



Internationalizing the Curriculum and Campus Paper Series

Curriculum Integration:

Where We Have Been And Where We Are Going

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Introduction

Curriculum Integration is not a new idea. Ever since U.S. students have been going abroad for short durations to study, they have been bringing their credits from abroad back home into their degree programs. What is new about “curriculum integration” is the buzz around the concept.

In his book on the history of study abroad published by the Forum on Education Abroad, Bill Hoffa (2007) reminds us of the historical shift from the traditional European junior-year-abroad language and culture programs to more study abroad offerings with curricular emphases for semester-long durations. I have become a bit of a historian recently too, as I am a co-author on one of the chapters of the Forum’s next publication on the history of study abroad (2010) in follow-up to Bill’s first volume. I have learned a great deal about the diversification of the student study abroad experience since the 1960s.

One area we looked into were trends in higher education compared to trends in study abroad. In higher education there has been a general shift away from college students wanting to become teachers, to college students wanting to become business people.

The single discipline that has seen the biggest increase since the 1960s in both number of students studying abroad *and* degrees granted is business. In the 1980s references began to emerge about the changing global economy and the need for more business and economics students to have a greater understanding of the world. By the early 1990s business schools seeking accreditation by the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) were required to include global issues in their curriculum (Praetzel, Curcio, & Dilorenzo, 1996).

The percentage of undergraduate degrees granted by U.S. institutions to students majoring in the STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) fields has remained relatively steady since the 1960s despite strong efforts that began in the late 1980s and 1990s to recruit more students into science, technology, engineering, and math. In addition, efforts by ABET, the American Board of Engineering and Technology, to make the undergraduate curricula relevant to emerging globalization and industries, have helped to pave the way for more engineering students to study abroad. Only a slight increase has been noted however.

With the rising awareness of the link of higher education and globalization, especially with high profile publications such as the Rand report on global preparedness (Bikson & Law, 1994), some study abroad professionals began to increasingly wonder why more students in underrepresented disciplines were not studying abroad.

The confluence of these streams led to new paradigms and models for growth in study abroad.

But if the concepts of globalization and internationalization were making a deeper impact on higher education in the past two decades, when would we start to see those shifts in study abroad? The research we did for our Forum book chapter confirms what Mell Bolen published in 2001—there is approximately a 20-year lag in trends in higher education shifting to study abroad. Remember, a trend can be no movement or a trend can be a lot of movement.

Results published in 2008 from a joint project of the American Council on Education, The College Board, and Art & Science Group regarding college-bound students' interest in study abroad shows a profile that looks very familiar. The high school student who wants to study abroad in college is still primarily a white female who plans to major in the humanities or social sciences and comes from a middle- to upper-middle class family (ACE, 2008). This is similar to trends in higher education that leading student engagement scholar George Kuh has also pointed out.

Could it be that we need another ten to twenty years before we really start to see shifts in trends due to more embedding of study abroad into the degree programs and outreach to underrepresented students? Or are the patterns from the last decade the norms of the future?

The University of Minnesota model of Study Abroad Curriculum Integration began in 1995 in our school of engineering, when globalization was beginning to make an impact on engineering degree programs. But thirteen years later where are we? The school of engineering was first in terms of growth, but now is lagging in growth and last in qualitative measures such as faculty encouraging their students to study abroad and advisers helping students plan for study abroad. Was it an innovation begun too early? Or is it a reality that there are limits to growth? We have almost had to re-start our efforts again in the school of engineering. But the difference now is that the entire university is involved in the initiative; there is a sea change underway. The school of engineering senses that, and the academic leadership in the college is now placing study abroad within the context of overall student engagement. They are considering other methods for internationalizing the student experience, such as supporting a student chapter of Engineers without Borders.

The challenge for us as professional educators is that we want to get students abroad, but we focus so much on the numbers of students going abroad instead of focusing on the learning outcomes that will ensue from study abroad. Mick Vande Berg (2007) reminds us of this in his article on intervening in student learning while students are abroad. Again, leading student development experts such as George Kuh remind us of this.

If curriculum integration is one pathway to growth in study abroad, then we have to go into the heart of the undergraduate experience, into those academic units that create the curriculum of the undergraduate degree programs and advise students about those degree programs.

What is Curriculum Integration?

Recall that in the Forum on Education Abroad baseline survey on curriculum integration practices (Woodruff, Gladding, Knutson, and Stallman, 2006), we found that the only statistically significant positive correlation in the data was seen in the relationship between faculty involvement in curriculum integration and the application of credits from education abroad toward students' majors ($p < .05$). This correlation is positive when faculty members are "usually" to "always" actively involved in curriculum integration.

