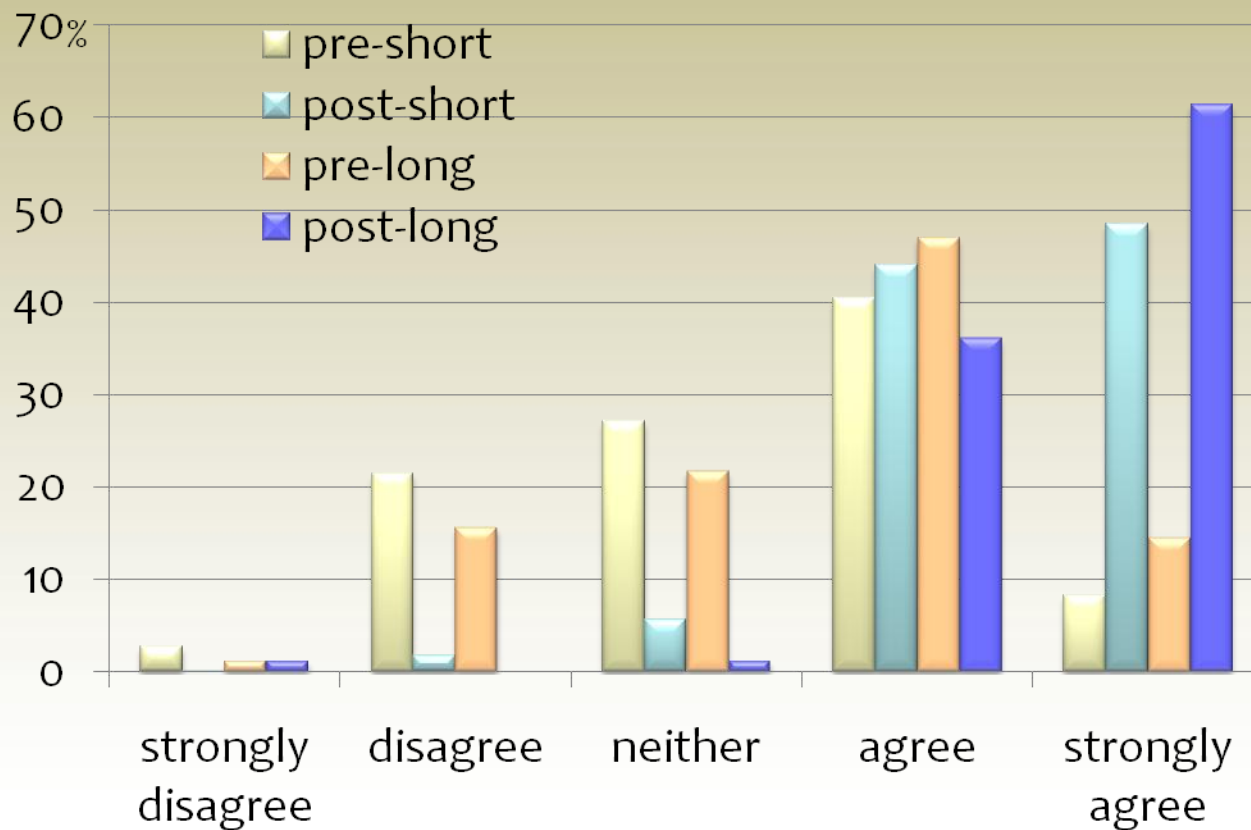


- Look for general impacts (changes from pre to post) in areas of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (applicable to all disciplines and sites)
- Short, in-house instrument (31 Likert scale items, 2 short answer); indirect measure
- Incorporated into required online pre-departure orientation quizzes
- Incorporated into required post-program evaluation (linked to University-wide Discovery Learning Experience)
- near 100% response rate and automatic, ongoing data collection