The University of Minnesota model of curriculum integration has been built upon learning outcomes as defined not just by those of us in study abroad, but also by the academic units. Our first and primary conversations with faculty and academic advisers in various disciplines center on these questions: What do you want to see students learning while abroad? How do we want students to complement their undergraduate experience with an experience abroad? How do you advise your students?

These conversations empower faculty and academic advisers throughout the campus to become knowledgeable about study abroad and be champions in supporting their students to study abroad.

The role that faculty and academic advisers serve as partners to internationalize the undergraduate experience moves us one step closer to achieving our goal. We seek to create a culture within our institution that encourages study abroad and changes expectations about study abroad. **This partnership based in culture of expectation, I believe, is the foundation of growth in study abroad.**

So this essentially reshapes the idea of “Curriculum Integration” into the concept of “Colleague Integration,” manifest in the partnerships between the faculty and the study abroad office. From here we see an eventual progression to “Campus Internationalization,” where the campus culture shifts as more units take responsibility for study abroad advising and program development, and the conversations broaden to be more inclusive of internationalizing the curricula as a whole.

The method you seek to achieve your goals is where you need to focus your thinking, energy, and resources.

I’m starting to call our method or model the “Power of One”—you only need to start with one influential, motivated faculty member in one academic unit to get started. You only need to host one luncheon meeting to get a conversation going within an academic department. You only need to send one executive leader at your institution abroad to visit your study abroad programs. You only need to send one influential faculty member to a CIEE, Forum, or NAFSA conference to open their minds about the possibilities of study abroad and the broader field of international education.

Our model started small in 1995 and built upon the “Power of One.” We worked with one influential associate dean in the school of engineering to start to make change (Cumming Lokkegaard and Hudleston, 2005). We then worked with one visionary undergraduate dean in the school of management. Our model built upon the “Power of One” and we saw growth in study abroad before we launched our model campus-wide.

Since then the Study Abroad Curriculum Integration initiative has been a pathway for developing study abroad capacity at the University of Minnesota (Woodruff, 2005). The model is more than a method for sending a larger number of students to study abroad. It is a model that seeks to change the culture of the university—to be one that is more inclusive of international perspectives, one that engages faculty in international education, and one that develops partnerships between the study abroad offices and the academic units on each campus. The Study Abroad Curriculum Integration initiative has provided a mechanism within which faculty, as well as academic advisers and other university professional staff, increase their knowledge about study abroad options in order to encourage more undergraduates to study abroad.

I am now discussing our model with four basic elements:

Plan – set goals, have a timeline, and envision our model as a strategy for internationalizing the curriculum.

Partner – align our base of administrators, faculty, advisers, and study abroad providers.

Educate – build knowledge among our faculty, advisers, and staff.

Evaluate – measure our results and drive our decisions based upon data.

Since 2001 there have been four major goals of the initiative. The first is to integrate study abroad into all undergraduate degree programs. Second, to increase faculty and adviser awareness of the impact that study abroad can have in students' lives, and increase the faculty and adviser knowledge base about study abroad options for their students. Third, to develop innovative practices and materials that will ensure that at least 50 percent of all students who graduate from our institution will have had an international experience. The final goal is to create an institutional culture shift and embrace internationalization of the curriculum as a core activity of the university.

These goals are combined with two main guiding principles. The first is that this initiative is not "owned" by the international offices, but rather permeates all units throughout the university from academic and advising units to the financial aid and admissions offices. Secondly, the study abroad office educates colleagues around campus about international opportunities for students, and the academic and advising units set the academic goals for students, develop the structures to advise students, and help students adapt to curricular changes around study abroad. Everyone within the university is a teacher and learner within this process.

Faculty, academic advisers, and university staff become partners or participants in curriculum integration through four main activities:

Curricular Assessment Workshops and Retreats. The Study Abroad Curriculum Integration team engages faculty in curricular assessment activities and exercises to help faculty reflect upon the academic considerations and priorities they have for learning outcomes with regard to internationalizing the curriculum. This activity leads to the production of innovative advising materials for use in the academic units and in the study abroad office.

Since 2001, the University of Minnesota Curriculum Integration team has hosted more than 50 workshops and retreats. These range from small workshops with faculty within their academic units to larger training sessions where faculty, academic advisers, and other campus professionals come together to learn about study abroad and share their knowledge of the undergraduate curriculum with each other. These workshops and training sessions have been the core of the Curriculum Integration activities.

Curriculum Integration Site Visits. Site visits are designed to give faculty and staff a personal experience with study abroad and the variety of offerings available. The site visit process not only increases their understanding and awareness of study abroad opportunities, but faculty and advisers return to campus as stronger supporters of study abroad. They bring back to their academic units an enthusiasm for study abroad and the possibilities it offers. In some instances our colleagues have very dated views of what international education has become over the past decade.

Faculty-led study abroad courses. Of course the usual manner for getting faculty involved in study abroad is by actually having them lead courses abroad. Only within the last decade has Minnesota focused on broadening this programmatic area, and it is the program type where we have seen the most growth.

Internationalizing On-Campus Courses. Another component of the initiative in which faculty participate is the *Internationalizing On-Campus Courses* workshops. This initiative is an intentional approach to designing courses that can be provocative and engender resistance because it challenges deep-seated attitudes, beliefs, and values, and requires faculty to employ pedagogical practices that promote self-discovery, self-reflection, and personal transformation (Smith, 2008).

In 2009, we reached the point that for every faculty member or academic adviser involved in the initiative, there are three students who have studied abroad (3:1 ratio).

Other successes include a 150 percent increase in study abroad since the late 1990s, and a significantly above-average rate of students who graduate having a study abroad experience (28 percent compared to national average of 10 percent that the Lincoln Commission estimated a few years ago). Our analysis of time to graduation data show that Minnesota students who study abroad are graduating in a more timely manner than those who do not.

Surveys conducted over the past seven years to evaluate our initiative have indicated the second most frequently cited factor for a student's decision to study abroad is whether study abroad will fit into their degree programs or delay their graduation. The first factor is the cost of study abroad (Woodruff, Williams, and Watabe, 2006). Faculty were envisioned to be involved primarily in the curricular assessment process, determining what learning outcomes were associated with study abroad and how study abroad would enhance the undergraduate degree programs. Faculty endorsement and support of study abroad were seen as critical from the onset of Study Abroad Curriculum Integration. The initiative developed over time to highlight faculty and adviser support as a critical method for directly addressing the factor perceived by students as a significant barrier to study abroad—the academic fit.

The partnership with the faculty in particular is based upon a developmental model in which faculty members are learning how to transform their curriculum to be internationalized with study abroad. They are doing this by engaging with the study abroad office to understand more about international experiences for their students and how an international education will add value to their students' academic and personal experiences. The faculty can become the change agents within the university in order to assist in the goal of internationalizing the undergraduate curriculum with study abroad.

While faculty members play a key role in promoting U.S. higher education's efforts to internationalize the undergraduate curricula, little has been done to research faculty members' knowledge, attitudes, and behavior with regard to study abroad. Again, using the data collected from surveys of our faculty, advisers, and students over the past seven years, we have begun to analyze the characteristics of faculty members who have participated in curriculum internationalization efforts and the characteristics of those who have not.

What do we know about the faculty and advisers who are participating in curriculum integration, and what do we know about those colleagues who are not participating?

Faculty Engagement

All of our new data analysis shows positive correlations between involvement in the curriculum integration initiative and faculty members' attitudes and beliefs about the desirability and benefits of study abroad, and their knowledge about study abroad options for students.

We are also seeing that when faculty and advisers become involved in the curriculum integration initiative, they are more likely to engage in behaviors that encourage students to study abroad, such as proactively talking with students about study abroad during advising meetings or after class. This is in comparison to those faculty members who are not participating in the initiative.

Survey results also show that faculty members' own prior international experience does not directly translate into promoting study abroad to their students. Faculty members who demonstrate a certain degree of engagement internationally (such as conducting research abroad, living abroad, or having studied abroad themselves) are not necessarily knowledgeable about the study abroad options available to their undergraduate students, nor do they encourage their students to study abroad. However, faculty members who were engaged in the curriculum internationalization initiative and had a higher degree of international engagement had a higher degree of knowledge regarding study abroad and were more likely to encourage their undergraduates to study abroad.

Faculty members with a higher degree of international experiences who were *not* participating in the curriculum integration initiative had positive attitudes about study abroad, but were *not* as knowledgeable about study abroad options for their students nor were they to a greater degree encouraging their students to study abroad.

A complete analysis of these data is in appendix A (page 9).

Faculty Who Participate in Site Visits

We have also recently looked at those faculty and advisers who have participated in our facilitated site visits to learn about the variety of study abroad experiences available to Minnesota students.