Findings: Knowledge – significant for both

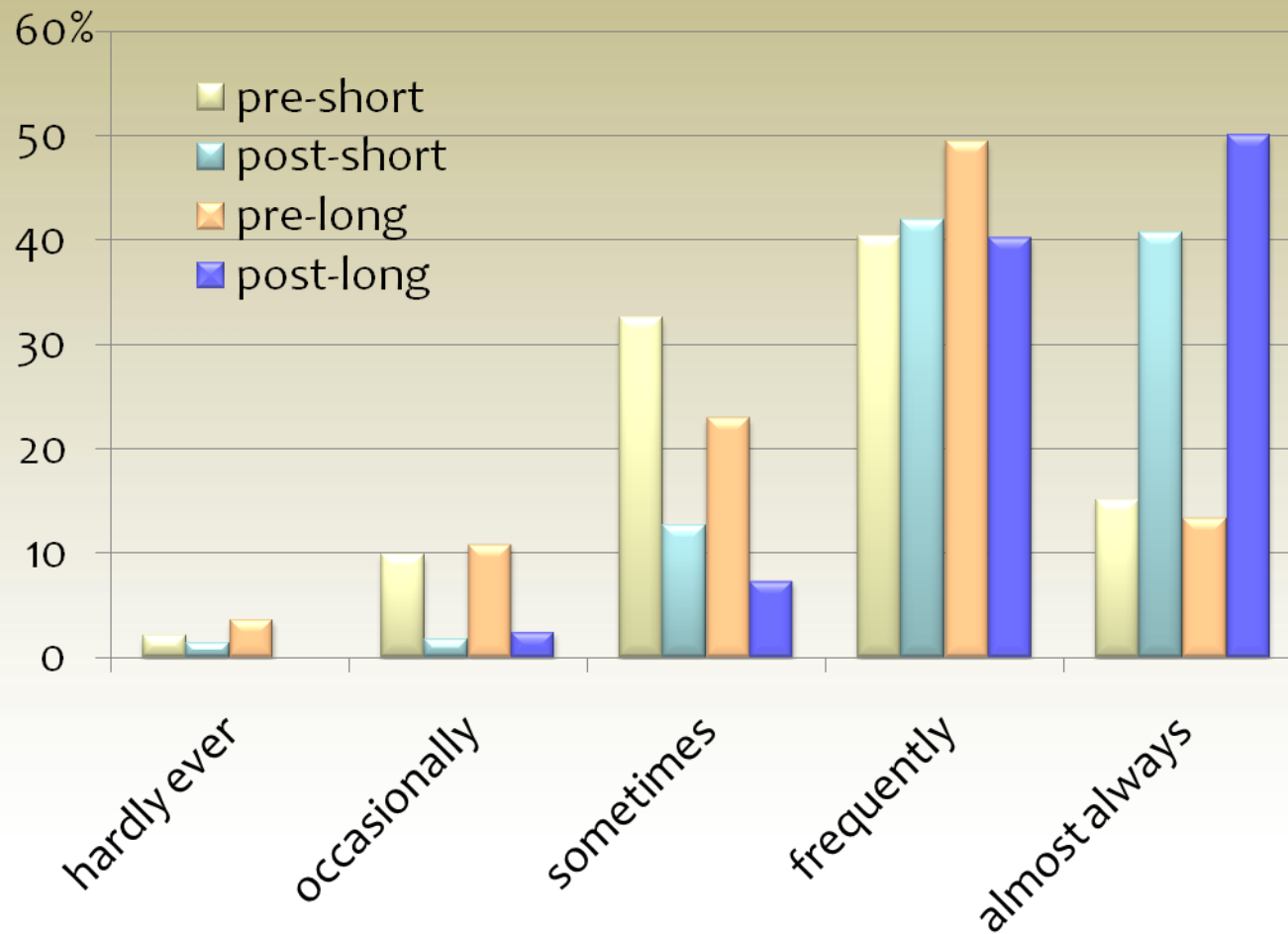
“I have sufficient knowledge of my host location to explain a current issue there to a friend or family member who has never been there.”