The more survey respondents agree that their site visit experience increased their awareness of study abroad options for students in their department, the more often they engage in behavior to promote study abroad. Examples include:

- Encouraging students to study abroad ($r(46) = .25, p = .09$)
- Mentioning study abroad to students ($r(47) = .30, p < .05$)
- Changing the way they interact with students about study abroad ($r(46) = .40, p < .01$)
- Sharing their site visit experience with students ($r(46) = .37, p < .05$)
- Encouraging others to participate in site visits ($r(46) = .41, p < .01$)

The challenge of our work is that we put the cart before the horse. We have built the foundation upon which study abroad is growing and is becoming a part of the fabric of the culture in our institution, but we are only now just starting to realize the magnitude of the course transfer and equivalency complexities and program development. Given that we have a wide network now of committed faculty, advisers, and staff throughout the university, this task will be seen as collective task, however, one for which all academic units feel some accountability.

We have also begun to reassess our goal of seeing at least 50 percent of graduates have a study abroad experience. We are broadening our definition of "learning abroad" to include work, intern, and volunteer experiences. This is helpful as some disciplines, such as engineering, require internships to graduate, but these internships are not credit bearing.

In addition, we are in the very early stages of having conversations across the disciplines about how realistic the 50-percent goal is for each discipline or collegiate unit. Might 25 percent be a more realistic goal for some disciplines? Maybe the engineering curricula really won't allow for 50 percent of their graduates to study abroad. I recently spoke with that associate dean in the school

of engineering who started working with us in 1995, and being the good scientist that he is, he reminded me that there are limits to growth, especially exponential growth.

At the other end of the continuum, our school of management has set the goal that all of their undergraduates will have an international experience. This may be an education abroad experience, but it also might be an experience with internationalization-at-home. This new thinking is broadening our vision and not confining us to think just about conventional study abroad as the mechanism for internationalizing the undergraduate experience of our students. But even though the school of management has set the bar higher, we want to make sure that our colleagues in other disciplines do not feel like failures.

“Power of One”

But none of this new thinking would have happened had it not been for the “Power of One.” In the case of the school of management, ten years ago there was another visionary associate dean who joined our early curriculum integration efforts. It has taken that college ten years to get this point, remember, and the new 100 percent goal just started this fall. We will need another five or so years to see effects and work through evaluation of the model.

I recently spoke with our former provost and executive director for international programs, Gene Allen, about my idea of the “Power of One.” He lit up and proceeded to tell the story of “Mark Nelson,” one tenured faculty member in the college of agriculture who is not a dean or a department head or a director of undergraduate studies. He is rather an enthusiastic influencer. His peers respect him and his students adore him. He is a cheerleader for ensuring that horticulture and plant science students study abroad. Gene reminds me that he would trade a five-star model of internationalization for just one “Mark Nelson” any day, as Mark represents the Power of One.

Over the past several years, we have been tracking a few case studies of curriculum integration initiatives at five different institutions: Michigan State University, University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, Skidmore College, University of California, and Oregon State University (Van Deusen, 2007). These initiatives have all been launched within the past five to six years. The main element of each model is the attention paid to faculty and academic adviser involvement and shifting the conversations to be more centered in student learning outcomes.

I recently spoke with Inge Steglitz, the director of curriculum integration for Michigan State University, about their initiative. They are in the process of evaluating the efforts they have been undertaking over the past five years and reflecting upon the curriculum integration advisory committee they have with representatives from all academic units. She has been amazed, as I have been with my colleagues, at the willingness of colleagues in academic units to be involved and see the process of internationalizing the undergraduate experience with study abroad as a campus-wide goal.

Here is where we begin to turn the “Power of One” into the “Power of Many.” It is a laborious process, but one that can be very rewarding when collaborations start to happen.

I encourage us to shift our thinking about “Curriculum Integration” to “Colleague Integration” with the hope that we all can achieve campus internationalization for our institutions. Please consider bringing a faculty member or academic adviser along with you to the next internationally focused conference you attend. It’s an easy first step!

As Bill Moyers paraphrased Joseph Campbell, on the day after the U.S. presidential elections in which Barack Obama was elected:

If we want to change the world, we have to change the metaphor.

What metaphors do we need to change?

Conclusion

Several major themes that have emerged in our model over the years should be highlighted:

- Marked increase in faculty members who want to lead a short-term course abroad (we have historically not had a significant interest in this)
- Emphasis on developing learning outcomes of study abroad, not simply administrative structures
- Continued need to focus on major-specific coursework in study abroad, not just electives (most disciplines continue to transfer study abroad coursework into students' degree programs as electives)
- Marked increase in student interest in non-credit education abroad, in part driven by their own motivation and focusing on community service and civic engagement
- Creative interpretation of international partnerships to increase student mobility (beyond the traditional "exchange" model)
- Challenge of developing pre-departure, on-site, and re-entry courses focusing on intercultural competence (maximizing study abroad)
- Increased interest in integrating international students into pre-departure orientations
- Increased interest in integrating students' study abroad experiences back into their campus life once they return home
- Increased interest in placing study abroad into an internationalized curriculum (holistic development of an overall curricula for undergraduate students that develops their global and intercultural competencies, regardless of type of experience student engages in)

Appendix A

These data represent evaluation data collected in 2007 from University of Minnesota faculty regarding the curriculum integration initiative. Data analysis conducted by Rhiannon Williams, Yuki Watabe, Clelia Anna Mannino, and Gayle Woodruff.

Analysis 1

Attitudes. Participants and non-participants did not significantly differ in their scores on either the Attitude 1 or Attitude 2 scales ($K-W(1,198) = 1.23$), ($K-W(1,198) = 2.22$). Thus, there were no significant differences between participants and non-participants in their beliefs that the skills and knowledge gained through study abroad are beneficial for students, and in their views about the potential impact of study abroad on students' futures. In saying this, overall both participants and non-participants hold high positive attitudes toward study abroad. For example, 84 percent of participants and 72 percent of non-participants stated that study abroad is both desirable and a realistic part of an undergraduate's education. And 96 percent of participants and 84 percent of non-participants stated that it was either very important or important for undergraduates within their discipline to have an understanding of cultural differences.

Knowledge. Scores on knowledge items differed significantly between participants and non-participants ($K-W(1,198) = 31.3$, $p < .01$). Participants were more aware of study abroad options and resources for students. For example, (90%) participants were aware of the availability of scholarships for students compared to (58%) non-participants. In addition, participants were more aware of their unit's goals toward undergraduate study abroad ($\chi^2(1) = 9.5$, $p < .05$, $V = .20$) and of colleagues who are knowledgeable about study abroad than non-participants ($\chi^2(1) = 5.6$, $p < .05$, $V = .15$).

Behavior. Participants and non-participants differed significantly in their behavior scale scores ($K-W(1,198) = 16.2$, $p < .01$). Overall, participants talked about study abroad in the classroom (79%) and encouraged their students to study abroad (97%), whereas non-participants did not engage as much in classroom discussions (54%) and encouraging student to study abroad (78%). When asked whether respondents incorporated students' study abroad experiences into their curriculum, 53 percent of participants stated "yes" they did, 10 percent stated "no," and 37 percent stated "no, but I am open to this idea"; while 28 percent of non-participants stated "yes" they do, 18 percent stated "no," and 55 percent stated "no, but I am open to this idea."

Summary. Overall, while those faculty members who have participated in curriculum integration initiatives have similar attitudes around undergraduate study abroad as those who have not participated, they differ significantly in their knowledge and behavior. Faculty participants were significantly more aware of study abroad options for the undergraduates in their departments and were more likely to encourage and talk with their undergraduates about study abroad. Thus we can begin to discuss how intentional involvement in curriculum integration might be one possible positive factor in increasing faculty knowledge and behavior regarding undergraduate study abroad.

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About the Author*



Gayle A. Woodruff is the director for curriculum and campus internationalization at the University of Minnesota. Gayle's current efforts are aimed at broadening the internationalization of the curriculum, inclusive of the faculty development necessary to reach institutional goals of teaching and learning for the 21st century. She reports directly to the associate vice president of international programs. Gayle also has strategic oversight of the University's curriculum integration initiative. This include advocacy for underrepresented students in study abroad.

She has been with the University of Minnesota since 1988, first as an undergraduate student who studied abroad four times! She then became a graduate student in the Comparative and International Development Education (CIDE) program, while working in international programs. Gayle was the principal counselor of the Hispanic Latino students during the 1990s and conducted research on multicultural students' identity formation. She then served as the assistant director of student services in the College of Human Ecology. From 1995 to 2005, she also served as the faculty mentor and instructor for the Minnesota Studies in International Development program to Ecuador.

In 2001, Gayle moved back to the international education office to work with the study abroad curriculum integration initiative. She held the position of director until 2009, when she moved into her new role as the system-wide director for internationalizing the curriculum.

Gayle is the recipient of the University's John Tate Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Advising.

She co-authored a chapter on diversity in study abroad in the Forum on Education Abroad's *History of Study Abroad* (2010). She also co-authored the Forum on Education Abroad's original report on the baseline practices of curriculum integration.

Gayle currently serves as the chair for the Teaching, Learning, & Scholarship Knowledge Community of NAFSA: Association of International Educators.

* A portion of this paper was presented at the CIEE conference 2008 as part of a session on curriculum integration with Mick Vande Berg, CIEE, and Joe Hoff, Oregon State University.