Findings: Skills - significant for both

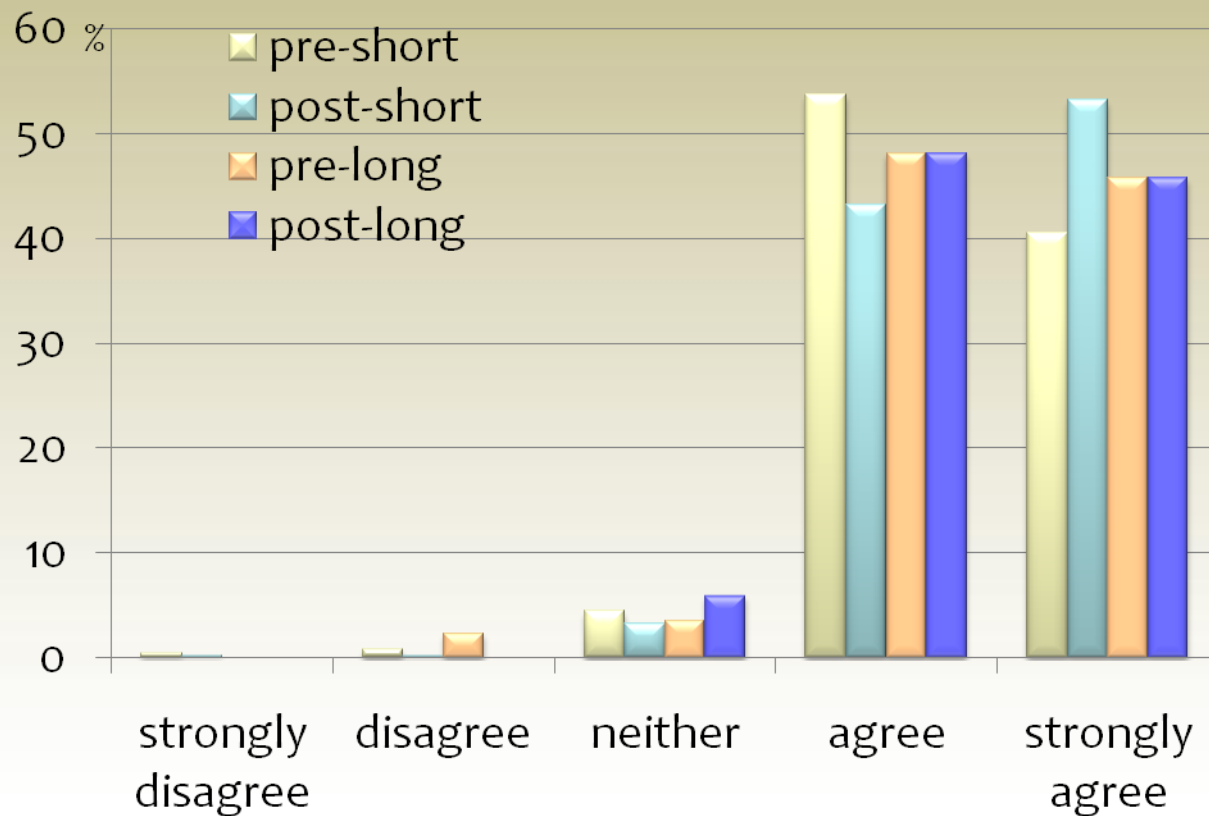
“I feel comfortable knowing when to laugh at a joke in my host culture.”





Findings: Attitudes - only sig. for short

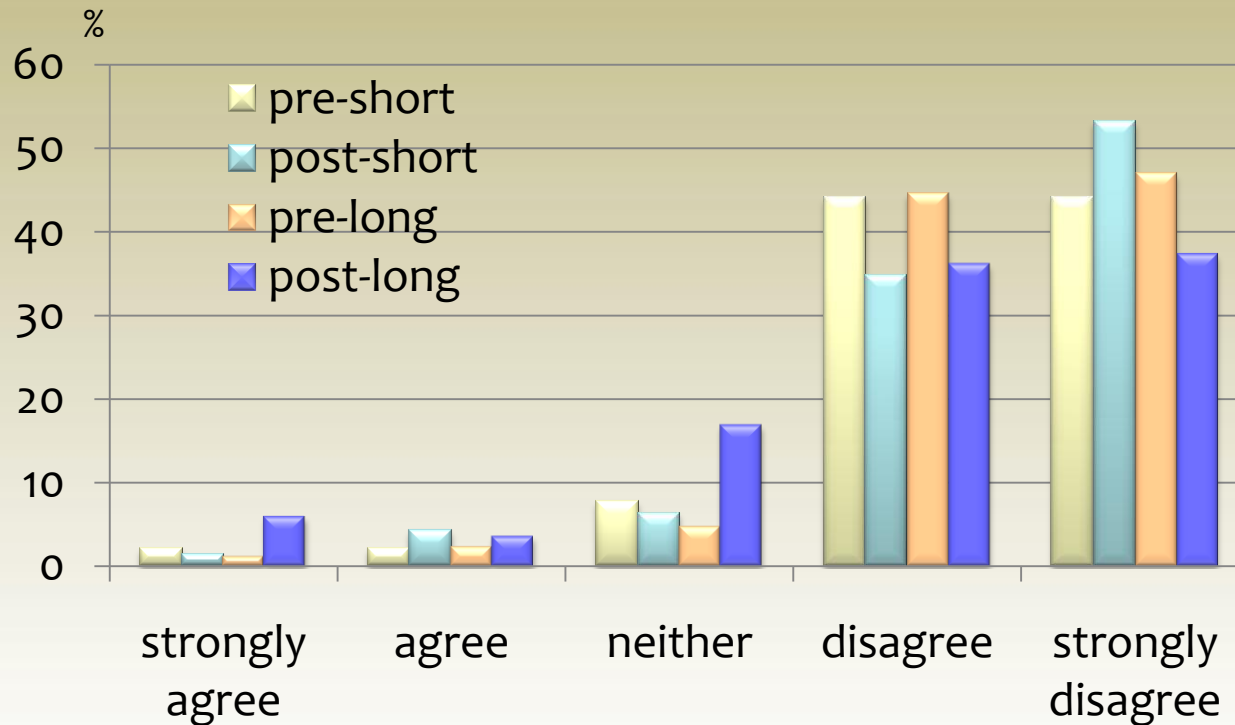
“When observing or interacting with individuals from another culture, I try to understand their perspectives before judging their actions.”





Findings: Attitudes - only sig. for short*

“It is acceptable to travel to another region and not know any basic expressions in the local language.”



*only significant for the subgroup of students on short-term programs with mandatory foreign language courses, 13% of total



Selected items - sig. differences, short only

- When I meet people who are different from me, I interpret their behavior in the context of their culture.
- I know what I can do to diminish some of the stereotypes that people at my host site might have about someone like me.
- I see value in talking with people who think differently than I do.
- Having to learn how things work in a new environment this term has stressed me out.”

Does that mean that for these items there was no change in students who went abroad for a semester???

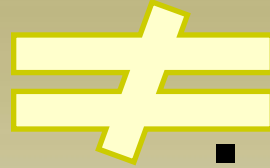




Population and Program Differences

Short

- 16% repeaters
- 70% female
- 13% engineer/science majors, 3% lang. majors
- 15% enrolled in foreign language courses
- 18% homestay
- 6 continents
- UD faculty directors



Long

- 61% repeaters
- 80% female
- 2% engineer/science majors; 28% lang. majors
- 82% enrolled in foreign language courses
- 82% homestay
- Europe & Central America
- Local resident directors

General Conclusions

- Change can happen, even on short programs! Significant differences between pre and post responses for 27 of 31 items
- But: for semester students, sig. only 19 of 31 items
- Change may not be dramatic across a group—often a shift of one category or a small mean difference
- Starting point can be surprising
- Numbers cannot tell the whole story—must be accompanied by qualitative data
- There are trade-offs!
- Complex, interdependent factors make inquiry and analysis challenging
 - prior study abroad or other intl. travel
 - major
 - foreign language background
 - program characteristics vis-à-vis host culture





Differences in Global-Mindedness Between Short-Term and Semester-Long Study Abroad Participants at Selected Private Universities

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Problem Statement

- Recent growth in participation in study abroad programs raises an important question about the differences between student outcomes for semester-long and short-term study abroad participants.
- Stake holders in higher education must be convinced of the value of study abroad via qualitative AND quantitative means of evaluating potential differences between students who chose to study abroad for varying lengths of time.



Purpose of the Study

- Compare the differences of social attitudes reflecting global-mindedness of student participants at three private universities' study abroad programs.
 - Examine differences between students who participated in a semester-long program and those who had participated programs of eight weeks or less and those intending to attend a program.
- Global-mindedness – denotes a worldview in which an individual perceives his or herself as connected to the world community and is aware of his or her responsibility for its members. (Hett, 1991).





Introduction



Growing global interdependence and awareness of problems facing humanity has given rise to institutions of higher education in the US to respond with the “internationalization of the curriculum and co-curriculum” including an increasing involvement in study abroad.

- To increase awareness of global life-conditions and social injustices.
- Contact with other cultures, customs and teaching methods deepens the educational experience of both students and faculty (Stier, 2004).



Research Questions



1. Are there differences in global-mindedness in students who have completed a study abroad program of eight weeks or less and those on the home campus who intend to study abroad in the future?
1. Are there differences in global-mindedness in students who study abroad for a semester and those on the home campus who intend to study abroad in the future?
2. Are there differences in global-mindedness in students who study abroad for eight weeks or less and those who study abroad for a semester?



Methodology

- Design: non-equivalent control group, convenience sampling
- Respondents: short- and semester-long program participants
- Pre-and post-sojourn questionnaire
- Participating universities shared similar mission statements (e.g. help students prepare to serve in a global context)
- A total of 520 surveys (52% return rate) were completed.





Survey Instrument

- The **Global-Mindedness Scale** selected for use in this study was developed by E. Jane Hett (Hett, 1993).
- Thirty item instrument using a five point Likert scale - strongly disagree to strongly agree.
- This study employed a one-way ANOVA. A two step process was used to determine if there were any significant differences within a group of means.





Review and Analysis of Results

Research Question 1

- Insufficient evidence to conclude any significant differences in the global-mindedness of students who studied abroad for eight weeks or less and those who intended to study abroad.

Research Question 2

- Global-mindedness scores of students who completed a semester-long program were significantly higher than those students who intended to study abroad.

Research Question 3

- Global-mindedness scores of students who completed a semester-long program were significantly higher than those students who study abroad for 8 weeks or less.

Recommendations

Further Research and Practice

- Pre and post measures should be administered to all groups.
- Consider differences between students attending programs conducted in a second language with those conducted in English.
- Consider the role faculty play in helping to develop global-mindedness among students.
- Consider which program designs or interventions have the greatest impact on students.
- Develop curricular and co-curricular elements in short-term study abroad programs that will significantly increase a student's global-mindedness.



Questions to Guide Discussion:

1. What form does the “short-vs.-long debate” take on your campus?
2. On what basis are arguments made (financial, anecdotal, measured or perceived learning outcomes, etc.)?
2. What are your initial reactions to the research presented here?
3. What types of assessment efforts have been made on your campus?



To report back:

What concrete approaches/strategies can we suggest that might guide campus decision-making regarding further development of programs of particular lengths?



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